[DE] Parliament adopts new Film Support Act

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

On 10 November 2016, the Bundestag (lower house of the German parliament) adopted an amendment to the Filmförderungsgesetz (Film Support Act - FFG). The new version entered into force on 1 January 2017 and is valid for five years. As a result, film subsidies will be concentrated on fewer films, focusing on films with a greater chance of success, from January 2017 onwards. The funding bodies will also become more streamlined, more professional, and more gender-balanced.

In general terms, the FFG is the legal basis for the provision of film support by the Filmförderungsanstalt (Film Support Agency - FFA). It first came into force in 1968 and has since been amended several times, most recently through the Siebte Gesetz zur Änderung des Filmförderungsgesetzes (Seventh Act Amending the Film Support Act), which entered into force on 1 January 2014. In addition to the Act, directives and other instruments also regulate film support. Film subsidies are funded by the so-called “film levy”, which is charged based on income from film exploitation. It is mainly paid by cinemas, but also by video industry companies, including video on-demand providers, TV broadcasters, and pay-TV operators.

Under the revised FFG, one of the main newly subsidised areas is screenplay development, with a corresponding increase in the amount of funding available for scriptwriters. Distribution, sales, and video subsidies will be merged in the future. The new law will also make it easier for people with disabilities to watch films at the cinema.

The FFA’s remit is also more clearly defined and includes a duty to ensure that employees working in the film industry are employed in a socially responsible manner. The FFA’s income from the film levy is also guaranteed. It funds feature films at all stages of production and exploitation: from screenplay development to production, to distribution, sales and video. Further funds are used to support cinemas, the preservation of the cinematographic heritage, the reception and promotion of German films abroad, and film education. As the central service provider for the German film industry, the FFA also regularly collates, analyses, and publishes key market data relating to Germany’s film, cinema, and video industries.

Gesetz über Maßnahmen zur Förderung des deutschen Films (Filmförderungsgesetz - FFG) vom 23. Dezember 2016

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http://www.ffa.de/ffg-2017.html

Act on measures to promote the German film industry (Film Support Act - FFG) of 23 December 2016

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