[LV] Developments of the Draft Film Law

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Ieva Bērziņa-Andersone
Sorainen, Latvia

A new Film Law has been drafted and proposed in Latvia (see IRIS 2008-2: 15). Initially, the draft was prepared by the Ministry of Culture and announced at the Meeting of State Secretaries on 22 November 2007. Subsequently, consultations with other ministries took place.

On 17 June 2008 the draft was supported by the Cabinet of Ministers. The name of the draft was amended as “National Film Law”. The content of the law is generally similar to the first draft announced on 22 November 2007. However, one important difference is that the indirect support to the film industry has been excluded. According to the first proposal the indirect support would be achieved by granting tax deductions to persons who have received the status of a “qualified producer”. Now, in the draft approved by the Cabinet of Ministers only the direct support has remained, i.e. this support shall be implemented by creating a Film Fund (a certain amount of the state budget funds devoted to the film industry). Another feature is that the capital of the Film Fund would be constituted not only by the subsidies from the state budget, but also from the income from the use of films whose rights are held by the state. The National Film Centre would issue licenses for the rights to use such films. In addition, there would be four standing committees (instead of three) to assess the submitted proposals for the funding.

On 30 June 2008 the draft National Film Law was submitted for reviewing to the *Saeima* (the Parliament). The draft was adopted in the first reading on 2 October 2008. As of that date, there has not been any further progress. The suggestions for the second reading had to be submitted until 31 October 2008. According to informal sources, currently there is work ongoing with respect to the suggestions to the draft by the legal service of the Parliament in co-operation with the National Film Centre. It is believed that the second reading of the draft in the Parliament might take place by the end of the year 2009.

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