

Sarajevo UNESCO City of Film UCCN Membership Monitoring Report 2019 - 2023



GLOBAL
PRODUCTION
AWARDS 2023

PRESENTED BY
SCREEN

Cannes Film Festival 2023

CITY OF FILM
SARAJEVO CITY OF FILM,
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

OBALA ART CENTAR

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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Sarajevo is the capital city of Bosnia and Herzegovina, situated in Southeast Europe at the crossroads between East and West. As a cultural and creative center, Sarajevo is home to international film festivals, film archives, film schools and major production companies. With its beautiful nature and turbulent history visible in diverse architecture, Sarajevo is an attractive filming location where 90% of national production takes place. The 30% cash rebate for production costs in the Sarajevo Canton is a major factor in attracting domestic and international film and TV production, making Sarajevo more visible on global screens.

Sarajevo was designated as a UNESCO City of Film in 2019. It was the first city in Bosnia and Herzegovina to join the UNESCO Creative Cities Network.

Sarajevo UNESCO City of Film focuses on three main objectives:

- create new employment and skills development opportunities for both film professionals and young talent by expanding film and TV production in the city and the region,
- support film festivals, cinemas and film-related events to improve access to diverse film content all year round and enhance participation in film culture for all citizens and visitors,
- collaborate with cities of film and other creative cities in the network to share knowledge and best practices as well as to participate in international creative projects and exchanges.

Only several months after Sarajevo's designation in 2019, the Covid-19 pandemic outbreak disrupted the implementation of the Sarajevo UNESCO City of Film's inaugural 2019-2023 Action Plan. Due to the restrictions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021, Sarajevo UNESCO City of Film mainly focused on local and international online activities, including online and/or hybrid editions of film festivals and film markets as well as numerous online and/or hybrid panels and conferences with other UNESCO creative cities.

With the main objective to boost the local film industry, Sarajevo UNESCO City of Film brought together and engaged key decision-makers in the Sarajevo Canton to introduce a 30% cash rebate production incentive for film and TV production as

well as to allocate additional funds for domestic film and TV series production. This initiative alone has resulted in a 400% increase in local production, compared to the pre-pandemic averages, with nearly 100 domestic and international productions in Sarajevo since 2020.

Since the end of the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions, Sarajevo's international film festivals have successfully resumed in-person editions and have safely returned audiences to festival venues and cinemas, including two new multiplex cinemas, with 16 new screens in Sarajevo. Numerous initiatives and projects have been implemented focusing on the local and regional film industry, film heritage preservation, environmental protection, cinema-going, film education and merging film with other creative industries. The film sector has set out to act ecologically in line with the City of Sarajevo's goal to achieve carbon neutral status by 2030. Internationally, Sarajevo representatives visited other UNESCO Cities of Film and participated in numerous initiatives with other cities. Sarajevo UNESCO City of Film representatives attended major international film festivals and film markets to promote Sarajevo as an attractive filming location and the latest films and TV series produced in Sarajevo.

In the next four years, Sarajevo will remain committed to the mission of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network and the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The new 2023-2027 Action Plan will drive sustainable urban development through local and international initiatives focusing on enhancing the local film industry, promoting cultural engagement, and fostering international collaboration.

2 GENERAL INFORMATION

NAME OF THE CITY

Sarajevo

COUNTRY

Bosnia and Herzegovina

CREATIVE FIELD

Film

DATE OF DESIGNATION

October 2019

DATE OF SUBMISSION OF THE CURRENT REPORT

November 2023

ENTITY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE REPORT

Obala Art Centar

PREVIOUS REPORTS SUBMITTED AND DATES

N/A

FOCAL POINTS OF CONTACT

Ms. Ines Radić

Sarajevo UNESCO City of Film Project Manager

ines@sarajevocityoffilm.ba

+387 63 960 017

Sarajevo City Administration

Ms. Nermina Suljević

Assistant Mayor/Head of Department for Sustainable Development

nermina.suljevic@sarajevo.ba

+387 61 431 458

Lejla Bešliagić

Expert Associate in Department for Sustainable Development

lejla.beslagic@sarajevo.ba

+387 61 512 535



3 CONTRIBUTION TO THE PROGRAMME'S GLOBAL MANAGEMENT

Number of UCCN Annual Conferences attended in the last four years

Sarajevo has not yet attended any UCCN Annual Conferences.

Sarajevo was not represented in Santos in 2022, the only annual conference that has been organized since Sarajevo's designation in 2019. Sarajevo representative joined the film cluster discussion in Santos remotely.

Hosting of a working or coordination meeting(s) addressed to one or more UCCN creative field representatives

Sarajevo would like to host a working or coordination meeting at some time in the future.

