

[DE] ARD and ZDF continue extensive film funding under 15th film/television agreement

IRIS 2025-4:1/17

*Christina Etteldorf
Institute of European Media Law*

In mid-February 2025, *Zweite Deutsche Fernsehen* (ZDF) and the regional public broadcasters that form the *Arbeitsgemeinschaft der öffentlich-rechtlichen Rundfunkanstalten der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (ARD) announced that they would continue their extensive voluntary film funding programme. Together with the German *Filmförderungsanstalt* (Film Support Agency – FFA), which is responsible for film funding in Germany, ARD and ZDF have each signed the 15. *Film/Fernsehabkommen* (15th film/television agreement).

According to Article 132 of the *Filmförderungsgesetz* (Film Support Act), public broadcasters are obliged to pay a film levy amounting to 3% of their costs for the broadcasting of cinema films from the year before last. This is included in the funding provided by the FFA. However, the public broadcasters also participate voluntarily in film funding through corresponding fixed-term agreements, through which they add a significant top-up to mandatory funding. This year, ZDF is providing the FFA with a total of EUR 7.8 million in cash payments, media services and co-production funding. ARD will provide a total of around EUR 9.3 million euros, meaning that the mandatory film levy will be voluntarily increased to EUR 5.5 million for a further year. For the first time, there will be a shift in favour of co-production funding, which will be increased to EUR 4.8 million. This will also ensure sufficient programme coverage for the public broadcasters. As in 2024, the media services budget will remain at EUR 1.5 million.

