

MOVEMENTS
OF CENTRAL
AND EASTERN
EUROPEAN
PROJECTS

VIA

EUROPEAN
DOCUMENTARY
MARKETS



Since the implementation of the MEDIA programme of the European Union, many initiatives have been put in place to improve the competitive chances of European audiovisual productions in the international marketplace; protect audiovisual heritage; create opportunities for B2B exchange; and encourage cross border collaboration both in a pan-European and international context.

Author:
Brigid O'Shea

The goal of this analysis is to see how East and Central European (CEE) creative documentary projects are represented in Western European markets and pitching events. How competitive are East and Central European documentary projects in the wider European marketplace? Can selection statistics show us the best places for East and Central European filmmakers to present their projects? And how can we create more geographic parity in the European Documentary Marketplace?

This study also does not include projects from training initiatives that present their results to the international industry via festivals or film markets. Nor does it include every marketplace in Europe. The focus has been placed on Creative Europe-supported markets plus Visions du Réel's Pitching du Réel and Docs in Progress.

This analysis defines the following countries as belonging to East and Central Europe: Albania, Austria, Belarus, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, North Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Poland, Republic of Serbia, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Ukraine; and the following post-soviet countries: Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan.

The preliminary markets and pitches interrogated here are:

- CPH:Forum (minus their 2016 edition; DK)
- DOK Co-Pro Market (DE)
- IDFA Forum (NL)
- Sheffield MeetMarket (UK)
- Thessaloniki Docs in Progress (GR)
- Visions du Réel's Pitching du Réel and Docs in Progress (CH)
- When East Meets West Co-Pro Forum (IT).

It looks at the selected projects from 2016-2019. East and Central European origin is declared by the submitter or decided on by the event organisers. The nationality of the director is not counted and the national origins of the projects are determined in this study as the countries declared in the project catalogue.



