[CH] New Film Act Proposed

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The current Film Act entered into force in 1962. Since then, rapid technical and economic developments in the production, rental and sale of films, as well as in their presentation and distribution, have led to enormous changes in the industry world-wide. A committee chaired by Prof. Pierre Moor has been working since June 1998 on a new draft Film Act which should not only take into account today's needs and conditions, but also provide a solid and meaningful medium- to long-term foundation for film production and film culture in Switzerland. The committee's proposal for a new federal law on film production and film culture is built on three pillars: a modern system of film support, a liberalised body of regulations and a specific tax to support diversity. According to Article 21 of the draft, for example, any sales and rental company which hires out films to be shown simultaneously at a large number of cinemas must pay a maximum of one centime per screen on which a film is shown and per ticket sold. This levy also applies, however, to the sale of films on video cassette, DVD or any other type of carrier. The proceeds will go not only to the Swiss film industry but will also support small productions in other European countries. Several issues for debate should be provided by Article 22 of the draft, under which the Federal Office for Culture is to find ways of maintaining or increasing the variety of films available on the Swiss market. For example, cinemas might be obliged to show films at certain times which they would not normally show.

The profit-related film support scheme, previously set up on an experimental basis, is introduced definitively by the draft. Cinema owners will need to register rather than simply requiring official authorisation. The Act is expected to come into force in early 2002.

Erläuterungen zum Gesetzesentwurf über die Filmproduktion und Filmkultur.

Comments to the draft law concerning film production and film culture.

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