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GREEN POLICIES AND NEW GREEN PROTOCOLS FOR THE AUDIOVISUAL INDUSTRY PROMOTED IN ITALY BY STATE AND REGIONS

Abstract

The pandemic certainly is an opportunity for the audiovisual industry, as well as for other industries, to make a necessary reflection on the business models that characterize it and on the development opportunities it can provide. This kind of reflection has already been desirable for at least a decade, as the audiovisual market is undergoing profound transformation. On one hand because the transition to digital technology has been completed, and, on the other hand, since the market has actually become global, which has happened thanks to – above all – the role of the OTT platforms. This scenario is challenging traditional economic models, for example blurring the boundaries between the different platforms for the consumption of audiovisual content. The pandemic has accelerated the visibility of the effects of the aforementioned processes by highlighting some issues that, more blatantly, concern the consumption patterns of audiovisual content. At a deeper yet more subtle level, they are related to the emergence of issues of general interest, where the audiovisual is at the same time a protagonist, since its role as an industry, and a vehicle, as it is a powerful tool for raising the public's awareness. Among these, the necessity to implement green policies in the sector is one of the most interesting. Since the end of 2021, the field's competent institutions – from the European ones to the regional ones – have begun to take action to develop intervention models in favor of the implementation of green practices in work processes along the entire audiovisual supply chain. In particular, some Italian Regions, through their respective Film Commissions, have acted as promoters of the development of green protocols to be applied to production and “promotion” (i.e. festivals). The intention is for these to be adopted by all other Italian Regions and by the State. As this is concerned, Italy already represents a model that inspires European and international public policies. In the first part of the essay I will describe how the audiovisual supply chain is changing in the post-pandemic era; in the second part I will present the most interesting policies promoted by the Italian Regions and State relating to the implementation of green practices, taking into account the context of the UE 2021-2027 Programming; I will conclude describing the most up-to-date green protocols applied in the last three years and with the collection of the first economic data related to their application (sources: Ministry of Culture, Italian Film Commissions); I will interview the most relevant subjects on the matter: Trentino and Sardegna Film Commissions, DGCCA – MiC. I will adopt a legal and economic approach, entering the field of “industry and production studies”.

Keywords

Green protocols; Italian regions policy; Film Commissions; audiovisual industry; European green policy.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The pandemic is an opportunity for the audiovisual industry – as well as for others – to question the business models that characterize it and to analyze the development opportunities it can provide. Among these, the diffusion of values such as environmental protection, reduction of energy waste and eco-sustainability of production processes and lifestyles constitute some of the guidelines orienting the way the sector policies are being redefined.

Since the end of 2021, the institutions competent in the field – from the European ones to the regional ones – have begun to take action to develop intervention models in favour of the implementation of green practices in work processes along the entire audiovisual supply chain. Through their respective Film Commissions, some Italian Regions have acted as promoters of the elaboration of green protocols to be applied to production and promotion (festivals). The intention is for these to be adopted by all other Italian Regions and by the State, during the selection of works and initiatives to be financed. As this is concerned, Italy already represents a model inspiring European and international public policy.

In this article, I analyze the premises, the developments and the prospects of the meeting between the audiovisual industry and the environmental eco-sustainability issues. Thanks to the pandemic, this match is producing its first results in 2022.

In the first chapter, I describe the context of the Italian audiovisual market in the pre-pandemic era, synthesizing the economics of this industry in the last decade. In the second chapter, I analyze the effects of the pandemic on this market. The third and fourth chapters are dedicated to green policies, in respectively the pre-pandemic and the post-pandemic period. In the fifth and last chapter, I enlarge the perspective of my analysis, describing the European strategies toward an eco-sustainable society.

In addition to an overview of the recent academic literature about industry studies, I have widely used primary sources: Italian Laws and European Directives, official economic data published by the institutions competent in the audiovisual sector and interviews with the national stakeholders.

2. THE AUDIOVISUAL INDUSTRY IN THE PRE-PANDEMIC CONTEXT

2.1. *The transformation of the audiovisual market in the last decade*

A reflection on the audiovisual business models' efficiency and effectiveness had been desirable for at least a decade, or since the market started to be the protagonist of a profound transformation. The challenges concern many aspects: from the technological to the economic to the legislative, to arrive at inevitable repercussions on the consumption patterns of audiovisual contents. The main stages of this profound transformation can be identified in some key events¹:

¹ For this overview on the state of art of audiovisual market, please see: AA.VV., *Tredicesimo Rapporto IEM. L'industria della comunicazione in Italia*, Milan, Guerini, 2015; AA.VV., *Rapporto cinema 2018: spettatori, strumenti, scenari*, Rome, Fondazione Ente dello Spettacolo, 2018; G. Abbamonte, E. Apa, O. Pollicino, *La riforma del mercato audiovisivo europeo*, Rome, Giappichelli, 2019; M. Cucco, *Economia del film*, Rome, Carocci, 2020; M. Cucco, G. Manzoli, *Cinema di Stato. Finanziamento pubblico ed economia simbolica nel cinema italiano contemporaneo*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2017; R. Lobato, *Netflix Nations. The Geography of*

a) the transition to digital technology: it began in the early 2000s for activities related to the production and post-production phases, and it was perfected around 2012, with the digitization of projection technology, from the film (analogue system) to the DCP (Digital Cinema Package), in all the Italian cinemas.

