[FR] Refusal to classify an animated film without dialogue as an "original French-language work"

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A production company sought the annulment, on the grounds of ultra vires, of a decision in which the French audiovisual regulator (*Autorité de régulation de la communication audiovisuelle et numérique* – Arcom) had refused to classify the animated film *Mon ami robot* as an original French-language work. This classification directly affects the ability of television service providers (and, by extension, certain on-demand audiovisual media services under French jurisdiction) to include the work in their broadcast quotas and investment obligations.

The Council of State (*Conseil d'Etat*) pointed out that the Decree of 17 January 1990 required the original version of a film to be wholly or mainly in French or a regional language used in France in order to qualify as an original French-language work. In this case, although the film had been co-produced by French companies, it was an adaptation, in the form of an animated film, without dialogue but without changing its linguistic environment, of a graphic novel written in English. Produced by a Spanish-speaking artistic team, it had not been originally conceived, written or produced in French. Accordingly, Arcom had correctly refused to classify the film as a French-language original, regardless of the extent of its distribution in France, the favourable opinion of the President of the National Centre for Cinema and the Moving Image (*Centre national du cinéma et de l'image animée*) and similar precedents, since the provisions of Article 6-1 of the Decree of 17 January 1990, under which such an opinion should be taken into account, did not mean that opinion was binding.

Conseil d'Etat, 15 mai 2026, n° 502249, Société Noodles Production

https://www.conseil-etat.fr/fr/arianeweb/CE/decision/2026-05-15/502249

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