

[IE] Strategy Report for the Film and Television Industry

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The Report of the Strategic Development of the Irish Film and Television Industry 2000-2010 was published in August. The Review Group, which drew up the Report, included representatives from Irish film and broadcasting organisations, educational institutes, government departments and the business and legal sectors. The Review Group carried out an objective evaluation of the effectiveness of the existing schemes and incentives for developing the Irish film and television industry, examined the fundamental issues facing the industry, and formulated a strategic plan for the future of the industry in the next decade. The Report, which recognises that film and television are the most powerful contemporary means of cultural expression, makes a number of recommendations aimed at fostering the continued growth of an indigenous film and television industry in Ireland. As well as suggestions for strategies to be undertaken by the industry itself, some of the recommendations have legal implications.

The Irish industry is still at a very early stage of development compared to those in many other developed countries. Accordingly, one of the main recommendations of the Report is that the tax incentives set out in Section 481 of the Taxes Consolidation Act 1997 should continue in force for a period of at least seven years. These incentives are designed to attract both domestic and international investment into the Irish industry. (Tax incentives were introduced in the Finance Act 1987 and have played a major part in developing the Irish industry).

The Report recommends that the Irish Film Board, a statutory body responsible for assisting Irish filmmakers and promoting the film industry, should be strengthened and restructured. In order to fulfil its expanded role and to enable it to increase its investment in the industry, government funding for the Board should be supplemented by the introduction of a 5% levy on cinema tickets and video rental and sales. In addition, a special once-off fund of Irish Pounds (IEP) 5,000,000 should be provided which could be allocated from the National Lottery. Because the domestic market is so small, Irish producers should be encouraged to focus on the international market. Similarly, non-indigenous industry should be encouraged, as the creation of employment and the development of infrastructure and skills will enable Ireland to be part of a global industry. The Report also recommends that production for television (in the fields of drama, feature films, documentaries and animation) should be increased. RTÉ (the national broadcaster) should assume a powerful leadership role because of its

experience and its position as the country's largest broadcaster.

Strategic Development of the Irish Film and Television Industry 2000-2010.

<http://www.iftn.ie/strategyreport/>

