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# ANIMA MUNDI NEWSLETTER

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# 1. Editorial: Building the evidence base: ANIMA MUNDI after one year

As ANIMA MUNDI steps into its second year, the project concludes its first phase focused on building the organisational, analytical and methodological foundation needed to strengthen the European Animation Industry Ecosystem (EAIE).

In 2025, the consortium delivered its first public outputs, including the [Literature Review Report \(D5.1\)](#), which provides a systematic overview of existing research and policy frameworks related to intellectual property, financing models, distribution patterns and the implications of emerging technologies such as generative AI. These findings now serve as a reference for upcoming empirical research and industry-oriented tools.

A major milestone of this first year was also the publication of [D4.1 Set-the-Stage Report on international promotion of European Animation Industry](#), an analytical report grounded in inputs gathered through online workshops with European animation professionals, and in-person [Set-the-Stage workshops at the Annecy Festival](#). This report captures shared challenges and expectations across the EAIE and lays the analytical groundwork for the research and pilot activities that follow.

To engage with a broader community, the project established its [International Advisory Board](#), gathering leading figures from the audiovisual sector, academia and cultural institutions to provide strategic feedback and ensure the relevance of project outputs to industry practice and public policy.

The first year also marked ANIMA MUNDI's broader outreach with its presence at festivals in Annecy and Berlin.

Looking ahead, the project now activates a wide range of empirical studies, co-design workshops, pilot labs, international training programmes, and comparative analyses that will result in major publications, including the first [Policy Brief](#) and reports on legal frameworks, festivals, market trends and stakeholder needs.

ANIMA MUNDI enters this new phase with ambition and shared enthusiasm. Strengthening the international promotion of European animation means reinforcing Europe's capacity to tell stories that resonate across borders - and we look forward to continuing this journey together.

**We look forward  
to continue this  
collective journey  
with you.**



**[READ THE FULL PRESS RELEASE FOR AN OVERVIEW OF THE 2026 ROADMAP AND UPCOMING ACTIVITIES](#)**

## 2. Project progress & milestones

# Spotlight: ANIMA MUNDI launches global survey on youth and children's animation preferences

ANIMA MUNDI has launched an international online survey aimed at better understanding how children (12–15) and young people (16–24) across the world watch, engage with, and discover animated audiovisual works. The survey forms a key component of Task 9.2, led by the University of Vienna (UNIVIE) with support from the University of Liège (ULiège) and CITIA.

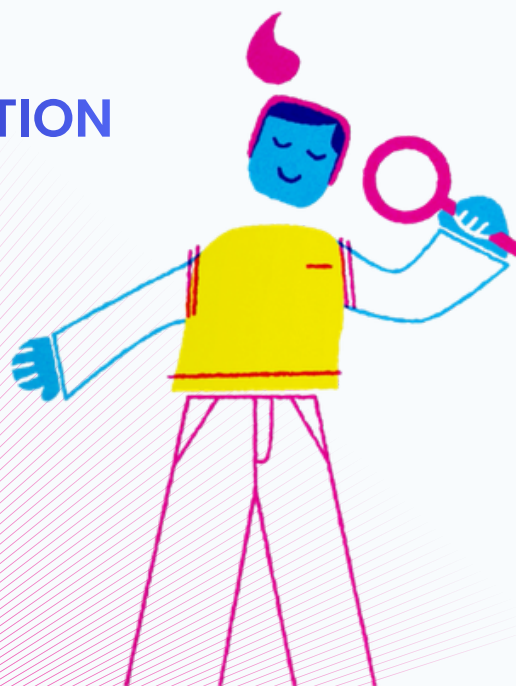
The survey takes approximately 15 minutes to complete, is fully anonymous, and is now available in 14 languages, ensuring broad accessibility for participants across diverse cultural and linguistic contexts. The study aims to collect responses from at least 40 different countries, making it one of the most geographically wide-reaching audience research efforts in the field of animation. It collects anonymous insights about:

- preferred genres, styles and formats of animation;
- viewing habits and devices;
- discoverability and access barriers;
- cultural and geographical preferences
- the role of AI in animation;
- participation in animation creation and related activities;
- aspirations to work in animation in the future.

This initiative contributes to the project's broader goal of strengthening understanding of audience behaviour, needs, and barriers across Europe and beyond.

We encourage partners, stakeholders, and networks across the animation, youth, and education sectors to share the survey widely and help us reach a diverse and representative group of young respondents.

**HELP US REACH  
YOUNG ANIMATION  
AUDIENCES  
WORLDWIDE**



**ACCESS**



## 2.1 ANIMAR\_BCN Animation Days: policy dialogue and stakeholder insights

From 1 to 3 December 2025, ANIMA MUNDI took an active role in ANIMAR\_BCN – the European Animation Convention, one of Europe’s leading policy-oriented gatherings for the animation sector. Curated by Animation in Europe at the initiative of PROA, with the support of ICEC, ICEX and ICAA, the event brought together key professionals, institutions and representatives of the European Animation Industry Ecosystem to debate shared priorities and strengthen cross-sector cooperation.

