

# BULGARIAN CINEMA 2011

FACTS / FIGURES / TRENDS

# EDITORIAL

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This special edition, prepared by the Bulgarian National Film Center in conjunction with MEDIA desk – Bulgaria, and with the help of the Observatory of Cultural Economics – Bulgaria, presents the current state of affairs in Bulgaria's audiovisual industry.

We did our best to offer more information both about the training in the field of cinema studies and the financing opportunities in this country, as well as about gaining support outside Bulgaria, the recent Bulgarian productions and their success, about the TV environment and the legislation. We believe that the booklet could expand on the idea of the processes taking place in Bulgarian film industry.

We also believe that the reference information, providing addresses and contact details of producers, festivals, distributors and institutions, could prove helpful to our readers to establish contact and enter into dialogue with their Bulgarian colleagues more easily.

# I LEGISLATION

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The system of administrative structure of management and the existing legislation, regulation and procedures form the institutional and legal environment for development of the Bulgarian film industry.

## **Regulatory framework at national level**

Two periods of building the current national institutional framework are distinguished:

- The 1990s, when the legal framework of the sector has been amended on more than one occasion, partially though: for example automatic subsidizing of coproductions was introduced at the time (1994).
- This decade, when an integral specialized regulatory framework started being developed. Over the decade, Bulgarian culture obtained its own sector law, the *Law on Protection and Development of Culture* (1999, in force as of 2000), while in 2003 a special law on Bulgarian cinema was passed: the *Film Industry Act*.

The audiovisual sector and in particular, the audiovisual goods and services have dual cultural and economic nature and their regulation is a projection of the entire economic infrastructure. So, in view of the considerable number of legal instruments intended for the sector, the legislation at national level should be divided into *direct* and *indirect* pertaining to its impact.

**The direct** legislative instruments, providing the main structures of organization, management and financing are as follows:

- *The Law on Protection and Development of Culture (1999)*, where for the first time ever the term “producership in culture” has been introduced and all forms of funding have been provided, as well as the equality of public and private subjects in regard to state support.
- *The Film Industry Act (2003, recently amended in 2009)*, which provides for a stable environment of development of the national film industry through projects and indirect measures, facilitating the overall process of making a film production, from the idea to the promotion. The financial stability is guaranteed by the mechanism set in Article 17, under which the amount of the annual subsidy shall not be less than the total of the previous-year average budgets of 7 feature films, 14 full-length documentaries and 160 minutes

animation respectively. Under the Film Industry Act the Bulgarian National Film Center was transformed into an Executive Agency with an information office under the MEDIA program as well as seven public registers.

- *The Radio and Television Law (1998)* regulates the functioning of public and commercial radio and TV broadcasters. As regards the national audiovisual policy, here a framework is set of several important regulatory and protectionist measures: the share of broadcasting time of European works and those made by independent producers, as well as the obligation of the public broadcaster, the Bulgarian National Television (BNT) to support the making and exhibition of national audiovisual production with no less than 10% of the subsidy for the (BNT) slated for making of Bulgarian TV films. In 2009, changes and amendments to the Radio and Television Law were passed along with such to the related to it
- *Electronic Communications Act (2007)*. The amendments are related to the development of a new regulatory framework, indispensable for the introduction of digital television in Bulgaria. As a result, in the early 2010, the Council for Electronic Media (a national regulator) launched a procedure to issue digital licenses for TV channels with national coverage.
- *The Copyright and Neighboring Rights Act (1993)* recently amended in 2009, sets the framework for the market of intellectual products and the non-property and property rights relating to these. Film industry is a chain of authors, creating value on a number of differentiated, though related markets and this Act protects and unites the creators also through the opportunity to establish collective bodies of managing the rights, both copyright and neighboring rights (Filmautor, Artistautor, ProPhon, etc.).
- A natural and important extension of the previous law is *The Act on Administrative Regulation of the Manufacture and Trade in Optical Disks, Stampers and Other Storage Media Loaded with Subject Matter of Copyright and Neighboring Rights (2005, recently amended in 2009)*, which sets the reproducing, distribution, import and export of disks, stampers and other storage, loaded with subject matter of copyright and neighboring rights. The Act establishes a certificate regime pertaining to the commissioning of production of stampers with recordings and reproducing on optical or other storage loaded with subject matter of copyright and neighboring rights, as well as to the deals in acquiring rights to reproduce and/or distribute, all of these being activities relating to the distribution channels of audiovisual media products and accounting for the modern technological changes in the distribution of audiovisual services.