b) The market has effectively become global: it has happened thanks to the role played by over-the-top platforms (OTT) above all. OTT are undermining traditional economic models, blurring the boundary between the different consumption devices: the audiovisual content exists, is created and encoded regardless of the distribution platform. This happens because there are no longer technical and format specificities that differentiate cinema, television and on-demand services, unlike what happened in the analogue era.

c) The legislative and regulatory reforms issued at European and national levels: by changing the public funding model, they had a profound impact on the operations of audiovisual companies. Reference is here particularly to:

i) at the European Union level, the 2018 revision² of the 2013 Audiovisual Media Services Directive (SMAV)³. It increases the programming and investment obligation quotas, already extended in 2013 to OTT platforms offering on-demand services.

ii) At the UE level again, the 2013 revision of “Cinema Communication”⁴. It updates the public funding constraints, already codified in the previous 2001 text. Among other measures, it encourages access to private resources for financing the works.

iii) At the national level, Law no. 220/2016 “Cinema and Audiovisual Discipline”. It reforms the public funding system in Italy in a radical way. Among the most significant interventions in terms of impact on the sector, we recall the extension to the “audiovisual content” of the effective scope of the new rules: in addition to films for the cinemas, it also includes narrative contents made for television and OTT platforms and some types of videogames⁵.

iv) The end-users consumption patterns are the ground on which all these processes fall. Over the decade there was an unresolved loss of balance between the revenues generated by the audiovisual works on the different exploitation platforms, which constitute the principal economic source of livelihood for the entire sector. Alongside the worsening of the progressive and constant crisis of the box office market, there is the crisis of the television market (loss of audience, then crisis of adver-

Digital Distribution, New York, New York University Press, 2019; A. Pasquale, “Netflix e oltre”, *Bianco e Nero: rivista quadrimestrale del Centro sperimentale di cinematografia*, 80, 594-595 (2019); F. Perretti, S. Basaglia, *Economia e management dei media*, Milan, Egea, 2018; M. Scaglioni, A. Sfondini, *La televisione. Modelli teorici e percorsi di analisi*, Rome, Carocci, 2017; B. Zambardino, *Dal possesso all'accesso. L'industria audiovisiva ai tempi dello streaming*, Rome, Edizioni Fondazione Ente dello Spettacolo, 2015.

² Directive 2018/1808/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 14 November 2018, “Amending Directive 2010/13/EU on the coordination of certain provisions laid down by law, regulation or administrative action in Member States concerning the provision of audiovisual media services (Audiovisual Media Services Directive) in view of changing market realities”.

³ Directive 2010/13/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 10 March 2010, “On the coordination of certain provisions laid down by law, regulation or administrative action in Member States concerning the provision of audiovisual media services (Audiovisual Media Services Directive)”.

⁴ “Communication from the Commission on State aid for films and other audiovisual works” (2013/C 332/01).

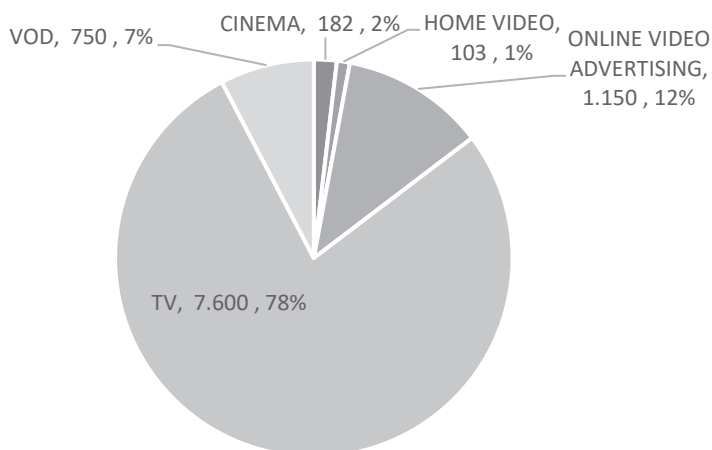
⁵ Here is the definition of “audiovisual work”, which defines the scope of application of the Law: “The recording of moving images, even if not accompanied by sounds, made on any medium and using any technique, including animation, with narrative content, documentary or videogame, as long as it is an intellectual work and protected by current legislation on copyright and intended for the public by the owner of the rights of use”, Law no. 220/2016, art. 2, paragraph 1, letter a).

tising, therefore reduction of investments), in favour of the increasing consumption of audiovisual works on OTT platforms.

2.2. The value of the Italian audiovisual market

The whole Italian audiovisual market has recorded quite stable revenues over the last decade, for a value of around 10 billion euros a year⁶. What varies over time are the relative values of the individual markets: in 2020, the year of the pandemic, there were remarkable discontinuities, which confirm a trend that has been emerging for some years.

Figure 1 - *Estimated revenues of the audiovisual market in Italy - 2020 (millions of €)*



Source: elaborations on eMedia, APA – 2021.

The television market is established as the most significant source of revenue in the audiovisual sector: if in the decade its collected share was close to 90% of the total value, in 2020 it stopped at 78%.

At the same time, emerging markets have increased their incidence: VOD services, which significantly entered the offer landscape only in 2016, reached a market share of 7% in 2020. Added to the value of online advertising, equal to another 12% in the same year, the revenues deriving from online businesses reach 20% of the total market.

Home video continues its steady decline caused by the entry of on-demand services: it settled for 1% of the total sector revenues in 2020.

