[IT] COVID-19: The measures adopted by Italy to support the entertainment, cinema and audiovisual sectors

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The Italian Government has adopted a series of measures aimed at countering the economic difficulties experienced by the entertainment, cinema and audiovisual sectors, following the interruption of activities due to the COVID-19 emergency.

These measures are contained in Decree-Law No. 18, the so-called Cura Italia Decree, which was adopted on 17 March 2020 by the government and which is currently being voted on by the Italian Parliament. Due to its legal nature, the decree will take immediate effect, but must be converted into a law within 60 days of its adoption.

Article 89 of the Decree-Law (Fund for show, cinema and audiovisual emergencies) sets up a guarantee fund in support of the aforementioned sectors consisting of EUR 130 million for 2020. The fund is divided into two “sub-funds”: the first EUR 80 million for the current account, and the remaining EUR 50 million for capital interventions.

A decree issued by the Ministry for Cultural Heritage and Activities and Tourism (MiBACT), to be adopted within thirty days from the date of entry into force of the law converting the decree, will establish the procedures for allocating resources to sector providers, including artists, authors and performers, taking into account the negative economic impact resulting from the implementation of COVID-19 containment measures.

Another important measure in support of authors and performers is contained in Article 90 (Urgent provisions to support the cultural sector) which consists in the allocation of a 10% share of the fees collected in 2019 by the SIAE (the Italian Society of Authors and Publishers, established for the collective management of authors' rights) for the private reproduction of phonograms and videograms (so-called "private copies").

By means of the aforementioned decree, MiBACT will, in agreement with the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF), define the requirements for accessing this benefit, taking into account the income of the recipients.

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Finally, Article 88 (Refund of residence contracts and termination of purchase contracts for tickets for shows, museums and other places of culture) provides for the possibility to obtain a voucher, to be used within one year of issue, for all holders of tickets for performances which have been suspended due to the health emergency, including tickets for events, cinema and theatre performances, as well as for museums and cultural places.

Decreto-Legge 17 marzo 2020, n. 18 "Misure di potenziamento del Servizio sanitario nazionale e di sostegno economico per famiglie, lavoratori e imprese connesse all'emergenza epidemiologica da COVID-19". (GU Serie Generale n.70 del 17-03-2020).

https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2020/03/17/20G00034/sg

Decree-Law of 17 March 2020, no. 18 "Measures to strengthen the National Health Service and economic support for families, workers and businesses connected to the epidemiological emergency from COVID-19". (OJ General Series n.70 of 17-03-2020).

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