

European Film Funding Policies – Similarities and Differences in the Danish and Austrian Film Industry

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Denmark: Policy Framework

Film Act (1997)

= provides the main definitions

Film Agreement

= is passed every 4-5 years and defines the immediate policy priorities within the Danish film Industry

Media Agreement

= relevant for regulating streaming services and broadcasters

Elements of the current Film Agreement (2019-2023)

- **68.3 million** euro of public funding per year for the film sector
- **20-26 feature films** and **30-35 documentaries** to be produced per year
- **Flexible support** system in terms of genres, budget, platforms and business models
- **Flexible distribution** strategy based on the agreement between producers and distributor
- **High-commercial ambitions** (29% of domestic market share for Danish films)
- **High artistic ambitions** (around 10 feature films and 10 docs at A-festivals per year)
- **4.3 million** euro per year for the development of new talent; **1.3 million** euro for games
- **25% subsidies** to be allocated for the content relevant for children and young audiences

**Austrian
Public Film Funds**

**Danish
Public Film Funds**

National Level:

- Austrian Film Institute
- Bundeskanzleramt (Federal Chancellery, BKA)
- ORF/Film-Fernsehabskommen (ORF Film/Television Agreement)
- Fernsehfonds Austria (Austrian Television Fund)

- Danish Film Institute

Regional Level:

- Film Location Salzburg
- Land Salzburg
- Filmfonds Wien
- Land Niederösterreich
- Land Oberösterreich
- Cine Art Steiermark
- Cinestyria
- Carinthia Film Commission (CFC)
- Cine Tirol Film Commission
- Landesregierung Vorarlberg

- FilmFyn
- West Danish Film Fund

Instead of tax-incentives:

- FISA

- Copenhagen Film Fund
- Scandinavian Film Funds

Differences in funding practices:

Austria

Denmark

Automatic support through the Reference Scheme

Elaborate development schemes

Funding decisions made by committees, commissions and juries

Funding decisions made by Commissioning Editors

More flexibility when it comes to funding of new formats (cross-media projects and streaming services)

Pronounced focus on support for the content relevant for children and young audiences (across all support schemes)

Aid intensity is more strictly defined

Funding intensity is flexible

Mandatory theatrical release

Flexible release requirements

Producer's funding journey



Market Scheme instead of Automatic Scheme

- It is **selective scheme**: the editorial board consisting of two members from the DFI and three part-time members from the business, appointed for a period 2–4 years, choose 7–10 popular mainstream films a year.
 - Most common genre in this category is **comedy, drama, crime** and **family films**.
 - Market scheme films are targeted at **Danish audience**. They can deal with the events from recent Danish history, politics and other topics relevant to the Danes.
 - **Quality (cultural value)** and **audience performance** are still the main selection criteria. Past merit and point system are not taken into consideration
- Quality is defined as:*
- good storytelling in the way that a large audience can understand the story
 - high production value and unique position in the market
 - effective distribution and strong marketing

DFI's Development Philosophy: Funding underdeveloped projects is more expensive than funding a long development



Phases within the development-funding scheme

- Development starting from **premise**
- Development starting from **characters**
- Development starting from **subject matter/content**
- Development starting from **visuals**
- Development starting from **locations**
- Development starting from **sound**
- Development starting from **technical solutions**
- Development starting from **production elements**
- Development starting from **financing**
- Development starting from **audience and promotion**

DFI Support Schemes for New Formates

Digital Games Scheme (since 2007)
Cross-Media Development Scheme (2015)



Cross-Media funding within all schemes (2019)
Call "Universe" (cross-media projects for children) (2019)

Funding for television content:

DFI: Public Service Scheme
Collaboration between public broad-
casters (DR and TV2) and New Danish
Screen

DR
Pitching Dasy

Financial Obligations for Streaming Services

As of 2020, streaming services are obliged to directly invest 2% of their turnover in new Danish-language content, or 0% if their turnover is below 50k euro.

However, this law does not bring anything new as Netflix and other big streaming services have been already investing 2%, or maybe even more, of their turnover into the Danish content.

So this percentage should be higher if the legislators want to make any change. Also, streaming services take all the rights from the independent producers who basically work only for one-time fees.

The Danish film professionals and the Danish Film Institute are lobbying for the introduction of the cross-border levy. They suggest that 7% of the turnover should be transferred – as a levy – to the DFI which then would reinvest it into the Danish culture.

New Media Agreement is to be negotiated at the end of 2020 and this cross-border levy may be included in the Media Agreement.

We are still waiting to see what will happen.

Freelance Survival Mechanisms

- 1) Earning enough to create your own funds for an advanced pension scheme, health insurance and social security
- 2) Contributing to a A-Kasse – specifically Danish model of social security
 - Inflexible unemployment system for free-lance workers
- 3) Worst-case-scenario:
 - Basic-health insurance
 - Basic income
 - Basic pension
 - (self-) stigmatization due to a low status