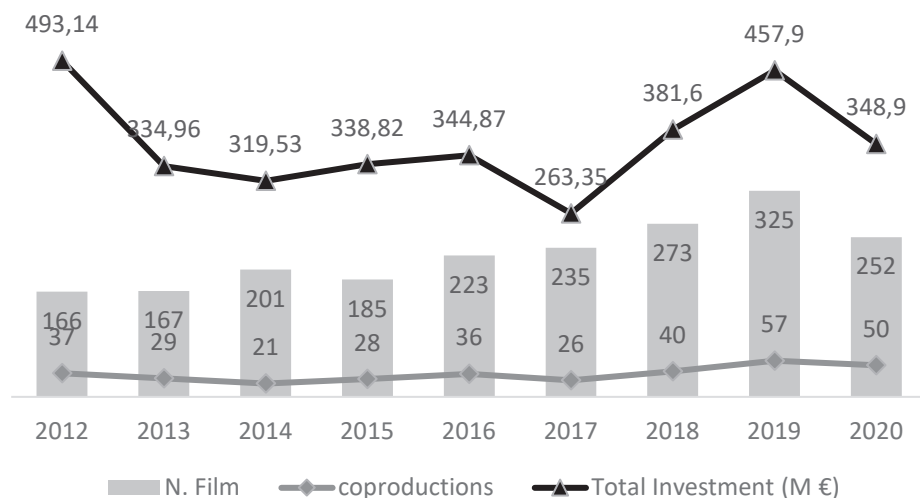
During the pandemic period, the cinema box-office segment saw its share collapsing to less than 2% of the total market, in the face of values around 6% in the decade. That is obviously due to the anti-Covid restrictions imposed by law.

⁶ Source: eMedia for APA, “National audiovisual production: economic values, trends and challenges of a rapidly developing sector 2021”, 2021, <https://www.apaonline.it>.

However, we observe an interesting phenomenon. In the cinema segment, the only value not decreased over the period is related to the production phase. Indeed, it shows an increasing trend over time and does not seem to have suffered significant repercussions due to the pandemic. The number of films produced (i.e. released on the market) maintains the growing average of the period, reaching 252 titles in 2020⁷. Even the total investment in production – equal to the sum of all produced films' costs – does not seem to have suffered the consequences of the crisis: it reached a value of close to 350 million euros in 2020 (Fig. 2).

Undoubtedly, the real effects of the crisis on the production sector will be evident in the next few years, considering the technical period for carrying out the works. However, it would not be surprising to record a growth trend in the next future, considering what aforesaid. Market developments lead to the increasingly consistent growth in the demand for content, even if the dynamics and balances within the sector, and specifically the power relationships between the individual consumption platforms, are undergoing a profound revision.

Figure 2 - Number of films produced and production value in Italy 2012-2021



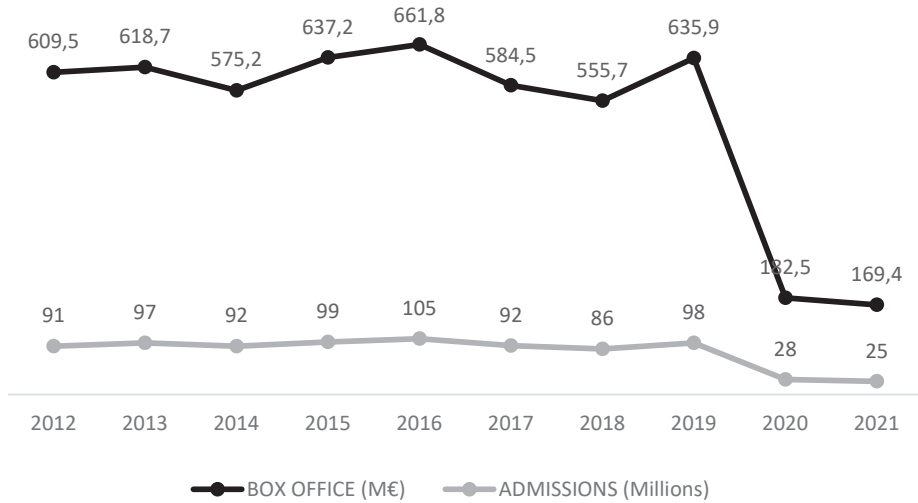
Source: elaborations on Ministry of Culture-DGCA.

2.3. Consumption patterns of audiovisual works

Analyzing the consumption trends, the box office recorded a negative record: fewer than 30 million admissions to the cinema during the pandemic, after maintaining a constant average of about 90 million annual sold tickets for many years (Fig. 3). The circumstances mentioned above aggravated this fall.

⁷ Source: Ministry of Culture - DGCA, "Tutti i numeri del cinema italiano", 2012-2022, <https://www.beniculturali.it>.

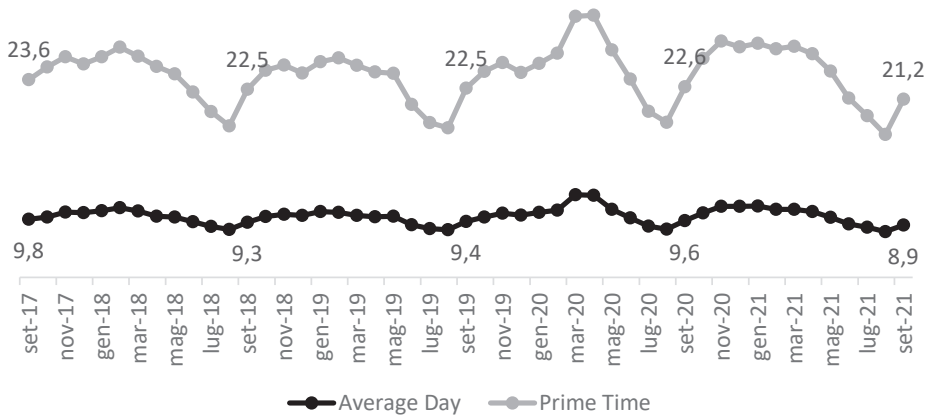
Figure 3 - Theatrical market –box office – Italy, 2012-2021



Source: elaborations on Cinetel.