Participation in the evaluation of previous applications and/or previous Membership Monitoring Reports

2021

Sarajevo evaluated the applications of 2 cities

2022

Sarajevo evaluated the Membership Monitoring Reports of 3 cities

2023

Sarajevo evaluated the applications of 3 cities



MAJOR INITIATIVES IMPLEMENTED AT THE LOCAL AND CITY LEVEL TO ACHIEVE THE OBJECTIVES OF THE UCCN

4.1 Film and TV Production

4.1.1 Production Infrastructure and Capacity Audit

In 2019 and 2020, Sarajevo UNESCO City of Film engaged the creative industries consulting firm Olsberg SPI to conduct an independent audit of the existing production infrastructure and capacities in the Sarajevo Canton. The audit included interviews with production companies and local authorities as well as the detailed analysis of the existing facilities, equipment, services, locations, crews and key creative talent. The aim of the audit was to identify opportunities and challenges in the Sarajevo Canton for introducing a cash rebate

scheme, while taking into account the detailed research of experiences with incentive schemes across the world, especially in the countries of Southeast Europe. The Production Infrastructure and Capacity Audit made specific recommendations how to proceed and introduce the cash rebate scheme in the Sarajevo Canton.

4.1.2 30% Cash Rebate Scheme

In 2020, Sarajevo UNESCO City of Film designation played a key role in bringing together and engaging key decision makers



and local authorities to collaborate and introduce a new 30% cash rebate production incentive in the Sarajevo Canton. The initial step involved the Sarajevo Canton Assembly adopting essential amendments to the Law on Film and subsequently it was possible for the Sarajevo Canton Ministry of Culture and Sports to introduce a film and TV production incentive scheme for the first time in Sarajevo and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The new production incentive scheme, coupled with beautiful nature and landscape surrounding Sarajevo and diverse architecture within the city, has drawn nearly 100 domestic and international productions in Sarajevo since 2020. This has significantly increased job opportunities and mobility of film professionals and young talent in the local film industry.

4.1.3 BH Content Lab

Launched in 2021, the BH Telecom's BH Content Lab is a premier film and TV production label aimed at bolstering BH cinematography and showcasing local stories. The BH Content Lab invested over 9 million euros in 2021 and 2022 and is investing another 9 million euros in 2023 and 2024 in Sarajevo-based productions, for an output of producing 7 TV series and coproducing 5 to 10 films every year, including new drama series *The Hollow* by Oscar winning director Danis Tanović and *I Know Your Soul* by Oscar nominated director Jasmila Žbanić.

The Sarajevo Canton new 30% cash rebate scheme and the BH Content Lab investments have driven the level of local production to an all-times high, with an increase of over 400% compared to the pre-pandemic averages. Employment has boomed with many young professionals opting to stay in the city rather than move abroad.



4.1.4 City of Film Global Production Award

In 2023, Sarajevo was awarded the inaugural Screen International's Global Production Award in the City of Film category. The Global Production Award is awarded in recognition of exceptional work in support of film and TV production around the world. It is awarded to organizations that have set high standards in the film and TV industry, including studios, production companies, film locations and other activities in the film industry. The Obala Art Center, the Sarajevo UNESCO City of Film management unit, received the award at the Screen International's Awards held at the 2023 Cannes Film Festival.



4.2 Film Culture

4.2.1 International Film Festivals

Sarajevo's major annual international film festivals are the Sarajevo Film Festival, Sarajevo Youth Film Festival, Human Rights Film Festival and Al Jazeera Balkans Documentary Film Festival.

The Sarajevo Film Festival is a leading film festival in Southeast Europe, covering domestic, regional and international cinema. In 2023, the 29th edition of the Sarajevo Film Festival screened 235 films from 59 countries, recording 120,000 admissions. The festival accredited nearly 3,000 festival guests from the film and TV industry and 683 media representatives, sending a positive image of the Festival and Sarajevo around the world. The 15th edition of the Sarajevo Youth Film Festival screened 59 films and recorded 15,000 admissions in 2013, as the biggest youth film festival in Southeast Europe. The 6th edition of AJB Documentary Festival screened 24 documentary films from 19 countries and recorded 6,000 admissions. The 18th edition of Human Rights Film Festival screened 21 films and recorded 1,250 admissions in 2023.

4.2.2 Sarajevo UNESCO City of Film at the Sarajevo Film Festival

Sarajevo UNESCO City of Film has established a very good cooperation with the Sarajevo Film Festival and has used it as the main platform in Sarajevo to promote the UNESCO City of Film status.

At the 2022 Sarajevo Film Festival, Sarajevo Mayor Benjamina Karić hosted a reception to promote the UNESCO City of Film title before a large number of festival local and international guests, including diplomatic corps and UN representatives in Sarajevo. The Sarajevo Canton Prime Minister Edin Forto and Minister of Culture and Sports Samir Avdić hosted a reception to promote the 30% cash rebate scheme for filming in Sarajevo. After the reception the film *Illyricvm* by Simon Bogojević Narath premiered at the festival, as the first film that used the production incentive for filming on Mount Bjelašnica outside Sarajevo.

From 2020 to 2023, Sarajevo UNESCO City of Film in cooperation with primary schools and kindergartens gave free online access and/or tickets to children of Sarajevo aged 5 to 12 for



film screenings in the Children's Program and TeenArena of the Sarajevo Film Festival. It is estimated that nearly 600 children watched films through this cooperation.