The *indirect* regulatory framework of Bulgaria's film industry is related to: *The Commerce Act (1991, recently amended in 2009)*, under which the legal entities, engaged in the producing, distribution, exhibition, promotion of film production are registered; *The Protection of Competition Act (1998)*, which is of growing importance in the context of the European single market, moreover, because of the specifics of film products, which are a „cultural exception”, but equally are part of a liberal economic environment. Indirectly regulatory are also the laws related to social security and the payment of those working in the sector.

### **The national audiovisual industry and the *acquis communautaire***

Being part of the EU, the Bulgarian audiovisual sector is also influenced by a regulatory framework at a supranational level, even though the principle of subsidiarity is the leading one in the field of culture. Through the EU primary legislation (for example, the *Establishing Treaty of the Union*, under which cinema is identified as a “cultural exception” and rules are set for all the sectors) as well as through the main instruments of the EU secondary legislation, such as directives and recommendations, national harmonization at a community level is obtained. In fact, audiovision is a projection of the entire economic infrastructure (which falls also within the scope of liberalization of the exchange of goods and services on the single European market) and the European legislation related to the uniting of the market and the fisc, encouraging of new technologies, but, equally, retaining the cultural specifics of the product, is best developed in this field. The institutional framework at an European level, major to Bulgarian national audiovisual industry as well, contains as follows: *The Audiovisual Media Services directive (2007)*, which came to replace the *TV Without Frontiers*, the *European Convention on Cinematographic Co-production (1992)* ratified in Bulgaria in 2004 and the *European Convention for the Protection of Audiovisual Heritage (2001)*.

## II FILM EDUCATION

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The university film education in Bulgaria started in 1973, when the Cinema Department of the National Academy for Theatre, transformed later into a Screen Arts Faculty, has been established. Previously, there were few schools that provided basic training in photography and cinema. Currently, there are two state universities and a private one as well as a private college that provide film education in Bulgaria.

### **THE NATIONAL ACADEMY FOR THEATRE & FILM ARTS, SOFIA**

- Film & TV Directing and Animation Department
- Film & TV Cinematography and Photography Department
- Dramaturgy & Film & TV Critical Studies Department

The Screen Arts Faculty's initial degree programs were opened in 1973. The curriculum in the faculty combines professional training with studies in the liberal arts. Students are provided with a variety of creative experiences, from basic to advanced, in both the conceptual and production phases of film, TV and video products, classical and computer animation.

Electives in the liberal arts are required of all students to ensure that they have the background necessary for participation in a profession that influences attitudes, opinions and ways of thinking in every aspect of human experience.

The Screen Arts Faculty is an active member of CILECT and has a representative in its Executive Council. The teaching staff features the most outstanding Bulgarian directors, screenwriters, cinematographers, editors, designers, photographers and critics, having numerous demonstrated their high artistic achievements both in the country and abroad. They not only share their experience but develop their own curricula in the subject areas they teach, providing an individual artistic and methodological approach.

The departments have developed the following programs: *Bachelor Programs* Film and TV Directing, Film and TV Editing, Animation, Film and TV Cinematography, Photography, Film & TV Critical Studies, and Playwriting and Screenwriting; *Master Programs* Screen Arts Management and Film and TV Arts

## **SOUTH-WEST UNIVERSITY, BLAGOEVGRAD**

- Television and TV Arts Department

The Television and TV Arts Department was established in 1991. The offered professional education adheres to world standards and is related to working in close cooperation with unique filmmakers and highly skilled technicians. Taking personal initiative is in great demand and is highly praised with its development being the constant goal of the teaching staff.