The free and pay television segment sees a slight but worrying decline in its presence on the media agenda of the Italian people. During the pandemic months, audience figures show an average loss of 1 million viewers compared to previous years⁸ (Fig. 4).

Figure 4 - TV (DVB-T and SAT) Overall ratings of national broadcasters 2017-2021 (Millions of viewers)

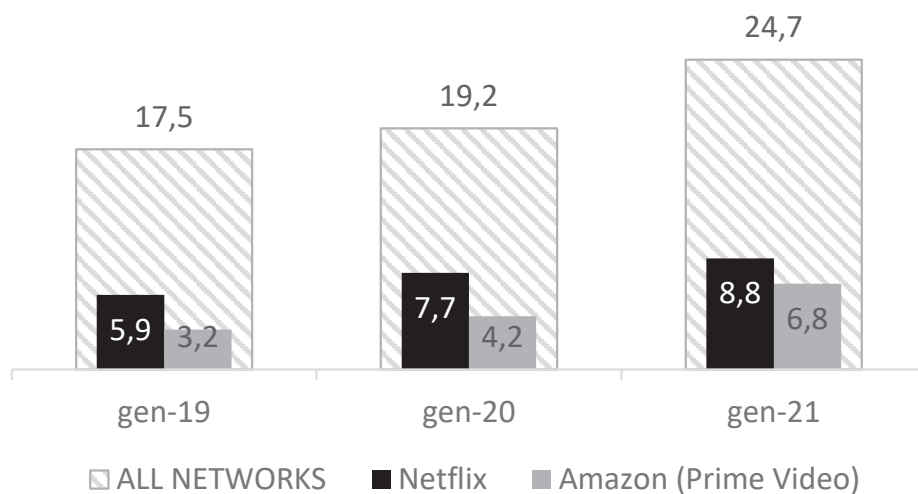


Source: elaborations on AGCom.

⁸ AGCom, “Communications Markets Monitoring System”, 4 (2021): 13.

The crisis in the traditional cinema and television markets is counterbalanced by the rapid rise of the on-demand offer by OTT platforms. According to AGCom data, the unique users in 2021 were around 25 million people, up nearly 50% from the 17.5 million recorded two years earlier. The average time spent on the single service was, in 2021, over 3 hours per day (195 minutes): this data is quite significant and shows that these platforms are definitely at the top of the audiovisual consumer agenda in Italy. Netflix and Amazon Prime are the two dominant operators in this segment, garnering two-thirds of on-demand service users⁹ (Fig. 5).

Figure 5 - *Number of unique users of VOD platforms Jan 2019 vs Jan 2020 vs Jan 2021, Italy*



Source: elaborations on AGCom.

3. EFFECTS OF THE PANDEMIC ON THE AUDIOVISUAL MARKET

3.1. *How the global audiovisual market is changing*

In this context so stressed on all sides, even before the pandemic the entire audiovisual sector was wondering about a reconfiguration of the industrial models it is based on, and a revaluation – or rebalancing – of its economic flows.

The Italian audiovisual sector, and more generally the European one, is essentially based, from the phase of development of ideas to commercialization, essentially on the enhancement of the rights of economic exploitation of the works. A market that tends to be conceived on an increasingly global scale, on the one hand, and which, on the other hand, tends to flatten itself onto an increasingly reduced number of platforms, crushing traditional markets such as theatrical, home video and televisions (pay o free) in favour of models essentially based on the SVOD offered by OTT platforms, is intended to re-

⁹ *Ibid.*: 23.

duce the moment when its value is essentially generated: the marketing of rights, segmented by territories, distribution platforms, limited concession periods rights of use.

As a result of the above, at the end of 2020, the market saw a further polarization in favour of a few international giants – more and more integrated. The acquisition of the 20th Century Fox group, including television channels and studios, by the Disney group in 2019, and the start of the ongoing negotiations for the acquisition of MGM, another of the historic Hollywood studios, by Amazon are just a few examples.

In this kind of scenario, the typically European model of a market set up around the figure of the independent producer and based on the unpacking of rights and their enhancement enters an epochal existential crisis.

Just when the audiovisual industry became aware of the new context and began to question itself about which survival strategies to adopt, the pandemic entered. This could only speed up processes already started, obviously beginning from the audiovisual's consumption models by part of the audience. The various lockdowns have substantially contributed to flattening the use of content through home devices, clearly favouring the business of OTT platforms and on-demand services, to the detriment of the cinema and other traditional markets. For example, this event has finally celebrated the end of the close identification between the film content and its theatrical release. This step is not banal from the point of view of the market. Until that moment, it had defined the selling price to the platforms following the theatrical box-office receipts obtained by the film. The fall of this constraint has also generated the need to correct the finance access procedures provided by the law¹⁰.

However, the pandemic has also brought new opportunities for the Italian and European audiovisual industry, alongside these and other difficulties. In addition to the influx of massive public money, merged under the PNRR¹¹ and the various funds allocated for the emergency, it has opened new issues and new horizons, activating fertile scenarios to develop the sector.

