

# Requirements for egalitarian participation

---

**Online:** 24<sup>th</sup> June 2021

---

**Welcoming Words:** **Zora Bachmann** (Chair of Interface Film)

---

**Opening Speeches:** **Petar Mitric** (Denmark)  
Assistant Professor at the Department of Film  
Studies and Creative Media Industries (University of  
Copenhagen), specialised in European  
Audiovisual Policy

**Deborah Bayer Marlow** (Denmark)  
Owner and Executive Producer at Marlow Film

**Simon Norrthon** (Sweden)  
President of Scen & Film - The Swedish Union for  
Performing Arts and Film/Actors, Directors and Film  
Workers

**Benjamin Boe Rasmussen** (Denmark)  
Actor and Chairman of Danish Actors' Association

**Trond Tønder** (Norway)  
Cinematographer and former president of the  
Norwegian Society of Cinematographers

---

**Working in the film industry often seems impossible for people with caregiving responsibilities and promising careers therefor end far too early.**

Primarily, this means an **exclusion of women**, who are mostly the ones who (have to) step back. **Long working days, precarious working conditions** and,

frequently, high pressure also lead to **increased psychological and financial stress.**

With the help of concrete **“good practice”** examples from our Scandinavian colleagues, we talked about **possibilities for improvement** and change in the film industry.

---



## Petar Mitric

- The University of Copenhagen tried to change the way to teach film policy, so that the students can become a more active part of the film industry: the goal is to teach students to analyse policies critically and how to propose policies.
- New methods are used to teach film policy: Film students are taught how to analyze policy papers and funding guidelines. The discussion also increased the master theses on diversity and inclusion issues.



## Deborah Bayer Marlow

- Marlow Film tries to plan the schedule during the development phase of a film or TV project by starting to look at the crew and if they have any care obligations that need to be considered.
- The production team has a flexible work schedule: People who start working earlier can leave earlier and people who start later, work longer.
- Mentors/Representatives on set:
  - There is a contact person for the crew to address their problems in the working environment (could be done privately or e.g. at a morning briefing)
- There is a support hotline available and it can be used anonymously. It is reachable for everybody in the Danish film industry.
- A flexible working system is not the only sustainable way to keep people with care obligations in the film industry. It is also very important for the more experienced crew members to teach the younger generations how they can establish fair working conditions.



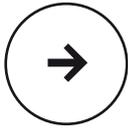
## Simon Norrthon

- Sweden has a parental insurance system guaranteeing parents to stay 480 days at home at full pay – it is accessible for both, employed and self-employed, film workers.
- There are a lot of productions abroad – that is one of the reasons the crew works every second week and share their work by taking turns. Even though it is not a type of employment that is included in the collective agreement they can make use of it.
  - Twenty to twenty-five TV-drama-series per year are produced abroad because of tax incentives, cheaper production costs, etc. and, therefore, it is impossible for parents or people with care obligations to be part of them.



## Benjamin Boe Rasmussen

- Unions are important because they have to regulate the collective agreements, to frame the working hours and recognise care giving responsibilities
  - This is also connected to gender equality – the film industry is still a male dominated business and a lot of educated and talented women tend to drop out because of their care issues, like taking care of their children, or are even not being taken into consideration at all.
- The Danish film institute is working in collaboration with producers, directors and writers to see how to keep women massively involved in the film industry and they are also working on age discrimination and ethnicity issues.



## Trond Tønder

- Fewer women apply for an education for cinematography and many drop out during their career.
- The Norwegian film institute has a quota for female directors, producers and writers but not for female cinematographers.

## Discussion round and Q&A

### ***Flexible working system on the film set - is salary connected to the working hours and how does it work in detail?***

The planning happens on a week-to-week basis - the producers look at the schedule and figure out the working hours together as a team. If somebody has to leave early, they start earlier and they will find somebody else in their department who will start later and leave therefore later.

This working system does not affect the salaries. They have day rates and these are based on a 40-hour working week, so nobody in the team will have fewer hours than in the 40-hour week and nobody's salary will be reduced - you will only get more if you work overtime and those overtime salaries are based on union rules. The producer's job is to keep the overtime work to a minimum because the budget does not support it - it is in everybody's interest to keep working hours to 40 hours a week.

### ***Does a flexible working system mean that more people are needed for the production?***

No, because the team makes sure to work more efficiently - that's why they don't need more staff. This means that somebody in the earlier shift will not get an extra helping hand - so they have to work more efficiently but therefore have time after work for other responsibilities, if necessary.

### ***How does this flexible system work and how does it help people with care obligations?***

The system changes every week, and therefore has to stay flexible.

It is important to plan a schedule that is flexible enough to give people the needed time off for e.g. care giving obligations.

The goal is to implement only people who really have tasks to do. The timetable is tightened so that nobody is wasting time - it is once more all about efficiency.

There is not the same call time planned for everybody, because you don't need people waiting around for their time to work - so you have to constantly look at the necessities of the day to keep an efficient timetable.

### ***Do you get support on a structural level to work flexible hours and help people with care obligations?***

The reputation of the production company is really important and therefore it is in everybody's interest to work ethically.

You have to have an open dialogue with the crew members - a safe environment.

And what helped getting a better work ethic is, that the production companies set goals concerning sustainability, the working environment, gender, diversity and so on. It has to be implemented in the work flow early on, so there can be a fair working environment.

---

**How many people use the system of working every second week in Sweden?**

It is used by both, men and women. The parental leave is used 30% by men and 70% by women.

.....

**Does the union also represent self-employed people in Sweden?**

Yes, they do!

.....

**Is there an exchange of the film institutes in Europe to work on structural change?**

Yes, there are some - it is especially recommended to connect at the major film festivals - because they are represented there and if they manage to get the issue on the agenda at the festivals, it could be a way to affect all countries.

.....

**Is the 40-hour week in the Swedish film industry normal?**

Often productions go abroad, because the collective agreements do not apply there and they can work longer hours in some foreign countries. This is a problem for the workers, as they are being exploited. There should be an international collaboration to raise the standard.

**Do the film workers really use the support hotlines in Denmark if they have problems?**

People hesitated to call the hotlines or help services of the unions because they preferred a more anonymous help. Now the association is working together with producers, film directors and writers and FAF, Danish Union for Film Workers, to make a campaign to use the tools, like the support hotlines or the contact persons that are provided on set.

.....

**Is there an institution in Norway that does work on the problem of too few women working as cinematographers?**

Currently, there are no institutions that try to solve the problem. Not a single feature film this year was shot by a female Norwegian cinematographer.

Disclaimer: The discussion was recorded and is going to be send out by request.