

[NO] Mandatory Subtitling of Films for the Benefit of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

IRIS 2012-1:1/34

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On 18 November 2011 the Royal Norwegian Ministry for Culture announced that, as of 1 January 2012, all Norwegian feature films (i.e., films screened publicly in cinemas) that have received public funding will be required to be screened with subtitles. The requirement applies to films in ordinary commercial distribution. An exemption is made for special screenings, festival screenings and other similar events. The legal basis for the measure will be amendments to Articles 2-1, 2-2, 2-3, 2-5 and 2-6 of the 2009 Regulations on Support for Audiovisual Productions. The final wording of these amendments has not yet been published.

According to Minister for Culture Ms. Anniken Huitfeldt, the measure is intended to “make films accessible to a greater audience and to contribute to making society more inclusive and accessible for all members of the population”. Social inclusion has been one of the pillars of the Norwegian government’s cultural policy since the adoption by Parliament of a White Paper on cultural policy in 2003.

The subtitling of films has been demanded by the Norwegian Association of the Deaf and by the National Association of the Hard of Hearing for a number of years and a voluntary system of subtitling has been operated by local distributors and the cinema owner’s organisation Film & Kino. The introduction of mandatory subtitling is seen as a result of the voluntary system’s not producing the desired effects, but the current measure has also been advanced by the lower cost of subtitling, following the full digitalisation of Norwegian cinemas (see IRIS 2009-9/25), which was completed during the summer of 2011.

Pressemelding, 18.11.2011 Nr.: 105/11 Alle norske kinofilmer skal tekstes for hørselshemmede

<http://www.regjeringen.no/nb/dep/kud/pressesenter/pressemeldinger/2011/alle-norske-kinofilmer-skal-tekstes-for-.html?id=663692>

FOR 2009-09-07 nr 1168: Forskrift om tilskudd til audiovisuelle produksjoner

<http://www.lovdata.no/cgi-wift/ldles?doc=/sf/sf/sf-20090907-1168.html>

