

## **Minutes FSE Board Meeting**

(approved by FSE board meeting on 22 September 2020)

### Were present:

#### **Board members**

Carolin Otto (president)  
Maciej Karpinski  
Ana Pineda  
Jacob Groll  
Gail Renard  
Nikolaj Scherfig  
Alexandre Manneville

#### **Staff**

David Kavanagh  
Amélie Clément

Gail Renard shared the information that Pyotr Verzilov has been arrested. He is a member of the Pussy Riot who intervened at WCOS Berlin. Gail proposed to check the information and possible reaction with WGA. FSE will react if the information is confirmed.

### **Item 1. Approval of the minutes of the previous board meeting (Zoom, 26 and 27 May 2020)**

The board unanimously approved the minutes, providing they include the following change on p.1 (paragraph on FSE president's letter to Ministers of Culture in Europe) : "Ana regrets that the efforts of the Culture minister in Spain do not get through".

### **Item 2. Zoom meeting on SVOD negotiations (24 June)**

David presented the purpose of the meeting (introduce everybody to each other – including a few new people, encourage multilateral contacts, cover basic information from each country, with possibility to meet again). Gail said that WGGB is very grateful for this initiative, as they are going to enter into negotiation with Netflix.

Carolin thinks it is a very good way to stress how FSE is useful in this case.

### **Item 3. Zoom meeting on "writing after Covid-19" (proposed date: 7 July)**

The proposal is to invite all members of FSE to join the meeting to discuss about the recovery package and the role of the cultural industry. What is it writers want in the recovery package? This discussion will help FSE define a concrete list of proposals from the writers' position, from the short term approach (make sure our members are better paid) to a wider, more general political and societal issue on the long term (social responsibility of writers).

The board exchanged various ideas:

- Tackle the difficulty to get insurance to film, lower VAT and more tax breaks (to encourage filming in each country). (Gail)
- Short term priorities are level of income and social insurance protection (Ana).
- Measures to make sure that money invested in platforms and streaming services is also invested in production (Ana).
- Does FSE need to choose between joining big groups (culture) and argue for very general scopes or forming a reduced coalition to lobby for specific measures? (Ana)
- FSE can protect its members providing the sector is strong (David).
- At EU level, very large amounts of money are borrowed for recovery. How to make sure some of it will help authors.
- Where is the work going to go? (Gail)

Proposals to change the title of the meeting

- The issue is more how to survive post covid (Maciej)
- How to make a living in writing after covid (Ana)

Then participants exchanged views on the recent developments of the AV sector (changes in the structure of what is produced and how it is produced).

Investment in feature film will change. David said that FERA is worrying about the eminent collapse of local film production and the EU independent film production. FSE members are more focused on television. Nikolaj confirms that in Denmark, the winners are TV and streaming and the losers are cinema. This is good for series writers, but how to get a bigger share from streamers? Meanwhile film directors in Denmark are focused on how to save cinema and money from the state is mostly to help feature film production to restart.

David made the link between film funding and cultural diversity. Streamers have an impact on cultural diversity (less?). Without cultural diversity, would film funds disappear? Without local film production, what would cultural diversity become?

Then followed a discussion on the preparation of the meeting: agenda, participants' contributions, speakers (Carolin proposed Peter Dinger, president of EFADs, for another meeting, after checking what guilds want, maybe for the annual general assembly in October).

#### **Item 4. Questionnaire to EU screenwriters on Covid-19 crisis**

David thanked Ana and Gail for their work. He adapted their first draft and proposed his changes to the board. He proposed to exchange further by email with Gail and Ana to finalize the questions.

The board raised the issue of language (will translation in national languages bring more answers?) but decided to keep it in English, leaving to each guild the possibility to translate it.

The project is to launch the questionnaire before the meeting of 7<sup>th</sup> July.

#### **Item 5. Covid recovery and the EU: latest developments**

This item refers to David's written reports and various letters and statements communicated to the board prior to the meeting. FSE has indeed signed various joint statements. The EU commission understands the

language of these statements issued by the cultural and AV sectors and shows sympathy to our position. But how to turn it into something useful?

### **EU recovery plans**

The main issue is : how money should be invested? Though several target sectors have very specific plans, the one for the Cultural and Creative Industries (CCIs) is more vague. FSE stands with the audiovisual industry and the AV coalition, though it includes private broadcasters which want less regulation (they attack the AVMS and Copyright directives). The position is not clear enough and apparently not very successful.

In the cultural sector, Culture Action Europe has a good slogan: 7% of recovery plans should be invested in culture. But it proposes no further detailed plan.

Some ideas:

- Money to go to creators (writers) to launch small scale projects (Gail). This is something you can ask at the level of film institutes (David).
- A part of the money invested in the AV sector must be spent on writers (Ana). Defend that idea to Culture ministers.
- Focus on contracts
- Guarantee volume of production

### **Copyright directive**

FSE will relaunch its campaign on implementing the copyright directive.

End of the meeting.

(No date has been set for the next meeting. Early September).