[CH] Agreement between Switzerland and the European Union on the MEDIA Programme Comes into Force

IRIS 2006-5:1/13

Patrice Aubry
RTS Radio Télévision Suisse, Geneva

The agreement between Switzerland and the European Union on Switzerland's participation in the MEDIA Plus and MEDIA Formation programmes came into force on 1 April 2006. The agreement was concluded on 26 October 2004 during the second round of bilateral negotiations on a number of issues, including - in addition to the MEDIA programme - extension of the agreement on the free movement of persons to the European Union's new Member States, taxation on savings, and combating fraud in indirect taxation (see IRIS 2004-7:6). Switzerland will contribute 7.9 million Swiss francs per year to the cost of the MEDIA programme. This amount also includes the subsidy allocated to the Switzerland MEDIA Desk and the funding for the recent compensatory measures that were set up to alleviate the negative results of Switzerland being excluded from the MEDIA programme in 1992.

As a result, professionals in Switzerland's cinematographic and audiovisual industry may now participate fully in all forms of support included in the MEDIA programme. The support provided by the Community's funds will facilitate co-productions of films by Switzerland and other European countries. MEDIA will also make it possible not only to support access to the European market for Swiss audiovisual productions but will also facilitate the distribution of European films in Switzerland. The outcome of Switzerland's participation in the MEDIA programme should be a reinforcement of the diversity of the cinematographic offer on the Swiss market. Moreover, Swiss professionals may now benefit under the same conditions as their European colleagues from easier access to the cinema schools supported by the MEDIA programme. Lastly, the Swiss cinematographic industry may also take part in film festivals organised within the European Union and thereby contribute to the promotion of European audiovisual production.

Switzerland's participation in the MEDIA programme was conditional on its legislation on television being "Euro-compatible". This implied that Switzerland undertook to transpose into its national legislation European demands in terms of minimum quotas for European audiovisual works (50%) and independent productions (10%) broadcast on television. As a result, a new Article 20c has been introduced for that purpose in the Federal Council's Order on Radio and Television (ORTV). This provision also came into force on 1 April 2006.

© European Audiovisual Observatory (Council of Europe) 2026

Arrêté fédéral du 17 décembre 2004 portant approbation et mise en œuvre de l'accord bilatéral entre la Suisse et la Communauté européenne sur la participation de la Suisse aux programmes MEDIA Plus et MEDIA Formation

http://www.admin.ch/ch/f/ff/2004/6705.pdf

Federal Decree of 17 December 2004 approving and implementing the bilateral agreement between Switzerland and the European Community on Switzerland's participation in the MEDIA Plus and MEDIA Formation programmes

© European Audiovisual Observatory (Council of Europe) 2026

© European Audiovisual Observatory (Council of Europe) 2026