The department has developed the following *Bachelor and Master Programs*: Film and TV Editing, Film and TV Directing and Film and TV Cinematography.

## **NEW BULGARIAN UNIVERSITY, SOFIA**

- Cinema, Advertising and Show Business Department

Cinema, Advertising and Show Business Department was established in 1994. It is a community of the teachers in the spheres of Dramaturgy, Directing, Camerawork, Fine Arts, Design, Animation, Digital Imaging Devices, Photography, Advertising, as well as other professionals, related to the creative process of realization and analysis of the film and other visual arts and their application in advertising. The department organizes cinema festivals and exhibitions, where it presents the work of its teachers and students.

The created within the university audiovisual works of art are periodically exhibited at internal, national and international forums. The results of the public activities of the department are widespread within the professional, academic and cultural circles. A number of publications in the central press evidence the warm welcoming of the films, exhibitions and works, created within the department.

The department has developed the following programs: *Bachelor Program* Visual Arts, modules: Cinema and television, Animation cinema, Advertising, Photography, Graphic design; *Master Programs* Film and Television Art, Animation Directing, Graphic and Spatial Design; Cinema Dramaturgy; *Doctoral Program* Graphic design.

## **SCREEN ARTS COLLEGE, SOFIA**

The Screen Arts College was established in 1998. After the completion of its two-year programs in Film, TV, Photography, and Animation, students are to be enrolled as junior students at the Cinema, Advertising and Show Business Department's program of New Bulgarian University, Sofia.

State support is provided by the Bulgarian National Film Center. The following genres are eligible for funding:

- Development and production of feature films (over 70 minutes), short features (between 15 and 30 minutes), short and feature length documentaries and animation;
- Minority co-productions;
- Local theatrical distribution of Bulgarian movies (including supported minority co-productions);
- Festivals and other cinema events;
- International promotion of Bulgarian films (participation of films and filmmakers at international festivals and other major cinema events).

Only companies registered in compliance with the Bulgarian Trade Law and registered as producers, distributors or exhibitors at the National Film Center – Bulgaria can apply for funding. The state support is allocated to film projects, selected by a National Committee of experts on a competitive basis.

For 2011 the secured amount of the state support for the Bulgarian film industry is 5,2 millions euros. In conformity with the law:

- At least 10% (0.52 million euros for 2011) of the funding is allotted for local theatrical distribution of Bulgarian movies (including supported minority co-productions);
- Up to 5% (0.26 million euros for 2011) is allotted for festivals, other film events and international promotion of Bulgarian films;
- Up to 5% (0.26 million euros for 2011) of the funding is allotted for special film projects on subjects, proposed by Ministry of Culture;
- At least 80% (4.16 million euros for 2011) of the funding is allotted for all types of film production (features, documentaries, animation and minority co-productions). Up to 20% of this amount (0.83 million euros for 2011) is allotted for minority co-productions.

The legal rate of support for majority Bulgarian productions is:

- At least 30% of the average budget for previous year of the respective type of film production (feature film, documentary or animation);
- Up to 50% of the budget of the film project, but for low budget productions the legal amount is up to 80% (The definition of low budget film production according to the Bulgarian Film Industry Act is “A film with a budget up to



60% of the average budget of an European movie for the previous year based on the data provided by the European Audiovisual Observatory).

Under the signed contracts for funding the producer has the obligation to pay back to the agency up to 5% of the received amount. This recoupment is due from the revenue generated after the recoupment of the own investment and other private equity funding.

Every year the Bulgarian National Film Center sets:

- Two application deadlines per year for feature films, documentaries and animation;
- Up to four deadlines per year for minority co-productions;
- One deadline per year for co-productions with a national TV broadcaster.

With the Bulgarian National Film Center's financial support in 2010, 5 feature films, 3 feature documentaries, 9 middle-length documentaries (up to 60 min.), 4 animation shorts, 3 minority feature film co-productions, 1 feature-length documentary minority co-production, 1 TV movie were made. There are 2 completed feature films financed independently.