4.2.3 Night of Cinemas

Launched in 2021, the Night of Cinemas is envisioned as a gift to Sarajevo's citizens and visitors to enjoy films for free for one night in all Sarajevo's cinemas. The Night of Cinemas aims to improve access to cinematic art as well as celebrate cinema-going and watching films together. The Night of Cinemas enriches cultural offer in Sarajevo during the holiday season, taking place on December 28, selected symbolically as the date of the first public screening organized by the Lumiere brothers in 1895 in Paris. All Sarajevo cinemas come together for the Night of Cinemas, offering a diverse repertoire that spans dozens of national and international films of various genres. Cinemas open their doors and invite audiences of all ages to enjoy free screenings from 5 p.m. to midnight. Every year, the Night of Cinemas attracts nearly 3,500 visitors to Sarajevo cinemas in one night, enhancing cinema culture and audience development in Sarajevo.

Sarajevo Cinemas

Sarajevo has seven active cinemas, including arthouse Meeting Point Cinema, new multiplexes Cineplexx and CineStar, Cinema Igman Ilidža, Novi Grad Cinema Free Valter Cinema and Archive of BiH. In 2021, the opening of 16 new screens in two multiplexes

CineStar and Cineplexx has driven the admissions to over 600,000 per year in 2021, 2022 and 2023, now averaging 2 admissions per year per capita, an increase of 100% compared to the 2019 numbers.

4.2.4 Film Heritage Preservation and Digitization

The Sarajevo Film Center is a public company with a mission to preserve the tradition and heritage of BH cinematography, managing the archive of 90 feature films and over 500 documentaries and short films.

In 2020, the Sarajevo Film Center launched the Free Valter Cinema, offering free screenings of the films from the 1951-1992 period, followed by educational and interactive discussions with film professionals. The BH Feature Films 1951-1992 catalogue is now available on the website www.fcs.ba.

In 2021, the Sarajevo Film Center launched a new laboratory for the restoration, protection and digitization of 35mm and 16mm films. In 2023, the restored 1972 classic film *Life of a Shock Force Worker* by Bahrudin Bata Čengić had a special pre-festival screening at the 29th Sarajevo Film Festival, before a large audience of 1,800 people. At the 80th Venice Film Festival, the film was screened as a nominee for Best Restored Film in the Venice Classics category.

In 2023, the Sarajevo Film Center has started cooperation with the Archive of Bosnia and Herzegovina to digitize the 1955 film *Hanka* by Slavko Vorkapić.



4.2.5 Promotion of BH Film Heritage

BH cinematography 1947-1992

In 2021, the Sarajevo Film Center set up the exhibition depicting BH cinematography from 1947 to 1992 at the History Museum of Bosnia in Herzegovina. The exhibition of photographs and film materials depicts the rich film heritage of Bosnia and Herzegovina from the beginning of organized film production in 1947 to the beginning of the Bosnian War in 1992. Today the exhibition is located at the Sarajevo Film Center – Jagomir Studio as one of the two main segments of the BH Film Museum.

Walter Defends Sarajevo Exhibition

Walter Defends Sarajevo is a permanent exhibition dedicated to the 1972 film Walter Defends Sarajevo by Hajrudin Šibe Krvavac. The exhibition is an attractive combination of wax figures, video and audio materials, scene reconstructions and historical documents. The film Walter Defends Sarajevo is a cult action film and one of the symbols of the city of Sarajevo. In 2022, the exhibition was permanently set up in the Old Bistrik Railway Station, which is a National Monument of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

25 Years of Sarajevo Film Festival Photography Exhibition

In 2021, on the occasion of the opening of the 27th Sarajevo Film Festival, a photography exhibition was set up with several thousand photographs that chronologically depict the history of the Sarajevo Film Festival from its launching in late 1995 to its 25th edition in 2019. The exhibition will remain open to all visitors of the Meeting Point Cinema until it becomes a permanent exhibition in the new Festival Center, which is planned to be constructed and opened in the coming years.

The First War Cinema Apollo Photography Exhibition

In 2023, the exhibition of photographs by Milomir Kovačević Strašni was set up on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the First War Cinema Apollo and the 29th edition of Sarajevo Film Festival. Milomir Kovacevic, a chronicler of life in besieged Sarajevo

during the 1992-1995 Bosnian War, used his photographs to preserve from oblivion film screenings and other cultural events that were staged in the basement of the Academy of Performing Arts from February 1993 to December 1995, which eventually gave rise in 1995 to the Sarajevo Film Festival as we know it today.

