[DE] Draft of a new Film Support Act adopted

IRIS 2016-6:1/11

Ingo Beckendorf
Institute of European Media Law (EMR), Saarbrücken/Brussels

On 23 March 2016, the German cabinet adopted the draft of a new Filmförderungsgesetz (Film Support Act - FFG) submitted by the Minister for Culture. Before that, comprehensive discussions had been held with the participation of the film-industry associations and institutions concerned.

The purpose of the draft Act is to adapt film support legislation to future needs. The Film Support Act is the legal basis for the provision of film support by the Filmförderungsanstalt (Film Support Agency - FFA). The aim is not only to provide more effective and successful support for quality German films, but also to continue efforts to preserve cinemas as places of culture. The intention is that the new Act should again improve the conditions for achieving these objectives. It is hoped that targeted measures, such as support for screenplay development, will promote artistic and creative success, because underlying the Film Support Act is the fundamental solidarity-based idea that all areas of the industry that exploit films must make an appropriate contribution to the preservation and promotion of German works. The funds spent by the FFA to promote German films therefore originate from the cinema and video industry, including online providers and TV broadcasters, via a parafiscal levy (the so-called “film levy”). For every cinema with a net turnover above EUR 75 000 the levy is between 1.8% and 3% of annual net revenues. Video industry companies pay between 1.8% and 2.3% of their annual net revenues. The levy for TV broadcasters is in principle calculated on the basis of the proportion of cinema films in their total programme schedule. The FFA consequently obtains its income exclusively from funds provided by the film industry, and receives no money from the state budget. It currently has an annual budget of around EUR 76 million.

According to the new draft Act, the bodies concerned are to be more gender-balanced and will also be slimmed down. Moreover, subsidies are to be concentrated on fewer projects and selection is to be improved. Furthermore, in the future more money is to be made available for funding screenplays. Provision is made for an increase in film levy rates, but in contrast to earlier versions there will be no separate obligation for providers of HD-TV services to pay the levy. The new Film Support Act is scheduled to come into force on 1 January 2017. Under the current Act, the collection of the film levy expires on 31 December 2016.

© European Audiovisual Observatory (Council of Europe) 2026

Entwurf des Filmförderungsgesetzes

https://www.bundesregierung.de/Content/DE/_Anlagen/BKM/2016/2016-03-23-filmfoerderungsgesetz-regierungsentwurf.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=2

Draft of the Film Support Act

© European Audiovisual Observatory (Council of Europe) 2026

© European Audiovisual Observatory (Council of Europe) 2026