[FR] Collective Agreement in the Cinema Sector: Government Names Mediator

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Amélie Blocman
Légipresse

On 28 March 2013, the French Ministers for Labour, Michel Sapin, and Culture, Aurélie Filippetti, announced that they had appointed Conseil d'État member Raphaël Hadas-Lebel as mediator in order to attempt to reach an agreement on the collective agreement in the cinematographic production sector. The sector has been negotiating a collective agreement for nearly ten years. An agreement was signed on 19 January 2012 by most of the employee unions and by just one employer organisation, the association of independent producers (Association des Producteurs Indépendants - API), which is an umbrella organisation of four major groups (Gaumont, Pathé, UGC, and MK2). The agreement, which the Ministers consider "contains real improvements for the employees concerned (technicians)", provides for the introduction of minimum levels of remuneration for directors, labourers and technicians in the cinema sector, and imposes a minimum number of posts for each film made. It can now be extended if the signatories so request, in accordance with the Act. The Minister for Labour had announced his intention of signing the decree extending the arrangement to all production of full-length films on 11 April 2013, with the text entering into force on 1 July 2013.

The text has, however, aroused opposition from a good many organisations representing producers, which fear the economic impact of its extension on employment and the diversity of films being made. A petition, signed by nearly 1,200 producers, directors and actors, calls for the extension to be suspended. According to the signatories, the text "lays down minimum salaries which independent production companies - predominant in the sector - are not always able to apply. It signs the death warrant for a good number of many low-budget films - between 50 and 70 fewer per year, according to estimates". "We solemnly appeal to the Ministry of Culture and to the Ministry of Labour to suspend the announced extension and to carry out voluntary, unbiased studies and discussions necessary for quickly achieving a balanced text that works in favour of employees, companies, and the common good of the French cinema".

The two Ministers said that they have done their utmost in attempting to achieve convergence of the various points of view. In a letter dated 14 March, they laid down for all the parties concerned two conditions necessary for emerging from the blocked situation. Firstly, the cinematographic production sector should be covered by a collective agreement. The collective agreement of 19 January 2012

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ought therefore to be extended and also supplemented after collective negotiation for performers and permanent employees. The second condition laid down is the necessary re-examination of the situation of economically fragile films within the collective agreement. It is now up to Mr Hadas-Lebel to facilitate the achievement of these two conditions.

Communiqué de presse du ministère de la Culture et de la Communication du 28 mars 2013

http://www.culturecommunication.gouv.fr/Espace-Presse/Communiques/Convention-collective-du-cinema/%28language%29/fre-FR

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