60 Years of Film Archive of Bosnia and Herzegovina

In June 2023, the Film Archive of Bosnia and Herzegovina celebrated the 60th anniversary, gathering a great number of film professionals, cultural workers and film lovers. Together they watched old documentary films and enjoyed the exhibition of BH film posters, photographs of BH film pioneers, videos of digitized monthly film magazines from the 1950s, filmmakers' awards and samples of old film cameras and equipment. The Film Archive protects and preserves film materials, including the collection that has been declared a National Monument by the Commission to Preserve National Monuments of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

4.2.6 Green Initiatives - Commitment to Sustainability

Film Festivals Contribute to the Sarajevo Net Zero Emission City

In 2022, Sarajevo was selected as one among the few cities outside the EU to join the EU mission "100 Net Zero Emission Cities", passionately committed to deliver 100 climate-neutral and smart cities by 2030. Film festivals in Sarajevo have keenly recognized and endorsed this initiative as a guiding principle for their future endeavors. The festivals have taken a proactive approach to promote awareness of environmental issues and inspire individual and societal change as well as to minimize its own impact on the environment.

The Sarajevo Film Festival has initiated the three-year program "Greening of the SFF" to make the festival more energy-efficient and reduce its use of resources. This has included introducing green procurement procedures, bicycles and electric or hybrid vehicles to

transport festival guests, efficient lighting in festival venues, distributing recycling bins at all festival locations and using recycled paper. The SFF has conducted a full greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory study in 2022.

With data-driven information, the SFF will make smart decisions and implement eco-measures that progressively reduce atmospheric emissions that will result in net-zero emissions for all its pop-up screening locations by 2025.

In 2021, as part of its commitment to sustainability, the AIB DOC Film Festival demonstrated its dedication to environmental responsibility by upcycling all promotional materials and banners. These materials were transformed into official festival bags and laptop bags, aligning with the broader efforts of festivals in Sarajevo to reduce waste and foster a more sustainable approach.

Films for Future

In 2023, with the aim of raising awareness of sustainable development and environmental protection, Sarajevo UNESCO City of Film organized a competition for young people titled Films for the Future. The topics for films were: What can young people do for a healthier and greener planet? How can I help preserve environment? How can I make positive changes in my environment? Young people from the whole Bosnia and Herzegovina joined this activity and made short films about how they can contribute to preserve nature. The best films were awarded and screened during the 29th Sarajevo Film Festival reaching wider audience.



4.2.7 Gender Equality

Sarajevo has emerged as a prominent force in the ongoing pursuit of a more gender-equal film industry, thanks to the commendable efforts of the Sarajevo Film Festival. Its commitment to gender equality is enshrined in its core missions, hosting initiatives such as the Audentia Award for Best Female Director by the Council of Europe in 2020, and the subsequent establishment of the Special Award for Promoting Gender Equality in 2021. These endeavors not only recognize the achievements of female directors but also actively contribute to reshaping the landscape of the film industry. This commitment to gender equality extends beyond competition strands, encompassing various programs and territories. In 2022, the Female Voices CineLink Award was introduced as part of CineLink Industry Days, further supporting and promoting female voices in the Southeast European film industry.

4.2.8 CineSchool

CineSchool program aims to enhance young people's engagement in film culture and foster film literacy while developing young people's critical thinking about film and love for film as well as showing that cinema-going can enrich their lives as it contributes to socialization, communication and dialogue. The program is organized throughout the year in collaboration with primary and secondary schools in the Sarajevo Canton. Film screenings and film lessons are organized in schools across Sarajevo or in the Meeting Point Cinema where students come to watch films together.

In 2022 and 2023, CineSchool screened the films *How I learned to fly* by Radivoje Andrić, *A Ballad* by Aida Begić and *Excursion* by Una Gunjak with nearly 900 students watching each film.



4.3 Creative Industries and Urban Regeneration

4.3.1 Festival in the Center

Launched in 2021, the Festival in the Center is a collaborative project of the Sarajevo Municipality Center, Sarajevo Film Festival and Sarajevo Canton Tourism Association. It takes place during the Sarajevo Film Festival and uses its great impact to link different creative industries in Radićeva Street and offer a rich cultural program for all citizens and visitors of Sarajevo.

For eight days, Radićeva Street becomes a pedestrian zone with designer showrooms, handicraft stalls, literary promotions and stage readings, art workshops, concerts, DJ sets, gastro offerings, majorette performances

and other creative activities. In the evenings, design students of the Academy of Fine Arts turn the street into the scene that evokes film magic and festival glamour by directing theatrical spotlights at passers-by to make them feel like “movie stars”.

The long-term objective of the Festival in the Center is to regenerate this part of the city and transform it into a creative district that will offer creative and cultural program throughout the year.



5 MAJOR INITIATIVES IMPLEMENTED THROUGH INTER-CITY AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION TO ACHIEVE THE OBJECTIVES OF THE UCCN

5.1 Collaboration with UNESCO Creative Cities

5.1.1 Promotion at the Berlinale

In February 2020, Sarajevo had the first international promotion of the Sarajevo UNESCO City of Film status at the 70th Berlinale, hosting a reception for numerous guests who were greeted by Sarajevo City Mayor Abdulah Skaka and Sarajevo Film Festival Director Mirsad Purivatra. In 2021 and 2022, Sarajevo was promoted on the online platform of the European Film Market, due to the Covid 19 pandemic. Sarajevo UNESCO City of Film and the Sarajevo Film Festival had a joint virtual profile where they promoted Sarajevo as a filming location, the latest films shot in Sarajevo and the latest news of the Association of Filmmakers of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Sarajevo Cinematography Foundation.