The Bulgarian National Film Center financed in 2010 the production of 11 upcoming feature films, 1 animation feature, 14 documentaries, 13 animation shorts, 1 short fiction, 1 TV movie, 1 six-part documentary TV series, 3 minority feature film co-productions, 6 minority documentary feature-length co-productions.

#### Public Funding for Bulgarian Film Industry (in BGN; 1 BGN=0.51129 EUR)

Film projects by category	2007	2008	2009	2010
Distribution & exhibition	178 542	229 142	312 620	444 050
Festivals & promotion	244 031	548 737	706 172	818 925
Film production	6 177 447	10 122 121	10 784 120	7 827 666
National film production	4 232 806	8 752 160	7 593 850	5 555 936
• <i>Feature Films</i>	3 149 406	7 631 800	5 022 400	4 427 206
• <i>Documentaries</i>	824 600	907 800	1 741 280	621 500
• <i>Animation</i>	258 800	212 560	830 170	533 130
Minority coproductions	640 000	606 300	686 230	1 201 230
TV coproductions	639 641	272 511	221 480	125 000
Project development	168 000	148 950	544 560	278 000
First movies	497 000	342 200	1 738 000	641 600
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6 600 020</b>	<b>10 900 000</b>	<b>11 802 912</b>	<b>9 090 641</b>

Source: Bulgarian National Film Center, 2011

**Non-national feature film productions shot in Bulgaria (2010)**

Title of the film	Producer	Director	Nat.	Main cast	BG expenditures (in EUR)
RIDEAU ROUGE A RAISKO	Native	Jean-Louis Lorenzi	BG/ FR	Constance Dolle, Chloé Stefani	970 000
CONAN	Posthaste Services/ Conan Productions Inc.	Marcus Nispel	US	Jason Momoa Ron Perlman	45 110 000
YEREN	Yeti Productions LLC	David Yen Hulet	BG/ US	n/a	568 720
J'ÉTAIS À NUREMBERG	Native	Andre Chandelle	FR	Serge Hazanavicius Julie Gayet	848 250
SUPER ERUPTION	MVE Super Eruption LLC	Matt Lorans Codd	BG/US	Peter Vollebregt MyAnna Buring	511 850
BLACK FOREST	Forest Productions LLC	Patrick Dinhut	BG/US	Oliver James, Tinsel Korey	497 630
LA FIGLIA DEL CAPITANO	Immagine e cinema srl	Jakommo Campiotti	IT	Vanessa Hassler, Primo Reggiani,	1 434 640
SOFIA	Mutressa Movies LLC	Isaac Florentine	US	Christian Slater, Donald Sutherland	1 491 710
SPIDERS 3D	New Boyana Sofia Production	Tibor Takacs	US	Christa Campbell, Patrick Muldoon	885 160
JABBERWOCKY	Bulgarian Movie Company	Steven R. Monroe	US	Tahmoh Penikett, Kacey Barnfield	109 830
IL GENERALE DELLA ROVERE	Produzioni internazionale srl	Carlo Carlei	IT	Pierfrancesco Favino, Raffaella Rea	593 320
BOOK OF ETERNAL DREAD	Dungeons and Dragons 3 LLC	Gerard Patrick Lively	US	n/a	578 600
SUPER TANKER	Mythical Productions LLC	Jeffery Scott Lando	BG/US	Ben Cross, Callum Blue	533 175

Source: Bulgarian National Film Center, 2011

**Average Film Budgets (in BGN; 1 BGN=0.51129 EUR)**

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
<b>Feature film</b>	1 260 265	1 540 579	1 773 034	1 970 157	1 692 673	
<b>Documentary</b>	115 948	140 998	147 958	151 246	131 230	
<b>Animation per minute</b>	6 435	9 374	10 121	10 617	11 605	

Source: Bulgarian National Film Center, 2011

**State subsidy for film industry:  
According to financial reports of state budgets cash payments for respective years (in BGN; 1 BGN=0.51129 EUR)**

