European Commission: Film Support in Northern Ireland and Wales

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In a decision of 10 June 2008, the European Commission approved the second extension of the Northern Ireland Film Production Fund (NIFPF) until 31 December 2008. The fund is managed by the Northern Ireland Film and Television Commission, and the scheme consists in the grant of loans for film projects.

The main selection criteria for the grant of such loans are the cultural value of the project, its likely profitability and its prospects of economic success. Support may be given to the production of cinema and television films.

The Commission considers that this arrangement for the provision of state aid to promote culture is compatible with the Common Market under Article 87(3)(d) EC.

Another support measure in the United Kingdom film sector is the Wales Creative IP Fund, a cultural fund set up by the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) in April 2005. Its purpose is to give a boost to the media industry by investing in film, television and music productions. In return, the WAG receives a share of the profits generated. The GBP 10 million fund is managed on behalf of the WAG by Finance Wales, a company wholly owned by the WAG.

By January 2007, around GBP 3 million had been invested in three films, two television productions and new media projects.

In addition, the film industry is supported by the Film Agency for Wales. Set up in July 2006, its main purpose is to support the production of cultural and experimental films and the organisation of film festivals.

Communication from the Commission to the United Kingdom

http://ec.europa.eu/community_law/state_aids/comp-2008/n214-08.pdf

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