5.1.2 Visit to Potsdam UNESCO City of Film

In February 2020, Sarajevo UNESCO City of Film representatives visited Potsdam UNESCO City of Film. While visiting the Film Museum, Babelsberg Film Park and Film University they learned about the long history of film in Potsdam as well as about Potsdam's creative initiatives aimed at increasing the visibility of the Potsdam UNESCO City of Film status. Sarajevo and Potsdam representatives discussed possible future cooperation and exchange between the two film cities.

5.1.3 Cooperation with the Busan International Kids and Youth Film Festival

From 2020 to 2023, the children of Sarajevo participated in festival poster drawing contests of the Busan International Kids and

Youth Film Festival. Sarajevo UNESCO City of Film had a very successful cooperation with primary schools and kindergartens in Sarajevo, engaging nearly 1,200 children aged 5 to 12 to participate in this international initiative of Busan UNESCO City of Film. A drawing by an 11-year-old student from Sarajevo on the theme "Beep! Beep! Save the Earth!" was selected as the winner of the poster drawing contest in Busan in 2020.



5.1.4 Sarajevo Short Films at the Busan Intercity Film Festival

In 2020, Sarajevo participated at the 4th edition of the Busan Intercity Festival with five short films shot in Sarajevo: In Your Hands by Maša Šarović/Sharon Englehart, The Package by Dušan Kasalica/Teodora Ana Mihai, The Right One by Urška Đukić/Gabriel Tzafka, Spit by Neven Samardžić/Caroline Markowicz and The Sign by Eleonora Veninova/Yona Rozenkier. In 2021, at the 5th edition of the Busan Intercity Film Festival Sarajevo participated with the short film Big Leap by Zulfikar Filandra.

5.1.5 Participation at the Forum of UNESCO Film Cities in Bitola

In 2020, Sarajevo participated at the Second Forum of UNESCO Film Cities Forum in Bitola, which brought together local representatives of creative industries in North Macedonia and representatives of UNESCO Film Cities. Bradford, Busan, Łódź, Rome, Sarajevo and Terrassa joined the forum online and shared their experiences and challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2021, at the Third Forum of UNESCO Film Cities in Bitola the future of cultural and creative economies was discussed. Sarajevo UNESCO City of Film representative spoke about the positive trends in Sarajevo, primarily about the return of film festivals and audiences to Sarajevo cinemas and bringing together major local stakeholders to invest in making Sarajevo an attractive filming location.

5.1.6 Participation at Roma Cinedays

In December 2020, Sarajevo joined an online panel at the Cinedays to share an open conversation on challenges and opportunities of the audiovisual sector in the COVID-19 times and beyond with representatives of other UNESCO Cities of Film (Bradford, Busan, Mumbai, Rome and Terrassa). In October 2023, Sarajevo participated at the Cinedays in Rome, joining the panel that discussed Creative Urban Regeneration: Building a New Landscape for the Contemporary City.

5.1.7. Participation at the UNESCO Film Cities Education and Media Literacy Forum

In November 2020, UNESCO Cities of Film from around the world came together to deliver an online forum to discuss film education and media literacy. The forum members discussed film as an effective tool for engaging children and youth in education and the importance of media literacy and critical thinking in the digital world. Presentations were given by seven film cities, including Bradford, Busan, Łódź, Potsdam, Sarajevo, Valladolid and Terrassa.

5.1.8 Website citiesoffilm.org

Sarajevo UNESCO City of Film joined the initiative of Bristol UNESCO City of Film to launch a joint website that connects all cities in the world that have the UNESCO City of Film status within the UNESCO Creative Cities Network. The website www.citiesoffilm.org was launched in July 2020 with the aim of having closer cooperation among cities and easier exchange about activities in all cities.

5.1.9 Promotion at the Cannes Film Festival

In 2021, due to Covid-19 pandemic restrictions, Sarajevo was promoted at the virtual pavilion of Bosnia and Herzegovina at the online edition of the Cannes Film Market. In 2022 and 2023, Sarajevo was promoted in-person at the South-East Europe Pavilion, a joint pavilion of eight Southeast European countries (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Montenegro, Croatia, Cyprus, Macedonia, Slovenia and Serbia).

Sarajevo City Mayor Benjamina Karić attended the 2022 Cannes Film Festival where she met with Cannes City Mayor David Lisnard and promoted Sarajevo as a UNESCO City of Film. At the 2023 Cannes Film Festival Sarajevo City Mayor Benjamina Karić and Sarajevo Canton Minister of Culture and Sports Kenan Magoda promoted Sarajevo as an attractive filming location at the Cannes Film Market.

In 2022 and 2023, Cannes UNESCO City of Film hosted representatives of UNESCO Cities of Film (Bitola, Cluj-Napoca, Mumbai, Rome, Sarajevo and Valladolid) and showcased Cannes' projects and activities under the Cannes UNESCO City of Film designation.

