[CH] Audiovisual Pact Renewed for a Further Three Years

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The Swiss radio and television broadcasting company “SRG SSR idée Suisse” (SSR) and the six associations in Switzerland’s cinematographic and audiovisual sector that are partners in the Audiovisual Pact have renewed their cooperation agreement for a further three years (2009 to 2011). The Audiovisual Pact represents in concrete form the statutory obligation incumbent on the SSR to support Swiss independent production; its aim is to reinforce collaboration between the SSR and the audiovisual industry in Switzerland (see IRIS 2005-8: 10). Under this system, the SSR has invested almost 200 million Swiss francs since 1998 in financing more than 1,000 fiction films, documentaries, animated films and short films.

The new Audiovisual Pact, signed in Berne on 16 July 2008, retains most of the provisions of the previous version. The SSR’s annual contribution will amount to a total of CHF 21.3 million in 2009, compared with 19.8 million in 2008. This commitment will be increased gradually in 2010 and 2011, to take the total amount of the investment provided by the SSR to CHF 22.3 million in 2011. In 2009, CHF 8.4 million will be allocated to cinematographic production, while television films will receive a total amount of CHF 7.9 million, and CHF 500,000 will be earmarked for financing animated films. The 2009-2011 Audiovisual Pact also makes provision for the allocation of a new annual credit of CHF 500,000 intended to support the promotion on SSF’s channels of cinema films when they are first shown in cinema theatres. A regulation will lay down the conditions for allocating this amount.

Another new feature is support for fiction series. This is a pilot project that will enable Télévision Suisse Romande (TSR), a component part of the SSR, to finance the production of new television series. The funds for financing these series will have to come out of the budget for television films. The TSR has also committed itself to investing at least as much in each series from financial resources outside the Audiovisual Pact. The series benefiting from this new scheme may last no more than twenty episodes and no more than a total of 520 minutes.

The 2009-2011 Audiovisual Pact also confirms the SSR’s right to use audiovisual works in a video-on-demand service on the test platform created in 2007 (see IRIS 2007-10: 7). This use is limited to the territory of Switzerland and is not exclusive. Furthermore, independent producers retain the exclusive right to exploit cinema

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films as video-on-demand before their first airing on SSR's channels. Lastly, the new agreement now authorises the SSR to offer Audiovisual Pact works as video-on-demand for a period of seven days following the broadcasting of the productions concerned on SSR's television channels (catch-up TV).

Pacte de l'audiovisuel 2009-2011 zwischen der Société Suisse de Radiodiffusion et Télévision (SRG SSR idée suisse) und den unabhängigen Filmproduzenten der Schweiz

Audiovisual Pact for 2009-2011 between the Swiss radio and television broadcasting company (SRG SSR idée suisse) and the Swiss independent production sector

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