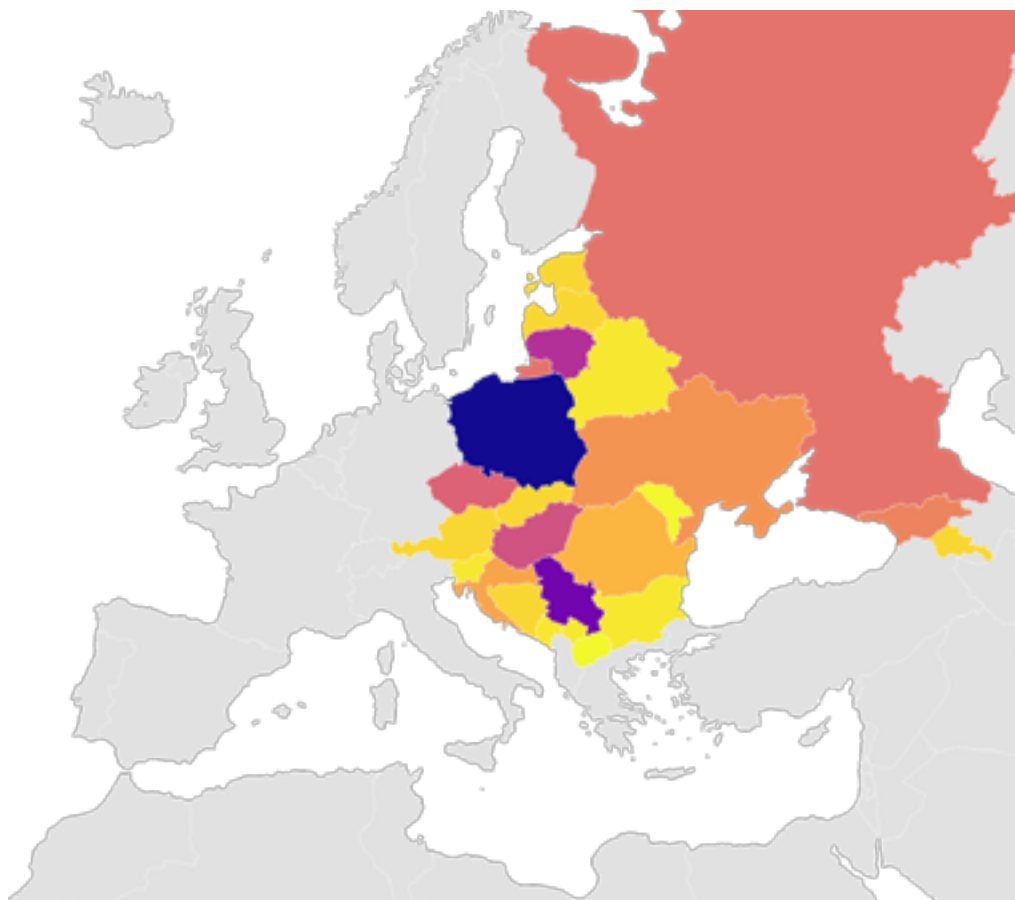
REPRESENTATION OF CEE COUNTRIES AT INTERNATIONAL MARKETS IN 2016-2019

Projects represented by countries



0

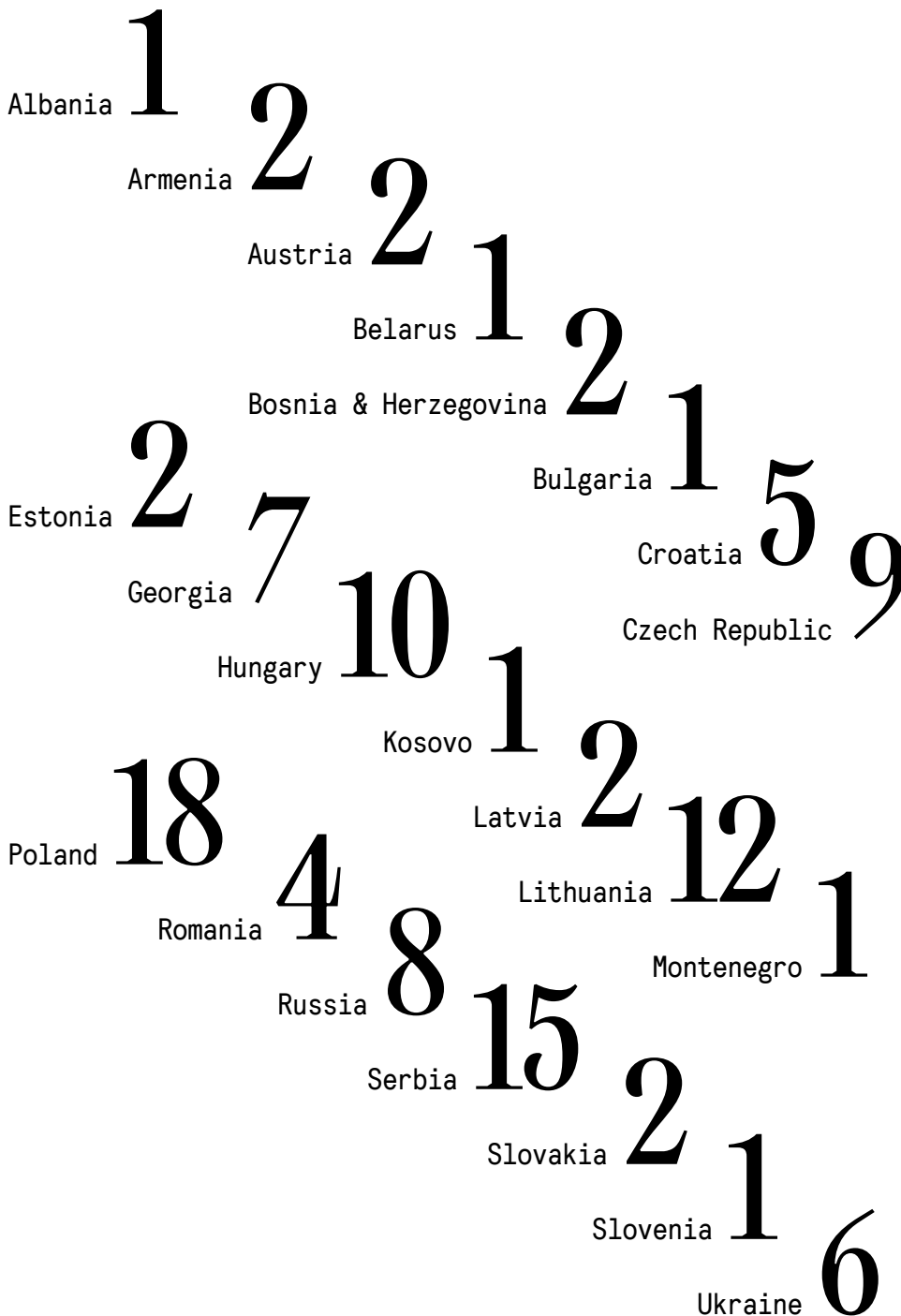
18



While these countries don't appear at all: Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, North Macedonia, Moldova, and Uzbekistan.

COUNTRIES REPRESENTED BY PROJECTS

The following projects by countries of origin were represented within the selected markets in 2016-2019.



Overall, 835 projects were selected for these events in the above mentioned period. 112 of those projects are of East and Central European origin and another 44 list an East or Central European country as a co-production country.



REPRESENTATION RATE ACROSS MARKETS

The number of projects pitched
in more than one of these events:



ESTIMATED NUMBER OF TOTAL FILMS FROM CEE COMPLETED



MARKET SELECTION RATE

Selection rate of either projects majority CEE
or CEE co-production country: CEE/Total

CPH:Forum **8/88**

DOK Co-Pro Market **41/138**

IDFA Forum **23/228**

Sheffield MeetMarket **11/199**

Thessaloniki Pitching Forum **12/44**

Visions du Réel **15/97**

When East Meets West **24/41**



KEY TAKEAWAYS

The large audiovisual markets: Germany, France, UK and USA represent the largest number of projects selected for these markets and events. This is due to systemic issues which are not the subject of this mapping study, however, certainly entrenches a domination that, as Creative Europe has correctly pointed out, requires special treatment and support to be lent to the countries of small audiovisual output, of which all CEE countries are, either small or medium.

This support must not necessarily be an implementation of a selection quota system, but rather the ongoing support for pitching events and markets in these smaller countries, to showcase and celebrate European storytelling in all its diversity, while also allowing the same support and “home court advantage” to be accessible to CEE film professionals.