5.1.10 Hosting Łódź, Gdynia, Potsdam and Valladolid UNESCO Cities of Film

In 2023, representatives of Łódź, Gdynia, Potsdam and Valladolid UNESCO Cities of Film visited Sarajevo for the first time. In addition to attending the 29th edition of Sarajevo Film Festival, both its film program and industry section, they met with Sarajevo

UNESCO City of Film focal points to discuss joint activities within the UCCN as well as visited the Sarajevo City Hall and major landmarks of Sarajevo.

5.1.11 Visit to Łódź UNESCO City of Film

In October 2023, Sarajevo UNESCO City of Film focal point visited Łódź on the occasion of the opening of the new National Center for Film Culture in Łódź. Representatives of seven UNESCO Cities of Film (Łódź, Galway, Gdynia, Potsdam, Sarajevo, Terrassa and Valladolid) visited film archives and film studios, attended the celebration of the 75th anniversary of the Łódź Film School as well as visited various other filming locations and institutions, including the Center for Comics and Interactive Narrative.

5.1.12 Participation at the Panel Exhibition in Yamagata

Sarajevo UNESCO City of Film was represented at the Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival 2023 in a special program of films made in or by filmmakers from UNESCO Creative Cities. Sarajevo was represented by the short film *Boja* by Anna Fernandez De Paco and at the panel exhibition which showcased the main characteristics of the UNESCO Creative Cities where the films were made.



5.2 Industry Days in Sarajevo

Sarajevo earns its international recognition for its offerings tailored to film professionals seeking to develop, produce, or discover films from Southeast Europe. Over the past four years, the Sarajevo Film Festival's CineLink Industry Days continued to play a pivotal role in shaping the co-production landscape. A total of 134 projects, spanning fiction features, drama series, and feature documentaries, in varying stages of production were presented. Annually, CineLink Industry Days attracted an average of around 1100 film professionals from 60 countries. Through strategic collaborations with international partners, the cumulative value of awards bestowed upon projects within the CineLink Industry Days reached EUR 551,500 in cash and in-kind services, covering diverse project stages from development to post-production. Additionally, the Sarajevo Film Festival continues its commitment to supporting emerging filmmakers and professionals, hosting over 300 participants from Southeast Europe at Talents Sarajevo and CineLink Producers' Hub, providing valuable training and networking opportunities.

While the Sarajevo Film Festival has excelled in fostering co-productions, the AJB DOC Film Festival and the Sarajevo Youth Film Festival have also made significant strides by expanding their programs to include industry activities. The AJB DOC Film Festival, since 2021, has provided an additional platform for presenting documentary projects, complementing its core business of showcasing documentary films. Meanwhile, the Sarajevo Youth Film Festival has demonstrated strategic evolution by creating a market for financing short films since 2023, providing essential support and promotion for the work of young filmmakers. Together, these initiatives underscore Sarajevo's commitment to fostering a vibrant and sustainable future for the film industry.



5.3 Sarajevo on Global Screens

The project Sarajevo City of Film, initiated by the Sarajevo Film Festival, is dedicated to supporting micro-budget films through cooperation of filmmakers in Sarajevo with colleagues from all over the world. The objective of the project is to put Sarajevo on global screens by shooting short films in Sarajevo and supporting the local film industry. Since 2007, more than 300 young directors, screenwriters, producers, actors, cinematographers, editors and composers from 20 different countries have shot their short films in Sarajevo.

In 2022, on the occasion of the Day of the City of Sarajevo (6th April), 33 short films were accessible online for free for one month at ondemand.kinomeefintpoint.ba, reaching 5, 856 views by audiences in Sarajevo and around the world. In 2023, the Day of the City of Sarajevo was celebrated with a marathon of the same short films screened at the Meeting Point Cinema.



