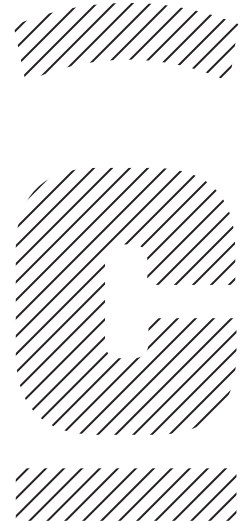




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CEE Animation Conference GO! 2025 PRESS MEDIA REPORT

CEE ANIMATION CONFERENCE GO! 2025
11. – 14.3.2025,
Villa Vipolže (SLO) and Kinemax Gorizia (ITA)

Supporting the Development of Animated Films: Key Challenges and Opportunities

The CEE Animation Conference GO! 2025 brought together independent animated film producers, public film fund representatives, creatives and other industry professionals for three days of discussions on Green Animation and the establishment of an International Co-development Support Mechanism. Held in the countryside connecting Nova Gorica–Gorizia, the European Capital of Culture 2025, the conference concluded with action plans addressing both subjects.

Organised in cooperation with CEE Animation, the Slovene Animated Film Association, Animation in Europe, PROANIMATS, PROA and ANIMAR_BCN, the event was part of the official GO! 2025 ECoC programme. It was supported by Creative Europe – MEDIA, AIPA – Collective Society of Authors, Performers and Producers of Audiovisual Works in Slovenia, Slovenian Film Centre, the Ministry of Public Administration of the Republic of Slovenia, Czech Audiovisual Fund, Czech Audiovisual Producers' Association and Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic.

The conference opened with an inspiring keynote by Alba Meijide on the role of AI in facilitating greater sustainability and efficiency in animation, followed by in-depth discussions on Green Animation and International Co-Development Support Mechanisms.

Co-Development of Animated Films: Challenges and Solutions

The discussions in this working group led by expert producer Jožko Rutar from Slovenia highlighted the disparities in national funding systems across Central and Eastern Europe, emphasising gaps between existing financial structures and industry needs. Given the longer development timelines and higher financial demands of animated films, a deeper understanding of the specific requirements of animation development is essential for effective regional support.

Key challenges include funding and visibility, particularly for demanding projects like animated feature films and animated series. Strengthening international collaboration is seen as a crucial step toward increasing industry capacity and encouraging cooperation. Despite these challenges, the region boasts a strong tradition, exceptional talent and original content, making increased resources and visibility essential for continued success.

The working group proposed a Recommendation Paper advocating for a balanced approach to funding animation development alongside other formats. The document, to be finalised in the coming weeks, will highlight the unique time and cost requirements of animation and call for the inclusion of minority co-development in national and regional funding programmes.

To further enhance international collaboration, the group is exploring a Joint Co-development Mechanism to support more ambitious animation projects, including animated series, feature films and more demanding short films. Designed as a lightweight model, it features a membership-based structure allowing various stakeholders to participate. CEE Animation is currently assessing ways to expand funding and cover operational costs through additional sources. The mechanism will be guided by principles of transparency, reciprocity and active participation from all member institutions in the selection process.

Green Animation: Sustainability in the Industry

This working group led by expert Alissa Aubenque from Ecoprod (FR) addressed the environmental impact of the animation industry, recognising the sector's dual responsibility in shaping cultural narratives while minimising its carbon footprint. While digital workflows may seem less environmentally impactful than live-action productions, they remain significant contributors to emissions. Energy-intensive rendering farms, data centres and specialised production pipelines highlight the need for targeted sustainability measures.

Adopting green production practices is not only an environmental responsibility but also a strategic advantage, as European national and supranational funding bodies increasingly prioritise sustainability in grant criteria. Animation studios incorporating green standards into their workflows will be better positioned to secure international funding. Sustainability-driven innovation presents an opportunity for animation to lead the creative sector toward more responsible production practices.

Building on this momentum, CEE Animation Conference GO! 2025 drafted a position statement emphasising the need for specific Sustainability Guidelines that encompass environmental, social and economic aspects for all in the animation value chain and reflect coordinated industry efforts across Europe. Additional actions include:

- Launching a survey on green practices across the CEE region, covering their current environmental, social and economic sustainability challenges and solutions.
- Hosting a webinar on the use of Carbulator.org, a multilingual online tool for animation studios to measure their carbon footprint, created by AnimFrance.
- Strengthening communication and collaboration among participating countries on sustainability initiatives.

A Case Study on a Successful International Co-production

Conference attendees also had a chance to listen to three producers Martin Vandas (Maurfilm, Czechia), Juraj Krasnohorsky (Artichoke, Slovakia) and Kolja Saksida (ZVVIKS, Slovenia) involved in the international co-production of the forthcoming animated feature film *Tales from the Magic Garden*. Hearing firsthand about the twists and turns involved in the eight-year journey of this original and well-crafted film was a true testament to the pivotal role of CEE Animation in helping to facilitate important networking and training events that connect animation producers across the region and beyond.

Organic Stop-Motion Animation Exhibition

As part of the conference, the exhibition *Organic Stop-Motion Animation* by young artist Sandra Jovanovska was presented at the Kinemax Gorizia exhibition space. The installation is inspired by the animated film *No One Ever Looked at Elephants as You Do*, which explores the bond between mother and child intertwined with nature, as well as *Dimensions of Sustainability in Stop-Motion Animation*, the artist's research into eco-friendly and cost-effective animation techniques.

Conclusion

CEE Animation Conference GO! 2025 successfully brought together key stakeholders to discuss the future of animated film development in Central and Eastern Europe. With concrete steps toward co-development mechanisms and sustainable production practices, the conference set the foundation for a more collaborative, better funded and more environmentally conscious animation industry in the region.



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