

# Canada's film sector lagging on gender equity progress: report

A new report published out of Germany estimates Canada's film industry is nearly 200 years away from achieving gender equity at its current progress rate.

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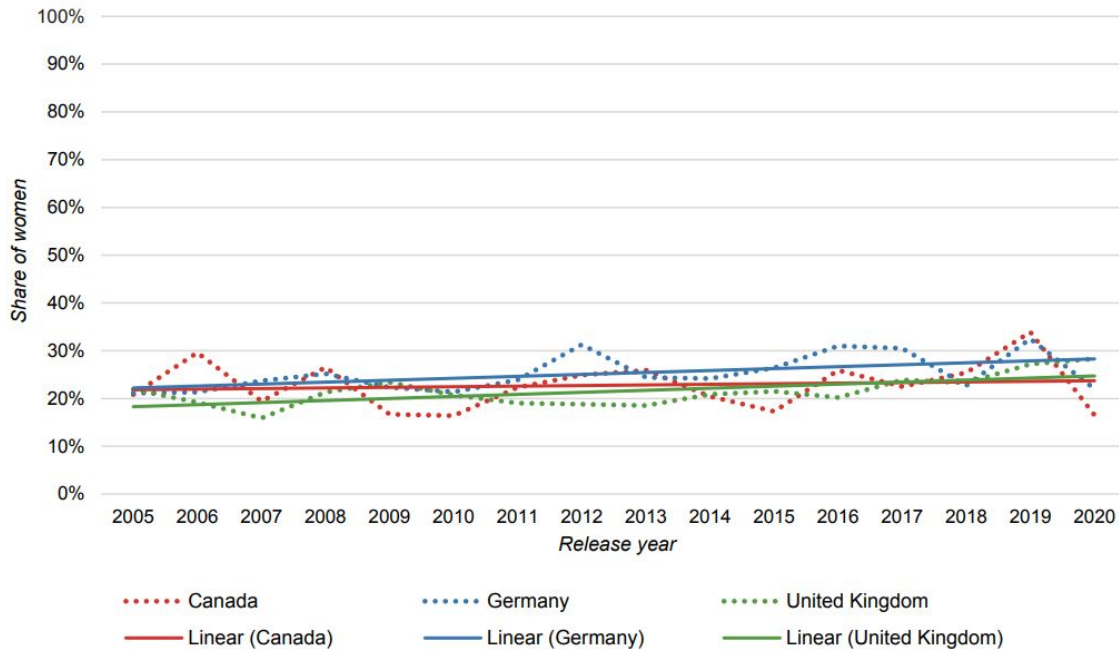
A new report out of Europe assessing the impact of gender equity policies in various international screen industries claims that it will take nearly 200 years for the Canadian sector to achieve gender equity.

The report, titled *Re-Framing the Picture*, was published by Germany's Konrad Wolf Film University of Babelsberg, with support from the University of Glasgow, the University of Alberta, the University of Rostock, and Deakin University.

The document was presented at the Berlin International Film Festival (Berlinale) on Tuesday (Feb. 20). It measures the impact of policies out of Germany, the U.K., and Canada between 2005 and 2020 via interviews with industry stakeholders, and includes contextual quantitative data from projects supported by the Eurimages Fund, which finances feature-length films, animation and documentaries.

Based on the Eurimages data, the report estimates that men represented roughly 77% of key creative positions in Canada’s film sector between 2010 and 2020, and 82% of the network elite, defined as those in the most central network positions in the sector. At the current pace of progress, Canada is expected to achieve gender equity by 2215.

In comparison, the report estimates that gender equity in Germany will be reached by 2041, and in the U.K. it will be reached by 2085. One figure in the report (pictured below) shows that, while Canada was ahead of the U.K. and on par with Germany for the share of creative roles in 2005, both regions have exceeded Canada on average as of 2020.



**Figure 1.2: Slow progress**  
 Percentage of key creatives (directors, writers, and producers) that are women per year and country plotted in dashed lines.  
 Linear increase rates plotted per country in solid lines.

Broken down into key roles, the Eurimages data says that men represented more than 84% of directing roles in Canada, with women accounting for nearly 15%, and less than 1% for mixed-gender teams.

For writing roles, men accounted for about 75% of roles, women at more than 17% and mixed-gender teams at 7.6%. Producing saw a greater mix, with men representing about 51% of producer roles, mixed gender teams at more than 36%, and women at 12.6%.

The report stated that films financed by Telefilm Canada saw greater representation of women. Out of 720 films assessed, 63% were supported by Telefilm, while the remaining 37% were not. Within the group not financed by Telefilm, women shared 16% of key creative roles; in comparison, women shared 27% of creative roles in the films supported by Telefilm.

As a result, the report argued that Telefilm “has a substantial reach and impact on a significant number of films produced” in Canada. As a result, “if Telefilm Canada were to include

mandatory policies to increase gender equity, this substantive share of Canada-produced films could show increased shares of women in key creative positions.”

A spokesperson for Telefilm Canada told *Playback Daily* that the organization could not comment on the report’s interpretation and identification process, noting that Telefilm began collecting gender equity data in 2017, and this report does not include any Telefilm data. According to Telefilm’s 2022-23 annual report, 41% of films financed in the fiscal year were produced by women; 43% were directed by women; and 51% were written by women.

The Re-Framing the Picture report also included qualitative data on various gender equity policies from organizations that support and/or commission film and television programs. It noted that policies out of Canada were most focused on numerical outcomes, followed by diverse voices. The report analyzed gender equity policies from Telefilm, the Canada Media Fund (CMF), the National Film Board of Canada, the CRTC, Ontario Creates, Creative BC, Bell Media, Corus Entertainment, CBC, Blue Ant Media, Rogers Sports & Media, and WildBrain.

The report concluded that, in order to accelerate gender equity initiatives, policies should target provenly effective ways of increasing equity, which includes prioritizing women and non-binary filmmakers receiving support for their second projects, and preventing all-male creative teams. It also said policies should look beyond individual support and target structures and behaviours that inhibit progress.

Women in View, the Canadian not-for-profit gender equity organization, put out a call to action last October for increased effort on domestic gender equity progress following the release of its **2023 On Screen Report**.

The report — which tracks projects funded by Telefilm and CMF — showed a decrease in the representation of women and gender-diverse workers in key creative roles in 2020 and 2021, although the figures are notably higher than the averages from the Eurimages data. It estimated that women and gender-diverse individuals held roughly 33% of key creative roles in Canadian film and TV in 2021, compared to 43% in 2019. At the time, Women in View chair Sharon McGowan warned that “the hard-earned progress that began to pick up speed in 2019 is fragile.”

Women in View’s calls to action included greater accountability for organizations, so equity is a practice rather than an achievement; more focused support for creatives who identify as Black, Indigenous or a person of colour; and sector-level interventions to ensure structural changes are permanent.

The full report is available [here](#).

*Image:* **Unsplash**

Read more: <https://playbackonline.ca/2024/02/20/canadas-film-sector-lagging-on-gender-equity-progress-report/#ixzz8SKuu42hg>