Discover Sarajevo City of Film: Short Film by Film

LIBERATION IN 26 PICTURES by Ivan Ramljak and Marko Škobalj

THE TOURIST by Ariel Shaban

WAITING by Daniel Béres

SEE YOU IN SARAJEVO by Vanja Juranić

SARAJEVO SPRING by Nikolina Barić

BODILY FUNCTION by Dane Komljen

ROUTE-3 by Thanasis Neofotistos

THE TICKET COLLECTOR by Catalin Musat

FRIGIDANCE by Kelmend Karuni

MORNING PRAYERS by Konstantina Kotzmani and Katarina Stanković

SHOPPING by Alen Drljević

SCENES WITH WOMEN by Nikola Ljuca

EDINA by Nóra Lakos

FICUS by Andrey Volkashin

ROUNDAABOUT by Orsi Nagypal

ORANGE BLANKET by Matija Debeljuh

MUSEUM OF BROKEN RELATIONSHIPS by Iulia Rugina

ALENA'S JOURNEY by Karoly Ujj Meszaros

SOMETHING SWEET by Jelena Gavrilović

HOLIDAY AT THE SEASIDE by Cristina Groșan

BIG LEAP by Zulfikar Filandra

REVERSE by Georgis Grigorakis

WOMAN IN PURPLE by Igor Drljača

MY! MY! MY LITTLE ROOM! by Barbara Vekarić

SMART GIRLS by Hana Jušić and Sonja Tarokić

RAIN IN SARAJEVO by Paul Negoescu

PINK RIVER by Zacharias Mavroeidis

POSTHUMOUS by Cenk Erturk

THE SIGN by Eleonora Veninova and Yona Rozenkier

THE RIGHT ONE by Urška Djukić and Gabriel Tzafka

IN YOUR HANDS by Maša Šarović and Sharon Engelhart

SPIT by Neven Samardžić and Carolina Markowitz

THE PACKAGE by Dušan Kasalica and Teodora Ana Mihai

PROPOSED ACTION PLAN FOR THE FORTHCOMING MID-TERM PERIOD OF FOUR YEARS 2024-2027

The forthcoming Action Plan focuses on the primary objectives of Sarajevo UNESCO City of Film, with a focus on enhancing the local film industry, promoting cultural engagement, and fostering international collaboration.

6.1 Local Initiatives

6.1.1 Attracting International Productions, Building New Environmentally Sustainable Infrastructure and Developing Work Force of Tomorrow

- Strategically promote the Sarajevo Canton cash rebate scheme on a global scale to attract more international film productions to Sarajevo.
- Establish a comprehensive skills training program in collaboration with the Academy of Performing Arts of the University of Sarajevo and the Regional Film and TV Academy to develop local talent.
- Integrate training programs with international productions, ensuring local crew involvement as trainees.
- Initiate the construction of cutting-edge film studios on the Nahorevska Street lot owned by the Sarajevo Film Center, with key investments from the Government of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, BH Telecom and Sarajevo Film Center.
- Start a film-tech incubator to support startups working on innovative solutions for the film industry. Provide mentorship to entrepreneurs focusing on areas such as virtual production, post-production technologies, and distribution platforms.
- Introduce Green Filmmaking Certification for productions shooting in the city, aligning them with support schemes operated by the Sarajevo Canton Ministry of Culture and Sports.

6.1.2 Building a New Film Festival Center

- Launch a strategic project to construct a state-of-the-art near net-zero Festival Center to serve as the focal point for the film industry and other creative sectors, replacing

the Meeting Point Cinema.

- Design the new Festival Center to host the Meeting Point Cinema and Sarajevo Film Festival with three modern cinema halls and an open-air cinema on the rooftop, fostering the promotion of domestic, regional, and arthouse cinema.
- Collaborate with the Sarajevo Municipality of Center, Sarajevo Film Festival, and other partners and donors to implement this initiative, contributing to the revitalization of the Skenderija neighbourhood and the creation of a vibrant creative industries hub.
- Video reference at https://youtu.be/svjL9Tm_VkY

6.1.3 Urban Regeneration through Cinema in the City Center and Old Town

- Transform Franca Lehara Street, home to Cineplexx Sarajevo, into a focal point for urban regeneration linked to the creative city strategy.
- Place a permanent light and photo wallpapers installation commemorating the 30th anniversary of the Sarajevo Film Festival, showcasing key moments and influential filmmakers.
- Emulate successful initiatives from Radićeva Street, such as the Festival in the Center, by gradually pedestrianizing the street during festival days and weekends, fostering community engagement and cultural activities.
- Develop film tourism programs that leverage iconic film locations in Sarajevo, creating guided tours and experiences for film enthusiasts. This should include partnerships with local businesses to enhance the overall visitor experience.

6.2 International Initiatives

6.2.1 Collaboration with UNESCO Creative Cities in the Balkan Region

Sarajevo aims to forge collaborative ties with UNESCO Creative Cities in the Balkan region. The city will take the lead in organizing events where each participating city will showcase their creative endeavors before a broader audience in Sarajevo. This cross-cutting initiative will foster collaboration among cities in various creative fields, including Banja Luka UNESCO City of Music (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Bitola UNESCO City of Film (North Macedonia), Vranje UNESCO City of Music (Serbia), Novi Sad UNESCO City of Media Arts (Serbia), Varaždin UNESCO City of Music (Croatia), Cetinje UNESCO City of Design (Montenegro) and Ljubljana UNESCO City of Literature (Slovenia).

Additionally, Sarajevo will sustain international cooperation with other UNESCO Cities of Film within the Film Subnetwork and actively participate in initiatives led by other UNESCO Creative Cities within the UCCN.

6.2.2 Industry Days: Strengthening Collaborations through Coordination Mechanisms

Sarajevo UNESCO City of Film is committed to elevating Sarajevo as a central hub for film professionals in Southeast Europe, leveraging its three international film festivals - Sarajevo Film Festival, Sarajevo Youth Film Festival and AJB DOC Film Festival. With this in mind Sarajevo UNESCO City of Film will establish a permanent coordination committee of the city's film festivals.

