[GR] New Greek Legislation on the Cinema

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On 23 December 2010 the Greek Parliament approved new legislation on support for cinematographic art and its development.

The new Act starts by laying down the principles of national policy on the cinema sector and goes on to define the conditions for designating a work a "Hellenic cinematographic work" in order to be able to take advantage of the measures for financial support. Each year, producers of Hellenic full-length cinema works receive part of the special tax levied on cinema theatre tickets, usually between 8 and 12%. The amount allocated to each producer depends on the number of tickets sold, after the application of specific weightings. The remainder of the amount collected is divided between the Hellenic Cinematographic Centre (80%) and the Ministry of Culture and Tourism (20%).

The new Act also provides for support for production from media service providers. More specifically, the public-sector television broadcasting body ERT S.A. is required each year to invest 1.5% of its annual turnover, including the audiovisual licence fee, in production. Private-sector television broadcasting bodies must allocate to production 1.5% of their annual income from advertising.

Half of the amount to be invested may be made available to the Hellenic Cinematographic Centre in the form of advertising time for promoting cinema works. From 2015 onwards, pay-per-view broadcasters will only be able to invest in production.

The Act introduces a new obligation to aid production, incumbent on telecommunication service providers. They are now required to devote to production 1.5% of their annual turnover from supplying audiovisual media services via the Internet or mobile phones. The penalty for failing to do so will be a fine.

The Act amends the articles of association of the *Ελληνικό Κέντρο Κινηματογράφου* (Hellenic Cinematographic Centre) which now becomes a not-for-profit entity under private law under the supervision of the Minister for Culture and Tourism, instead of a public company. The Centre retains its administrative and financial autonomy. The seven members of its Board of Directors are appointed by ministerial decision, for a three-year term of office. Four members are appointed from the Greek or international cinema world, while the remainder

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may come from the humanities sector or have substantial experience of the management of such bodies. The Director General, appointed by a decision of the Minister for Culture and Tourism on a proposal from the Board of Directors, is responsible for strategy and for achieving the Centre's policies. The Centre has been given responsibility for the Hellas Media Desk. The Hellenic Film Commission deals with foreign production in Greece and the promotion of Greek productions in other countries.

The Act also reorganises the *Φεστιβάλ Κινηματογράφου Θεσσαλονίκης* (Thessalonica Cinema Festival), which is a not-for-profit entity under private law.

Regarding cinematographic archives, the not-for-profit entity under private law *Εθνικό Οπτικοακουστικό Αρχείο* (Hellenic National Audiovisual Archive) is henceforth responsible for the upkeep of the cinematographic archives with a view to collecting, preserving, digitalising and cataloguing them as well as all kinds of printed material, photographs and objects related to the art and history of the cinema. Every producer of a cinematographic work or who has an original copy of a film in his/her possession is required to deposit one copy in digital or film form. Failure to do so would deprive the producer of entitlement to benefit from the support introduced by the Act.

The purpose of this new text is to update the regulation of the sector that has been in place since 1986 (Act No. 1597/1986 - the "Melina Mercouri Act").While a lot of hope had been pinned on the new Act, it has been received not without dissatisfaction, the main issue being the new status of the Cinematographic Centre.

Νόμος 3905/2010 «Ενίσχυση και ανάπτυξη της κινηματογραφικής τέχνης και άλλες διατάξεις» (ΦΕΚ Α΄ 219/23.12.2010)

http://www.gfc.gr/images/stories/press/document.pdf

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