In line with its mission to connect and reinforce Europe’s animation landscape, ANIMA MUNDI organised two dedicated Focus Groups within its academic research programme. These sessions, held immediately after the Think Tank discussions, convened producers, policymakers, researchers, broadcasters, distributors and other industry stakeholders. Their input fed directly into the project’s ongoing work on international promotion, intellectual property and copyright management, discoverability, market structures, and the sustainability of current business models in an evolving audiovisual environment.

The conversations also explored structural challenges and opportunities for European animation at the global level, including co-production practices, changing distribution dynamics, financing frameworks, and emerging technological disruptions such as AI and their implications for authorship and rights protection.

ANIMA MUNDI’s participation at ANIMAR highlighted the value of bridging research, policy and industry practice. While the Think Tank gathered 52 experts from 15 European countries, ANIMA MUNDI’s contribution ensured that these strategic exchanges were translated into concrete research insights feeding directly into the project’s analytical and comparative work packages. The project also joined forces with the Horizon Europe projects REBOOT and CRESCINE for a panel offering cross-project perspectives on the European film and animation industries, reinforcing the importance of coordinated European action to enhance visibility, protect creative value and ensure long-term competitiveness.

For ANIMA MUNDI, ANIMAR\_BCN represented a key milestone in Work Package 4, strengthening engagement with stakeholders, supporting cross-project dialogue, and enriching the evidence base that will inform the project’s next phases, including its pilot activities and policy-focused outputs.



## 2.2 New Policy Brief: Strengthening the global reach of European animation

We are pleased to announce that **Deliverable 13.1 – Policy Brief 1: Policy recommendations for enhancing the global reach, partnerships, and visibility of European animation** is now publicly available online.

Prepared by a consortium of experts including KEA, UNIVIE, ULIEGE, EUI, SSSA and VUB, this first policy brief outlines strategic recommendations to strengthen the international presence of European animation, including:

- building a coordinated **EU-level promotion platform for animation**;
- supporting **dubbing, subtitling and localisation**;

- enhancing **international partnerships and cooperation frameworks**;
- improving discoverability and fair **IP/rights management**;
- embedding animation more effectively into **EU cultural relations** and external action.

The policy brief draws on evidence from ANIMA MUNDI's early research activities and contributes to the project's mission of reinforcing Europe's animation ecosystem and its global cultural influence.



## 2.3 Highlights from the EFM workshop

On 14 February, ANIMA MUNDI co-hosted a closed-door workshop titled "Boosting the Visibility of European Animated Films" during the inaugural EFM Animation Days in Berlin. Held within the European Film Market's new platform dedicated exclusively to animation, the session highlighted the growing prominence of animation within Europe's audiovisual landscape.

Co-chaired by Animation in Europe and UNIFRANCE, the workshop convened 15 professionals from across the animation value chain including producers, distributors, exhibitors, festivals, publishers, and marketing experts. Participants also included representatives from key European organisations such as Europa Cinemas, Europa Distribution, and Europa International, alongside ANIMA MUNDI partners University of Liège, VUB, and CITIA.

Discussions focused on identifying barriers and opportunities to strengthen the circulation, promotion and visibility of European animated feature films.



Topics included marketing and exhibition strategies, dubbing practices, windowing models, territoriality, and audience-building approaches. These exchanges build on previous insights from Animar\_BCN's European Animation Convention and contribute to a growing evidence base on the structural conditions shaping Europe's animation sector.

The workshop's outcomes will feed into ANIMA MUNDI's ongoing research and policy recommendations, supporting efforts to reinforce the competitiveness and international reach of European animation.



## 2.4 Introducing the International Advisory Board

ANIMA MUNDI has established its **International Advisory Board**, a key structure designed to strengthen the project's mission of supporting the European Animation Industry and enhancing its international promotion.

It includes five major European organisations with strong experience in audiovisual and animation ecosystems: **European Film Promotion, Europa Distribution, the European Broadcasting Union, Europa International, and the European Video Exchange Network**. Their strategic insight will help align ANIMA MUNDI's work with industry realities and European sector priorities.

Complementing this core group, a **Pool of Engaged Organisations** contributes additional expertise from across the European cultural and audiovisual field. These include **CARTOON, CineRegio, Eurocinema, the European Audiovisual Observatory, the European Film Agencies Directors Association, EUNIC Korea, the European Producers Club, and the Cultural Relations Platform** – each playing a crucial role in connecting European animation with broader policy, funding and internationalisation frameworks.

The Advisory Board is further reinforced by a **Pool of Engaged Scholars and Experts**, whose academic backgrounds span media studies, cultural diplomacy, IP and the cultural and creative industries. Among them are **Carmina Crusafon Baqués** (Autonomous University of Barcelona), **Carla Figueira** (Goldsmiths, University of London), **Carlotta Scioldo** (Erasmus University Rotterdam), and **Panagiotis Kyriakoulakos** (University of the Aegean). Their contributions will help anchor ANIMA MUNDI's work in rigorous research while fostering dialogue between academia and industry.

