[LV] Government Questions National Film Support

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While revising the budget for the year 2003, the recently elected Cabinet of Ministers questioned the necessity to finance the production of Latvian films from the national budget. As background information it noted that the majority of already-financed films has not been seen by the audience of Latvia and only a few films received financial support from the national budget in 2002.

The National Film Centre (the government body overseeing the film sector and acting under the Ministry of Culture) explained that its overall strategy has firstly been to create platforms to help producers to attract foreign finance for film production. These aims have been achieved by Latvia's joining the EURIMAGES foundation in 2001 and the MEDIA Plus programme in 2002. The next step shall be to secure an optimised distribution throughout Latvia. Although most of the films are broadcast on television and screened in cinemas, a closer co-operation between television stations and the film production sector should be initiated.

After compiling a detailed account on the application of funds (LVL 600 000 - around EUR 1 000 000) in 2002 and on the general organisation of the financing system, the National Film Centre together with the Ministry of Culture stated that the financial means for film production would not be subject to reductions. Furthermore, the Ministry of Culture has announced that the film sector will be granted priority in the case of another budget revision in the middle of this year.

Press release of the Ministry of Culture of 3 December 2002

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