# **A Popular Post-Yugoslav Cinema: Does it Exist and Why (Not)?**

The purpose of this article is to systematize popular genres in the (post-)Yugoslav region as well as to discuss possible policy actions that can bring audiences in the region closer to local films. Relying on four concepts which we elaborate on below – low-brow, middle-brow, high-brow (art) cinema and the ideal European co-production – we map out the films that were successful in their domestic post-Yugoslav markets, as well as those that managed to successfully traverse national borders, achieving distribution and some success in the post-Yugoslav and occasionally also the European film market. Due to the lack of comprehensive data for all post-Yugoslav states, but also the fact that they constitute the two largest national film markets, we focus primarily on two countries: Croatia and Serbia. We identified the most popular post-Yugoslav films by consulting European Audiovisual Observatory’s LumierePro database and the databases of the Serbian Film Center and the Croatian Audiovisual Center.

We then move on to identifying the main obstacles to post-Yugoslav films achieving (domestic and regional) success, and discuss some possible policy steps to remedy them in the future. For this, we analyzed the texts and distribution processes of a number of films in question and observed the workshop “Digitalni Propeler” that was held in Belgrade on November 9-10, 2020 as well as industry webinars on digital distribution during the Sarajevo Film Festival in August 2020, to learn more about the challenges to audience-building in the region and the possible digital strategies to respond to these challenges.

Our analysis shows that there are no easy answers: audience preferences in Serbia and Croatia (and judging by limited data available, also in other post-Yugoslav states) do differ somewhat, and they are also evolving and marked by changes in their local contexts.