

# [LT] A New Law on Cinema Adopted

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On 22 December 2011 the Seimas (Lithuanian Parliament) adopted a new Act on Cinema. The draft law was prepared by the Ministry of Culture in cooperation with the Union of Lithuanian Cinematographers and the Association of Independent Producers.

The new Law determines the basis for State regulation and financing of Lithuanian cinema, the protection of its heritage and the rules for film distribution and presentation in cinemas. It aims at distinguishing between the State policy forming function and the implementation function in the cinema sector. The Law foresees that the State policy forming function is discharged by the Ministry of Culture, while the implementation function is carried out by a newly-established institution, the Lithuanian Cinema Centre. This Centre will administer the State funds allocated to cinema projects, supervise the expenditure and account of funds, represent Lithuania in international organisations, foundations, events etc., administer the Film Registry and index Lithuanian and foreign films meant for public presentation etc. The Law embeds the right to finance cinema projects from the State and Municipality funds. It defines the areas of State financing, i.e., State funds can only be allocated to film preparatory works, production, distribution, presentation, and the collection and protection of cinema heritage. Besides, the Law establishes certain criteria for a particular area of State financing, e.g., the funds can be allocated to film production provided the screenplay or the main theme is based on events of Lithuanian or European culture, history, religion, mythology, society life etc. In accordance with the provisions of the Law funds can only be allocated to legal persons or other organisations or their units, which are established in Lithuania or another State of the EEA and one of the main activities of which is film production, distribution, presentation and the collection of cinema heritage and its protection. The Act establishes that in case the film is 100 % State-financed, the duty to present the film from the moment it is registered in the Film Registry within one year's time is with the public broadcaster Lietuvos nacionalinis radijas ir televizija.

It also has to be noted that with the new Act a new film rating system was introduced. It differs from the that for television programmes. The following ratings are introduced with regard to the viewers' age: „V“ for films of various age; „N-7“ from 7 years of age; „N-13“ from 13 years of age; „N-16“ from 16 years of age and „N-18“ from 18 years of age. Besides, the Act obliges cinema owners and/or managers to make information on the meaning of the ratings

publicly available. The Law also obliges legal persons who are engaged in film distribution to publish information about the respective ratings in Lithuania or the State of production on the cover of the record. All films, which are either produced in Lithuania or brought to Lithuania from abroad for cinema presentation, should be registered in the Film Registry, except those which are meant to be presented during certain events, e.g., festivals, seminars or retrospectives, which are dedicated towards satisfying the cultural, artistic and educational needs of society. Only films that have been classified according to age categories can be registered in the Film Registry. The Act will enter into force on 1 May 2012.

***Kino įstatymo pakeitimo įstatymas, 2011 m. gruodžio 22 d. Nr. XI-1897 (Žin., 2002, Nr. 31-1107; 2003, Nr. 108-4812; 2009, Nr. 77-3163)***

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