Sarajevo UNESCO City of Film will deepen its engagement with industry professionals through initiatives such as CineLink Industry Days, an esteemed business platform within the Sarajevo Film Festival. This platform attracts European and global film professionals seeking talent, co-production opportunities, and insights into the region's business landscape. Through year-round training programs, it provides access to an extensive network and markets in

the European and international film and audio-visual industries, enhancing the capabilities of local and regional film and TV professionals. The OFF Pro Industry Days, embedded in the Sarajevo Youth Film Festival, acts as a nexus for young authors, offering a platform to showcase projects and collaborate with film professionals. Simultaneously, AJB DOC Industry Days support documentary filmmakers by connecting them with leading professionals from the regional and international documentary and TV industries, facilitating funding opportunities for documentary production.

6.2.3 Sarajevo on Global Screens: Showcasing Local Talent

Sarajevo is committed to sustaining the Sarajevo City of Film project initiated by the Sarajevo Film Festival in 2007. The project aims to project Sarajevo onto the global stage by producing short films in the city and supporting local film professionals. By fostering collaboration among Sarajevo filmmakers, the project engages directors, screenwriters, producers, actors, cinematographers, editors, composers, and other creatives from both the film and broader creative industries.

Sarajevo UNESCO City of Film will persist in promoting locally produced short films on both national and international platforms. Additionally, the city will extend invitations to young filmmakers from other UNESCO Cities of Film, encouraging them to join the project and create short films in Sarajevo, thereby fostering cross-cultural collaboration within the UCCN.

6.3 Estimated annual budget for implementing the proposed action plan

The City of Sarajevo allocates EUR 40,000 annually for Sarajevo UNESCO City of Film management unit to cover basic costs of staff, some local initiatives and participation

in international activates within the UCCN. Other local and international initiatives and projects in the proposed action plan will be accomplished with in-kind support and financial contributions and investments from local authorities, partners, sponsors and donors.

6.4 Plan for communication and awareness

Sarajevo UNESCO City of Film will use its official website and social media to disseminate information about its major

activities at local and international level as well as mass emails, press releases, ads in local and international magazines, promo videos at local radio and TV stations and other communication tools. Sarajevo UNESCO City of Film will make brochures and promote major activities at international film festivals, film markets and other in-person events. Sarajevo UNESCO City of Film will use UNESCO logo to promote creative projects and activities, especially when major local authorities and partners unite together in their efforts and projects under the Sarajevo UNESCO City of Film designation.



INITIATIVES UNDERTAKEN IN RESPONSE TO AND FOR THE RECOVERY FROM COVID-19

The initiatives under 7.1 and 7.2 emerged as Sarajevo's response to the challenges posed by Covid-19. These initiatives have demonstrated ongoing success and will continue into the future.

7.1 Platform ondemand.kinomeetingpoint.ba

The Obala Art Center introduced the online platform ondemand.kinomeetingpoint.ba in 2020. The platform made its debut with the online edition of the 26th Sarajevo Film Festival, featuring an extensive selection of about 250 films, along with numerous talks, masterclasses, and other festival events. Over the subsequent years, this platform has attracted a broad audience both within Bosnia and Herzegovina and internationally. It continues to showcase curated films and programs from the Sarajevo Film Festival and other regional festivals. Additionally, the platform hosts various programs like CineSchool and CineArchive, primarily promoting domestic, regional, and European cinema.

ondemand.kinomeetingpoint.ba was the host of the Network's online editions in 2020 and 2021. In 2022, a fifth partner was introduced - Ljubljana International Film Festival (Slovenia). The five festivals within the network share a common mission to promote and circulate European audio-visual content and talent by curating joint film programs and initiatives such as staff exchange, fostering a dynamic exchange of expertise and ideas. Today, the Network's mission is actively pursued through in-person editions of the Network's film programs showcased in all the cities where the festivals take place.

7.2 Network of the Festivals in the Adriatic Region

In 2020, given the Covid-19 restrictions, the Sarajevo Film Festival launched a network of festivals in the Adriatic region, initially gathering Sarajevo Film Festival (BiH), Zagreb Film Festival (Croatia), Herceg Novi Film Festival (Montenegro) and Auteur Film Festival (Serbia) to showcase online the films selected by each festival. Sarajevo's platform




7.3 Sarajevo Response to Covid-19

Sarajevo responded to the UNESCO's call to publish creative and cultural initiatives of cities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic on a common platform. In September 2020, the electronic publication "UNESCO Creative Cities' Response to COVID-19" was published. In this publication, Sarajevo was presented through the initiative of the Sarajevo Film Festival, which invited teenagers from BiH and the region to make short films and show their experience of a different spring in 2020, as part of the TeenAction program. This initiative gave young people aged 13 to 18 the opportunity to show their creativity in the challenging time of self-isolation.





www.sarajevocityoffilm.ba
info@sarajevocityoffilm.ba

 [sarajevocityoffilm](https://www.instagram.com/sarajevocityoffilm)
 [Sarajevo UNESCO City of Film](https://www.facebook.com/SarajevoUNESCOCityofFilm)
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[#sarajevocityoffilm](https://www.instagram.com/sarajevocityoffilm)

OBALA ART CENTAR
Hamdije Kreševljakovića 13
71 000 Sarajevo
Bosnia and Herzegovina