Indeed, the audiovisual has always absorbed and reflected the most important issues that involve public opinion, feeding and interacting in the social debate on an increasingly global scale. Among the most significant issues in which the audiovisual sector has been involved in recent years, both in terms of content and industrial practices, are those relating to gender equality, racial equality, immigration, rights of people with disabilities, eco-sustainability.

In the post-pandemic reflection, the issue especially imposed at the top of social and political priorities is that of protecting the environment.

¹⁰ D.M. n. 531 of 29 November 2018 “Amendments to the Ministerial Decree July 14, 2017, identifying the cases of exclusion of audiovisual works from the benefits provided for by Law no. 220 of November 14, 2016, as well as the parameters and requirements for defining the cinematographic destination of audiovisual works”, art. 1, paragraph 2, lett. b). The text provides for a mandatory 105-day window for the first exploitation of cinematographic works, for the purpose of accessing the legal benefits. This is a measure, in all probability provisional, that protects the “theatrical” window: this intervention constitutes a novelty in the Italian legislation, which until then had chosen not to regulate the windows system, leaving its management and self-regulation to the market.

¹¹ The National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR) is the document drawn up by the Italian government to manage investments aimed at the recovery of the economy after the Covid-19 pandemic. The total planned investments are 222.1 billion euros, of which: 191.5 billion, financed through the Recovery and Resilience Facility envisaged by Next Generation EU (see paragraph 5); 30.6 billion deriving from a national complementary fund, financed through the multi-year budget variance approved by the Council of Ministers on 15 April 2021.

3.2. *The audiovisual and the environment*

Environmental sustainability is currently at the heart of European, Italian and international public policy. The investments aimed at safeguarding the environment collect a large part of the interventions envisaged by the European programming for the seven years just started 2021-2027, as subsequently supplemented by the resources of the Next Generation EU fund.

Since their birth, cinema and audiovisual have been fundamental tools for building individual and collective awareness. If the rapid evolution that is involving the sector, driven by the development of technology and the consequent transformation of consumption models, puts the sector in crisis from the point of view of its industrial structure, on the other side it further strengthens the social and cultural role that the images play in the contemporary world. For the penetration and persuasion power it is characterized by, the audiovisual tool is an ideal vehicle for new contents and urgent values towards which to sensitize a global audience. Among these, the issue of adopting practices and eco-sustainable policies is one of the most relevant.

The audiovisual sector is also hybrid: if, on the one hand, it plays a fundamental role in the composition of the cultural map of individuals, on the other hand, it is also an industry with a structure that responds to the laws of economics and business and generates – no less than other industries – waste, energy left-over and pollution.

Therefore, the audiovisual industry is the cultural industry for excellence. Precisely in this dual role, it has to question the environmental sustainability issues, as and maybe more than other sectors.

Indeed, the audiovisual industry has implemented dissemination and awareness-raising activity for three decades, thanks to some festivals and sector events, contributing to the promotion of films with an environmental theme. However, the revision of its processes in terms of eco-sustainability is a more recent and less known commitment. We dedicate the following analysis to this second aspect.

4. GREEN AUDIOVISUAL: PRE-PANDEMIC POLICIES

4.1. *First-generation green protocols*

The attention to the environment by the film industry was born at the end of the last century in the United States. Since then, Hollywood Studios have embraced the green policy, thanks to a joint program shared by the associations of film producers (MPAA¹² and PGA¹³) and television producers (AMPTP)¹⁴. That has brought to the recent publication of the “Green Production Guide”¹⁵, a guide to the implementation of sustainable procedures and attitudes in audiovisual production activities.

In the European audiovisual industry, sensitivity to eco-sustainability issues has

¹² MPAA - Motion Picture Association of America is the association of six American film studios: Walt Disney, Sony, Paramount Pictures, Netflix, Universal Studios and Warner Bros; <https://www.motionpictures.org>.

¹³ PGA - Producers Guild of America is one of the most important American independent producers associations, active in the film, television and digital media sectors; <https://www.producersguild.org>

¹⁴ AMPTP - Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers è la più importante associazione di produttori televisivi americani; <https://www.amtp.org>.

¹⁵ Toolkit “Green Production Guide”, 2021, <https://www.greenproductionguide.com/tools/>.

been delayed by a few decades. The first thought on the issues of eco-sustainability applied to production processes has been developed precisely in Italy, around 2010-2011, thanks to the view of Carlo Cresto Dina, producer and CEO of Tempesta Film¹⁶ company. That materialized in the first protocols drafting. Inspired by the American model, it was intended for producers and contained the essential instructions to be adopted during the film shooting, aiming to minimize excessive resources and waste¹⁷.

But these were still early initiatives, which had a slightly limited diffusion, though increasing over time. “Ecomuvi protocol”, the most advanced of this generation of enterprises, was implemented by less than 10% of Italian film and audiovisuals productions in 2020¹⁸.

The reasons for the limited diffusion of this tool can essentially be found back to the difficulty in adapting the film shooting processes by introducing innovative practices. Even if they can guarantee advantages and economic savings, they imply the activation of processes of change in work practices that are hard to consolidate among the operators.

According to the widespread opinion among operators, the stimulus to speed up the integration of a new mentality in the work processes must come from public interventions or dedicated incentives, to ensure their concrete effectiveness on a large scale. Instead, the first-generation protocols remain the result of private initiatives so far. Furthermore, they base on the optimistic assumption that the industry is able to self-regulate only by sharing collective interest beliefs.

