[DE] Federal government adopts new draft Film Support Act and launches "Kino I" initiative

IRIS 2021-3:1/19

Mirjam Kaiser
Institute of European Media Law

On 7 January 2021, the federal government announced the launch of its new "Kino I" project as part of the "Neustart Kultur" financial aid programme for 2021, which is designed to further stabilise the economic situation of cinemas during the pandemic.

The "Kino I" campaign forms part of the federal government's "Neustart Kultur" programme that was launched in 2020. "Neustart Kultur" is a government-led financial aid programme designed to safeguard the film industry as a cultural asset, which is in particular need of support following the closure of cinemas during the pandemic. The "Kino I" project aims to support investment in the long-term viability of cinemas, especially those in rural areas. The funding is particularly aimed at modernising aspects such as barrier-free access, sustainability, technical equipment, and energy efficiency. The campaign will provide up to EUR 25 million of funding, a EUR 3 million increase compared with last year.

Meanwhile, in a press release published on 13 January 2021, the federal government announced the adoption of a draft amendment to the *Filmförderungsgesetz* (Film Support Act – FFG).

The draft FFG is designed to provide financial support to the film industry through a film levy that is to be used to provide financial assistance through the *Filmförderanstalt* (Film Support Agency – FFA). Charged to pay-TV providers and programme distributors, the levy is designed to protect the structure of the German film industry, strengthen filmmaking as an economic and cultural asset, and uphold the quality and diversity of the German film landscape. The proposed amendments to the FFG concern pandemic-related adjustments to the eligibility requirements for receiving support, blackout periods and the general use of funding. The FFA will now be able to use a special "force majeure" clause to relax the requirements for receiving support, for example. Other key changes concern film production, which should be accompanied by measures to support ecological sustainability and reduce the carbon footprint; gender equality within the FFA board of directors and executive committee; fair working conditions in the film sector; and anti-discrimination measures to support disabled people and diversity. It will also be possible to adapt the levy requirement for pay-TV providers and

© European Audiovisual Observatory (Council of Europe) 2026

programme distributors in line with current market developments. These proposals, which are designed to meet the need for flexibility during a pandemic, also take into account the current socio-political agenda regarding employee friendliness and climate protection within the film industry. The FFG is amended at least every five years in order to adjust the size of the levy. The latest amendment, which will come into force on 1 January 2022, will only be valid for two years because the consequences of the pandemic are hard to predict. It will now be examined by the German Bundestag (federal parliament) and Bundesrat (federal council).

Pressemitteilung der Bundesregierung zur "Kino I"-Aktion

https://www.bundesregierung.de/breg-de/bundesregierung/staatsministerin-fuer-kultur-und-medien/aktuelles/bund-verstaerkt-erneut-kinofoerderung-kulturstaatsministerin-gruetters-gemeinschaftserlebnis-im-kino-ist-durch-nichts-zu-ersetzen--1835014

Federal government press release on the 'Kino I' campaign

Pressemitteilung der Bundesregierung zum Gesetzesentwurf des FFG

https://www.bundesregierung.de/breg-de/bundesregierung/staatsministerin-fuer-kultur-und-medien/aktuelles/bundeskabinett-verabschiedet-neues-filmfoerderungsgesetz-kulturstaatsministerin-gruetters-filmfoerderung-in-zeiten-der-pandemie-flexibler-machen--1836268

Federal government press release on the draft FFG

© European Audiovisual Observatory (Council of Europe) 2026

© European Audiovisual Observatory (Council of Europe) 2026