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Subsidy for film industry according to final financial reports	1 546 000	1 350 369	2 165 852	3 933 146	3 747 232	5 793 341	5 516 994	6 600 000	10 900 000	11 794 400	9 090 000	10 100 000
Ministry of Culture total budget expenditures	49 704 427	49 812 235	53 771 503	64 936 014	72 855 669	89 989 553	92 337 002	115 053 732	138 480 971	120 895 823	92 292 100	104 292 100
Rate of subsidy for film industry to the Ministry of Culture total budget	3.11%	2.71%	4.03%	6.06%	5.14%	6.44%	5.97%	5.74%	7.87%	9.76%	9.85%	9.68%

Source: Bulgarian National Film Center, 2011

## IV FILM DISTRIBUTION

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Bulgarian cinema theatres have generated ticket sales revenues soaring by double digits for four successive years now. Unlike most of the European countries in 2010, Bulgaria saw a significant growth both as regards the audiences (by 34 %) and the revenues from ticket sales (by 39 %). In the long run, the outcome of the yielded box-office receipts in 2010 constitutes an almost double growth as compared with the figures reported just a couple of years ago.

Indicative also is the fact that the primary engine of growth in 2010 was not an increase in the ticket prices, but rather it was the attracted growing interest of the audiences. In 2009 the increase in the average ticket price went up by more than 15 %, while last year it grew by mere 4 %, which is almost as much as the yearly inflation rate in this country. Noteworthy still is the fact that over less than a decade the ticket prices here have almost doubled. The reason for this, of course, is in significantly improved comfort in the cinema halls and the ever-growing number of multiplexes for the garnered actual box-office receipts. In the meanwhile, however, the number of the viewers has almost doubled from 2.015 million in 2002 up to 3.99 million in 2010.

An important reason for the last-year growth is not only the „skyrocketing” success of Avatar (recorded mostly in 2010), which far outpaced Titanic both in terms of received revenues and of the number of tickets sold. In 2010 the first Bulgarian picture was released, which was able to compete with the most successful Hollywood productions thanks to its local box-office results. Mission London by Dimitar Mitovski (375 754 viewers and 2 624 689 BGN in revenue) ranks third in terms of number of viewers and second in terms of revenues in the history of the modern Bulgarian box-office statistics. Thanks to this picture, Bulgaria for the first time in 2010, realized more than 10 % market share in terms of tickets sold and 9 % in terms of received box-office revenues. By comparison, in 2009 Bulgarian works were viewed in the cinemas by 1.6 % of the total number of viewers with their revenues constituting less than 1 % of the national box-office. Over the most successive previous year, 2008, Bulgarian films attracted some 3 % of the viewers and less than 2 % of the box-office.

This trend towards increased interest of the audiences in the newest Bulgarian cinema kept pace in the early 2011 as well. The work Tilt by Viktor Chouckov (128 789 viewers and 856 207 BGN in revenue) has been the most popular in the Bulgarian cinemas over the recent 6 months and ranks 19th on the Top 20 of the most popular 20 films over the recent decade and a half. Another recent

Bulgarian picture, *Steps in the Sand* (director Ivailo Hristov), distributed in the early 2011, boasts over 50 000 viewers, while *Love.net* by Ilian Djevelevkov, released on April 1st stands the chance to overcome the psychological barrier for this country's cinema market of 100 000 viewers.

An analysis of the shares of individual distributors draws one's attention to the significant concentration of the film-distribution business. Of a total of 13 companies, distributing their titles in 2010, only four – Alexandra, Forum Films, A+ Films and Tandem – produce 95 % of all the revenues. Still, most explainable, the dominating position of these four companies is due to the fact that these distributors screen 80 % of the titles in the cinema theatres.

Looking into the development of the Bulgarian cinema market one could not help noting the fact that along with the increase in the revenues and the number of viewers the number of the shown films is successively decreasing year-on-year: from 157 in 2005 down to 113 in 2010. What also attracts one's attention is the significant concentration of revenues and viewers on a limited number of titles. For example, Top 20 for 2010 ranks 8 films with more than 100 000 viewers each, while the first 10 titles, constituting less than 10% of the entire repertoire, have generated almost half of the revenues. By comparison, on the 2009's Top 20 there are only 4 films with over 100 000 viewers each, while the box-office of the top 10 titles is a bit over one third. Obviously, 2010 saw the phenomenal box-office results of *Avatar* and *Mission London*, which together received 20 % of the annual revenues, though undoubted is the trend towards cutting the repertoire on the part of the distributors with the latter reducing their programmes to less titles with guaranteed box-office potential.