### ROLE AND WORK OF THE ADVISORY BOARD

The Advisory Board contributes to the project in three main ways: development by providing strategic guidance, validating findings, and ensuring that the project's outputs reflect the needs and ambitions of the European animation ecosystem. This collaborative structure is central to maximising the project's impact both within Europe and on the global stage.



## 2.5 ANIMA MUNDI aligns on next steps at January Consortium Meeting

On 27 January 2026, ANIMA MUNDI partners convened for the consortium meeting to review first-year progress and align on an ambitious 2026–2027 roadmap, marking a clear shift from foundational research to coordinated implementation. The meeting confirmed the next phase of work across the project's three methodological Hubs: IP Management; Institutions, Partnerships & Promotion; and Discoverability, Audiences & Consumption, while setting priorities including expanded IP research and workshops, preparations for Annecy 2026, and the launch of new audience-focused pilot initiatives, reinforcing the project's transition from analysis to practical action for Europe's animation sector.

## 2.6 Youth focus groups completed in February

As part of task 9.2 – Exploring youth and children preferences regarding animation, the project conducted online youth focus groups in February. Led by the University of Vienna (UNIVIE), these sessions gathered young people aged 16–24 to discuss how they watch, choose, and engage with animated films and series.

The discussions explored viewing habits, preferred genres and styles, modes of access, and the factors that shape young audiences' excitement, creativity, and discoverability in animation.

The task combines desk research, audience mapping, a large-scale survey, and international workshops to better understand the perspectives of youth and children toward European Animation and their conditions of access to animated audiovisual works.

Insights will feed directly into the broader objective of assessing audience perspectives – particularly those of younger viewers – and contribute to evidence-based policy and industry recommendations.



## 3. Get ready for...

### EXPLORING ASIAN ANIMATION MARKETS: NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR EUROPEAN CREATORS AT FILMART 2026

17–20 March 2026  
Hong Kong Filmart

As part of Task 10.4, Anima Mundi will take part at Hong Kong Filmart, led by Bridging Visions with the participation of the consultancy agency LMF. UNIFRANCE and the University of Liège will also be present. In addition, Anima Mundi will host a dedicated table at Filmart, facilitating exchanges and meetings with key players across the Asian animation landscape.

### FLAGSHIP WORKSHOP: SHAPING GLOBAL ANIMATION: PATHWAYS BETWEEN ASIA AND EUROPE

19 March 2026  
Hong Kong Filmart

This workshop will explore emerging opportunities for European animation in China, Japan, and South Korea, offering a concise update on the region's rapidly evolving industry. Drawing on the case-study of the **Oscar winning feature FLOW**, the session will dive into distribution challenges, market positioning, and concrete collaboration models between Europe and Asia. The goal is to equip European studios and professionals with insights and strategies to navigate and access Asian markets more effectively.

## 4. Industry insights & news

### CARTOON MOVIE 2026 ANNOUNCES 50-PROJECT LINE-UP

The 2026 edition of Cartoon Movie will present **50 feature-film** projects, selected from a record **150 submissions**, marking a **22% increase** from last year. Featuring works from **21 European countries**, the slate reflects strong diversity in genre, production scale and representation, including a rising share of women directors and producers. Co-production remains central, with **58%** of projects involving international partnerships, and 2D animation leading the selection.



### ANIMATION IN EUROPE CALLS FOR A RETHINK OF BUSINESS MODELS

Animation in Europe has expanded to **27 countries** and **30 professional associations**, announcing new strategic priorities including stronger support in the upcoming **AVMS Directive revision**, development of a sector-specific carbon footprint calculator, and a renewed dialogue with European broadcasters. The federation emphasises the need to **rethink financing models for animated series**, aiming to increase broadcaster and platform investment in European original content.



### ANIMATION IN EUROPE PROPOSES REVISIONS TO THE AVMS DIRECTIVE

During ANIMAR 2025, Animation in Europe proposed targeted amendments to the **AVMS Directive** to strengthen the animation sector. Recommendations include: extending AVMS rules to video-sharing platforms, increasing European content quotas for streamers to **50%**, ensuring prominence of European works online, and improving transparency around audience data and algorithmic curation. The proposals aim to reinforce independent production and support European co-production frameworks.



### GLOBAL SUCCESS OF ANIME CHALLENGES OSCAR PARADIGMS

A Hollywood Reporter analysis highlights how the global success of titles such as **Demon Slayer: Infinity Castle** and **KPop Demon Hunters** is prompting reconsideration of how anime is positioned within major awards structures. Historically overlooked, non-Ghibli titles are now among the season's frontrunners, signalling a shift in recognition toward more diverse stylistic and narrative forms of East Asian animation.



### EUROPEAN CINEMA GAINS INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION

According to DW, European cinema is experiencing renewed global visibility with films that foreground **political engagement, artistic risk-taking and adult-oriented storytelling**. This trend is reflected in the strong presence of European titles in the **European Film Awards** and wider awards-season discussions. Works highlighted include Jafar Panahi's *It Was Just an Accident*, noted for its urgency and political resonance.





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