Bringing the decision making structure to the region may be the most effective way to improve competition and lift the profile of the professionals and projects. Specific and special training that organisations in the CEE region can offer the projects prior to their own events is also essential to increase their professional experiences and chances for success. It would be hoped that understanding for the wildly varying industry standards can be bridged via such encounters.

Furthermore; as one of the core mandates of the Creative Europe programme is B2B business exchange and improving the networks of European film professionals, events outside of Germany, France, Netherlands etc. are essential to create strong local networks, improve competitive chances for professionals in the large markets/abroad, as well as broader opportunities for professional development.



Countries in CEE that have both national and regional support (i.e. Poland) seem to have the most competitive chances in the Western European Markets, as do those with healthy promotional budget (i.e. Ukraine, Lithuania) as well as those countries bordering Western European (Czech Republic).

As each Western European film market has its own focus, size, atmosphere and idiosyncratic offerings, it is difficult to say if participating in one market is better/more impactful for a project. A combination of markets is necessary for projects to build a network to successfully finance and distribute a documentary internationally. This includes research work as part of delegations or attending as an observer, not just having a project officially selected for a market, as well as ongoing work that many institutions are doing for professional development and training (e.g. Serbia, Hungary).

However markets in countries that border CEE have the highest selection rates of East and Central European Projects (When East Meets West, DOK Leipzig, Agora Thessaloniki).

This survey was
conducted by Institute
of Documentary Film
in collaboration with
DAE - Documentary
Association of Europe.

●◀
institute of
documentary
film

DAE
DOCUMENTARY
ASSOCIATION
OF EUROPE

