



BILATERAL

MEDIA

The Swiss film industry has become very dynamic: more productions, more viewers, a higher profile. One of the reasons for this is the EU Film Promotion Programme MEDIA, in which Switzerland participates.

European filmmakers have difficulty competing with their US counterparts: While Hollywood films reach hundreds of millions of potential viewers in the USA, European filmmakers have the disadvantage of much smaller national markets. And even showing a film in a neighbouring country requires synchronisation (dubbing). This makes it more difficult for European filmmakers to show productions profitably in cinemas. This is also manifested in the disproportionately high market shares of American films in European cinemas.

The EU wishes to counter this. Through the MEDIA programme, it promotes above all the development and marketing of European films. Success has already been achieved: The German film "The Lives of Others", which won an Oscar for the best foreign language film in 2007, is an example of a production supported by MEDIA.

Switzerland is also involved in this programme, allowing Swiss filmmakers and producers to benefit from European training programmes. They can apply for money for the development of film projects, the marketing of movies and participation in audiovisual education and further training programmes. The programme also facilitates participation in film festivals. This enables Swiss filmmakers to present themselves more effectively.

Since the start of Switzerland's participation in MEDIA, over 60% of the requests for support from Swiss filmmakers have been accepted. This percentage is high by European comparison. In 2006 alone, Swiss filmmakers received 1.25 million francs for the development of film projects. The MEDIA programme has funds of 755 million euro available for the period 2007 to 2013. Switzerland's contribution is approximately 10 million francs per year. The agreement must be renewed for each new programme generation, i.e. every seven years.



Key data

Date of signing: 26 October 2004 (in the framework of Bilaterals II)

Date effective: 1 April 2006

Signature of the renewed agreement: 11 October 2007

“Without MEDIA programmes, life would be even more difficult for the Swiss film industry. We are dependent on being able to organise co-productions with neighbouring countries. To gain access to a sufficient public, we also require marketing support. Thanks to MEDIA, I was able to take part in further training for producers and was chosen as “producer on the move” at the Cannes Film Festival – a programme for promoting young producers. We received financial support for both the film “My Brother is Getting Married” by Jean-Stéphane Bron, as well as for “Home” with Isabelle Huppert. “Home” is a co-production between Switzerland, France and Belgium, directed by Ursula Meier from Switzerland, and was shown in Cannes.

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Elena Tatti, Producer