4.2. *Second-generation green protocols*

Parallel to this private initiative, and probably stimulated by it, starting from 2013, also public authorities competent in the audiovisual field have begun to deal with the matter in a structured way. Not by chance, the first public authorities that demonstrate sensitive to the issue of ecological sustainability in the audiovisual sector were the Film Commission of Sardinia¹⁹ and the Film Commission of Trentino²⁰. They are active respectively in a Region and an Autonomous Province which, for different reasons, have structurally and culturally a natural care for green themes.

In particular, in 2014, the Trentino Film Commission embarked on a structured path aimed at promoting the values and culture of ecological sustainability applied to the audiovisual sector. The complex and labouring path started by this institution immediately had a double objective:

a) encouraging the adoption of sustainable practices by producers of audiovisuals who shoot their works in the area, through incentive devices included in the regional Film Fund which for support to shooting activities: the “Trentino Film Fund”²¹.

b) Developing a univocal and shared certification system for green procedures in

¹⁶ <https://www.tempestafilm.it>. Toolkit “Ecomuvi”, <https://www.ecomuvi.eu>.

¹⁷ F. D’Urso, S. Finazzi, I. Giannattasio, F. Medolago Albani, “Green Movie: quando il set diventa eco-sostenibile”, *8 e mezzo*, 20 (2015): 52-57.

¹⁸ Toolkit “Ecomuvi”, <https://www.ecomuvi.eu>.

¹⁹ Fondazione Sardegna Film Commission, <https://www.sardegnafilmcommission.it>.

²⁰ Trentino Film Commission, <https://www.trentinofilmcommission.it/it/>.

²¹ Regional audiovisual fund of the Autonomous Province of Trento, managed in collaboration with the Trentino Film Commission. <https://www.trentinofilmcommission.it/it/film-fund/>.

collaboration with the public authorities competent in environmental matters (specifically APPA, the Provincial Agency for the Protection of the Environment²²) to make the measure objective and applicable in a balanced and uniform way, therefore indisputable.

Considering these objectives and the need to guarantee institutional and univocal recognition of the eco-sustainable practices implemented by the production industry, in 2017, Trentino launched the “T-Green Protocol”, contemplated by the Trentino Film Fund for the selection of projects to be financed. That is the first regional fund in Europe that rewards and certifies film and audiovisual productions that work with respect for the environment.

This initiative quickly attracted the attention of the other Italian Regions and, above all, of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities and Tourism (now the Ministry of Culture): they were interested in adopting measures aimed at promoting eco-sustainable practices in the industry on a national scale.

The difficulties relating to the extension of the good practice started in Trentino have concerned and still concern the fragmentation of competencies both in terms of audiovisual and environmental matters, since these are matters on the border between “exclusive competence” of the State and “concurrent competence” between State and Regions²³. Specifically, the crucial issue lies in the difficulty in identifying unique environmental certification methods for the whole national territory, considering social, cultural and economic – as well as institutional – diversity among the various regions that compose the country.

The first relevant result of the complex coordination work between institutions led to the birth of “Green Film”²⁴, in 2019. It is a brand certified by APPA: it guarantees compliance with the essential parameters of ecological sustainability of audiovisual productions, applicable and usable throughout the whole country. If the producer adopts a list of practices foreseen by a specific toolkit, he obtains the certified mark. The aim is to optimize the activities in all segments of the production process: from energy consumption to the use of transport, the choice of materials and supplies, the waste management, as well as the commitment to communicate the values of sustainability to the public through the powerful medium of audiovisuals.

After verifying compliance with the actions in the various stages of production, the Trentino APPA agency issues the Green Film brand. The Trentino Film Fund, followed by other regional funds, guarantees bonuses or additional funds to the productions that have obtained the label²⁵.

²² APPA - Provincial Agency for the Protection of the Environment of the Autonomous Province of Trento, <http://www.appa.provincia.tn.it>.

²³ Costituzione Italiana, Titolo V, artt. 117-118.

²⁴ “Green Film: Rating System for Sustainable Film Production”, <https://www.green.film/it/>.

²⁵ Since 2017, Trentino has supported 16 films that have applied the green protocols that have occurred over time, obtaining certification and therefore also an economic incentive within the Trentino Film Fund. Among these: “Il divin codino”, Fabula Pictures production, 2020; “Let’s Stay Friends”, Minerva Pictures production, 2019; “The Pantani Case”, Mr. Arkadin Film production, 2018; “Ride”, Lucky Red production, 2017.

Green Film Protocol and Trentino Film Fund

The Green Film specification provides a list of good practices that cover all production activities on the set and in the offices. They concern for example:

- the use of energy from renewable sources to power the sets,
- optimization of travel to accommodation,
- the use of plastic-free materials for procurement,
- the reuse of stage clothes,
- the careful collection of waste
- the communication of these sustainability choices.

The companies that decide to shoot in Trentino and to adopt the Green Film regulations are rewarded with a financial contribution after verification of compliance with the actions. Verification is entrusted to a guarantor body which may be the Trento APPA.

5. GREEN POST-PANDEMIC POLICIES

5.1. *Third-generation green protocols*

In May 2021, the Green Film brand was recognized officially by the Italian Film Commissions, the association that brings together all the Italian regional Film Commissions. Currently, three regional funds are adhering to the initiative: those disbursed by Emilia-Romagna, Trentino and Veneto. They provide for specific bonuses to award the works that have obtained certification. Three other Regions have declared their willingness to include the green criterion in the calls for their funds, starting from 2022.

