

[FR] Minister for Culture Presents his Programme to Help the French Cinema

IRIS 2003-6:1/22

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The Minister for Culture and Communication did not wait until the International Film Festival in Cannes before presenting to the Cabinet on 30 April a communication on policy beneficial to the cinema. In a follow up to the Leclerc Report (see IRIS 2003-3: 14), the Minister announced a number of measures intended to "diversify and perpetuate sources of financing for the cinema and contribute to increasing the number of works being filmed in France". For this, the video sector and also the regional authorities will take over the financing of cinematographic production arising out of television.

As part of the examination of the Lending Libraries Act, the National Assembly had already adopted a government amendment in early April that changed the basis for assessment for the tax on videos to be levied from 1 July on the public sale price, leaving the rate unchanged at 2%. At the same time, aid for video publishers will be expanded, particularly with a view to encouraging an increase in sales of French films.

The Minister also announced the creation of a fund enabling local authorities to assist production, through joint financing with the State, which would top up the funds provided by local authorities to a ceiling of EUR 10 million, compared with EUR 1.5 million at present. The Government is also considering setting up tax aids which could replace the outdated system of the companies for financing the cinematographic and audio-visual industries (Sociétés de financement des industries ciné

matographiques et audiovisuelles SOFICA), particularly by means of a scheme currently under consideration that would make leasing available to cinematographic films. The purpose of this modernisation of the tax scheme, which will be proposed in the next Budget Act at the end of the year, is to encourage filming in France. The Government would also like to encourage the export of French films. To do so, it is planning an expansion of export aids, particularly by means of the Institut de financement des industries culturelles (institute for financing cultural industries IFCIC) setting up a new guarantee programme intended to allow the pre-financing of films on the basis of their export potential. Lastly, the arrangements presented make provision for support for those undertakings that are the most fragile and those productions that are

the most innovative, and more particularly independent production undertakings and the technical industries in the audio-visual and cinema sectors.

Shortly after this presentation, President Jacques Chirac himself reiterated his determination and that of the Government to "support and defend" the cinema.

J.-J. Aillagon, Communication relative à la politique en faveur du cinéma, 30 avril 2003

<http://www.premier-ministre.gouv.fr/fr/p.cfm?ref=39347#2>

