[DE] Commission approves German scheme to support feature films and TV series

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Through the German Motion Picture Fund (GMPF), the Federal Republic of Germany plans to support the production of feature films and television series from 1 January 2022 until 31 December 2023, with an estimated total budget of EUR 150 million. The support takes the form of direct grants to producers and co-producers of certain feature films and TV series. The expected scale of the GMPF meant that it required European Commission approval under EU state aid rules. On 27 October 2021, the Federal Republic therefore informed the Commission of the plan to continue with the scheme, which was first established in 2016.

The GMPF, which falls under the responsibility of the Federal Government Commissioner for Cultural and Media Affairs, supports the production of big-budget TV series and films. Funding is available to producers and co-producers, with their domicile or a registered office in Germany, who have produced at least one film or TV series in the previous five years. At least 40% of the total production costs must be spent in Germany.

On 7 January 2022, the European Commission approved the GMPF after assessing the scheme under Article 107(3)(d) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) and the 2013 Communication from the Commission on State aid for films and other audiovisual works. According to Article 107(3)(d) TFEU, the Commission can approve aid to promote culture and heritage conservation where such aid does not affect trading conditions and competition in the Union to an extent that is contrary to the common interest. The 2013 Communication sets out the compatibility requirements for aid in favour of cinematographic and audiovisual works on the basis of the aforementioned provision of the TFEU.

The Commission found that the scheme complies with the aforementioned Communication, notably as it supports cultural works only, is not channelled towards specific production costs and respects aid intensity limits, in particular the 40% rule. It also concluded that the GMPF contributes to the promotion of culture without unduly distorting competition in the Single Market.

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Presseartikel der Europäischen Kommission

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