Even two national funds, specifically the Selective Fund²⁶ and the Production Tax Credit²⁷, provide bonuses for the productions that self-declare to respect the green protocols. However, a greater and more precise systematization of the regulation on the subject at a national level is currently in progress. The impracticality for the State to use Green Film as a certification mark essentially lies in the regional nature of the certifying authority. In its place, national recognition is needed.

A fundamental step, which will constitute a watershed in the evolution of this matter, will be the recognition of certification at a national level by ISPRA²⁸, the authority responsible for issuing certifications in terms of sustainability in all kinds of industries. Negotiations and dialogues are underway between ISPRA and the Ministry of Culture²⁹ on this topic. Currently, work is underway on the definition of common parameters (CAM - *Criteri Ambientali Minimi*) to define a national brand. It has to be considered that, due to its particular nature, the audiovisual sector requires an anomalous effort by

²⁶ Law n. 220/2016 “Disciplina del cinema e dell’audiovisivo”, art. 26. <https://cinema.cultura.gov.it/normativa/normativa-statale/>.

²⁷ Law n. 220/2016, artt. 15-22.

²⁸ ISPRA - Higher Institute for Environmental Protection and Research, established by law 133/2008, is a public research body subject to the supervision of the Ministry of Ecological Transition.

²⁹ Interview with Luca Ferrario (CEO Trentino Film Commission) and Bruno Zambardino (Head of European Affairs DGCA - Ministry of Culture).

the certifying body. The question is identifying a trademark that has an intermediate nature between the two macro-typologies of trademarks traditionally issued, according to what is already foreseen by EU regulations:

- “Ecolabel”, product certification issued to products,
- “Emas”, process certification issued to companies.

The audiovisual sector ranks transversally between the two types.

The creation of a unique environmental sustainability certification, issued by ISPRA and applicable throughout the whole country, is therefore expected within 2022. This certification can be used by the Ministry of Culture and the Regions in a homogeneous and coordinated way, to promote the culture of eco-sustainability through concrete incentives, including economic and fiscal ones, to recipients of public aid who obtain the certified mark.

The pandemic and its effects have had a catalytic role in this process of institutionalization of green protocols at the national level. The phase of profound review of industrial practices and policies, necessary in a moment of objective crisis in the sector, created the conditions for implementing the new regulation in a rather rapid time. The aim was to support the sector and to do so through tools that respond to the new goals set by community policy: eco-sustainability is one of the most significant tools for this purpose.

For now, no new funding is envisaged for productions that adopt green protocols, but only additional rewards within the scope of existing funding. The PNRR has made it possible to access additional resources for many industrial sectors, including the audiovisual sector. Much of these resources have not yet been allocated, but programming is underway. As regards the audiovisual sector, part of the UE resources has been invested to manage the economic crisis during the pandemic. In the future, it is hoped that a planned allocation of resources for the sector will provide further support to green practices at all stages of the supply chain.

5.2. *Green beyond production*

Until now, most of the attention on eco-sustainability certification has focused on the strict production phase. However, other segments of the audiovisual supply chain are also activating similarly: there are significant initiatives in the “promotion” segment (festivals and film awards) and the exhibitors’ one.

In the promotion area, we recall the historical experience of some thematic festivals, among which the Cinemambiente Film Festival is the best known: for over two decades, it has been dedicating its programming to environmental protection issues. Alongside these historical events, essentially centred on the green nature of programmed content, another phenomenon has recently developed: the growing interest in aspects relating to the codification of sustainable work procedures in the context of activities relating organization of events. Along the lines of the Green Film Protocol dedicated to the production, in 2021, AFIC³⁰, the Association of Italian Film Festivals, started working on

³⁰ AFIC - Association of Italian Film Festival was founded in 2003 as a hub for aggregating Italian film events that recognize the importance and value of being part of an information network. In 2021 AFIC promotes the Green Festival Project to develop guidelines to reduce the environmental impacts of events. <http://www.aficfestival.it>.

the codification of a “Green Protocol Festival”³¹, in collaboration with the Ministries of Culture and Ecological Transition and, of course, with ISPRA.

Green Protocol Festival

The Festival Green Protocol specification, developed by AFIC and still awaiting official recognition by the competent ministries, provides a list of best practices concerning all activities related to the organization and management of film festivals. They concern in particular:

- sustainable mobility,
- sustainable energy consumption,
 - printing materials,
 - recycling installations,
- waste reduction and management,
- food sustainability,
- production of gadgets,
- management of guests,
- social sustainability and Environmental culture.

At the time of writing, in the exhibitors’ area there are no initiatives shared by the entire category. However, the individual experience of some cinema exhibitors disseminated throughout Italy is noteworthy. In recent years, they have been working on the codification of good practices relating to the reduction of polluting emissions and electricity consumption. Among these, the most virtuous initiative is the Cinema Odeon: it is a historic cinema located in the city centre of Florence, which in 2018 became the first Italian “eco-sustainable cinema”, managing to eliminate the CO₂ emissions resulting from its typical activity. This cinema also promotes environmental thematic programming, aiming to raise awareness among its public on these topics.

On these issues Italy was a pioneer in Europe, placing itself as the first experience in the audiovisual green certification field. Even the countries traditionally known for a stronger and more consolidated culture of eco-sustainability are starting to follow the path traced by Italy.

Sensitivity to the issue is also spreading among European institutions. In particular, in recent months, the Creative Europe Program - MEDIA Sub-program³², promoted by the EU, and Eurimages Program³³, promoted by the Council of Europe, are creating transnational working groups, aimed at identifying the procedures necessary for the application of a green protocol shared in all Europe, to be taken into consideration when assigning economic and financial support.

This interest of European institutions in the environment is part of the broader reflection inspiring the guidelines of the new 2021-2027 programming, which – as regards the audiovisual sector – is embodied in the MEDIA sub-program of the Creative Europe Program. Precisely developed in the pandemic period, the new program broadly accommodates the issues that emerged during the period, integrating with the strategic objectives established by the UE Commission at a more general level. For the period 2021-2027, the budget of Creative Europe has increased by 58% compared to the previous 2014-2020

³¹ Interview with Laura Zumiani, member of AFIC board.

³² Institutional website: http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/index_en.htm.

³³ Institutional website: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/Eurimages/>.

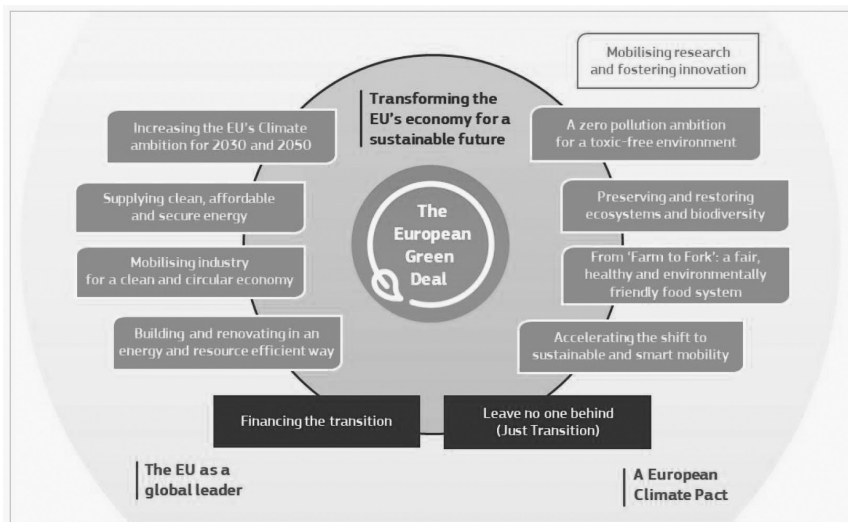
program and amounts to 2.2 billion euros for the seven years period just begun. Among the three founding principles of the restructuring of MEDIA Sub-program – the most relevant EU direct intervention to the audiovisual sector, eco-sustainability appears, alongside support for cooperation and the incentive for technological innovation.

6. THE EUROPEAN STRATEGY FOR AN ECO-SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY

6.1. *Green Deal and Next Generation EU*

The European Union had codified the “Green Deal” in 2019 (Fig. 6). That is a strategy of impressive dimensions, both in terms of investments and policies, aimed at accompanying the Union in the transition to an eco-sustainable society. The ultimate goal is to help limit the increase in global warming, which, according to the estimates of the IPCC - Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change of the UN, must remain within 1.5° C compared to the pre-industrial era, so as not to cause irreversible damage to the planet and humanity. The Green Deal is geared toward transforming the European Union into a modern, resource-efficient and competitive economy, ensuring that, in 2050, greenhouse gas emissions will be no longer generated, and that economic growth will be decoupled from the use of resources. In addition to the resources originally allocated under the EU seven-year budget (2021-27), in 2020 a third of the investments envisaged by the “Next Generation EU”³⁴ post-pandemic recovery plan have been added to the Green Deal budget.

Figure 6 - *The European Green Deal*



Source: COM(2019)640 final, “The European Green Deal”.

³⁴ “Next Generation EU” (NGEU) is a European Union fund worth 750 billion euros, for the three-year period 2021-2023, approved in July 2020 by the European Council in order to support the Member States affected by the Covid-19. It integrates the resources foreseen by the EU budget 2021-2027, bringing the total value of the EU budget to 1,824 billion euros.

Environmental policies, therefore, crosses with the European economic policy activated in the post-pandemic era and aimed at rebuilding a thriving economy in Europe. The intersection and collaboration between the environment and the economy are two of the most interesting phenomena of the contemporary era, at least from a public strategy point of view.

6.2. *Conclusions: audiovisual and green in the near future's policies*

The next few years will be crucial for implementing procedures promoting environmental sustainability within all sectors of the economy, including the audiovisual industry. Indeed, it is a candidate to represent a model for other sectors. All territorial levels – European Union, States, Regions – are involved in the governance of this epochal transition.

Awareness of eco-sustainability issues will be increasingly at the centre of public policies for the audiovisual sector in the coming years: this is not a coincidence. Audiovisual industry, being a polluting industry – potentially improvable from this point of view, is traditionally a powerful tool for disseminating values and sensitivity on crucial issues for international politics and civil coexistence. Therefore, it is a fundamental vehicle for raising public awareness on urgent and general interest issues, such as protecting the environment.

The efforts to implement green procedures in the manufacturing processes along the entire audiovisual supply chain are totally coherent within the priorities of EU and international policy, as developed also considering the pandemic effects. The analysis of the Italian experience in this regard takes on a particularly significant interest, currently representing Italy as the reference point for interventions on the subject by other European countries and by the Union itself.

In conclusion, environmental sustainability is one of the pillars of European policy in the coming years, aimed at the economic and social reconstruction of the post-pandemic era. In this scenario, a detailed understanding of the processes that will lead to the stabilization of public policies sustaining the green transition of the audiovisual industry is necessary to understand the new business and market models, more and more global, of the near future. Italy is a pioneer in this process. The transition is still in the process of planning and running in, but it will be essential to monitor its developments and results from now on.