Evidently, such reductions and risk-avoiding strategies affect mostly the art-house works and the productions of European origin. Though the contact with such films is provided by a number of film events (*Sofia Film Fest*, *Cinemanía*, *Love Is Folly*, etc.), the lack of regular arthouse repertoires in the cinemas creates a danger of a gradual decline in everyday film culture.

## Top 20 theatrical releases in Bulgaria 2011

Film	Distributor	Studio	Released	Admissions	Box office
AVATAR	ALEXANDRA	FOX	18 Dec 09	473 118	5 346 851
MISSION LONDON	A+ FILMS	BG	16 Apr 10	375 754	2 624 689
PRINCE OF PERSIA	FORUM FILM BULGARIA	BVI	21 May 10	172 171	1 336 419
ALICE IN WONDERLAND	FORUM FILM BULGARIA	BVI	05 Mar 10	115 505	1 263 863
CLASH OF THE TITANS	ALEXANDRA	WB	09 Apr 10	109 728	1 230 527
SHREK 4	FORUM FILM BULGARIA	UIP	16 Jul 10	95 011	1 056 399
TANGLED	FORUM FILM BULGARIA	BVI	03 Dec 10	92 381	924 310
SHERLOCK HOLMES	ALEXANDRA	WB	01 Jan 10	108 192	848 981
INCEPTION	ALEXANDRA	WB	23 Jul 10	111 652	845 113
SEX AND THE CITY 2	ALEXANDRA	WB	28 May 10	109 607	816 310
LAST AIRBENDER	FORUM FILM BULGARIA	UIP	27 Aug 10	58 666	671 971
THE SORCERER'S APPRENTICE	FORUM FILM BULGARIA	BVI	23 Jul 10	80 925	605 538
HARRY POTTER 7A	ALEXANDRA	WB	19 Nov 10	79 769	583 795
THE PRINCESS AND THE FROG (DUB)	FORUM FILM BULGARIA	BVI	25 Dec 09	70 881	479 324
CATS AND DOGS 2	ALEXANDRA	WB	13 Aug 10	42 849	454 893
HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON	AUDIO VISUAL / SILVER SCREEN	PAR	02 Apr 10	41 952	436 754
KNIGHT AND DAY	ALEXANDRA	FOX	02 Jul 10	53 479	424 789
STEP UP	TANDEM	IND	24 Sep 10	34 807	384 052
PERCY JACKSON & THE OLYMPIANS: THE LIGHTNING THIEF	ALEXANDRA	FOX	19 Feb 10	49 496	364 431
SAW VII	ALEXANDRA	IND	29 Oct 10	31 452	359 200

Source: Bulgarian National Film Center, 2011

\*1 BGN=0.51129 EUR

### Theatrical industry trend (2002–2010)

Year	Releases	Admissions	Box office (in BGN)	Average ticket price (in BGN)	+/- %
2002	98	2 015 735	8 717 074	4,32	+2.7
2003	117	3 045 451	12 005 343	3,94	+37.7
2004	118	3 120 088	12 592 151	4,04	+4.7
2005	125	2 421 871	11 661 250	4,81	-7.4
2006	157	2 362 149	11 956 716	5,06	+2.5
2007	137	2 398 193	14 020 755	5,85	+17.3
2008	137	2 434 530	17 120 941	7,03	+22.1
2009	143	2 986 611	24 350 153	8,15	+42.2
2010	113	3 993 709	33 879 494	8,48	+39.1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1145</b>	<b>24 778 337</b>	<b>146 303 877</b>		

Source: Bulgarian National Film Center, 2011

\*1 BGN=0.51129 Euros

### 2010 Bulgarian theatrical distribution

2010 new releases	Admissions	Box office (in BGN)	Release share (%)	Admissions share (%)	Box office share (%)
39	1 807 302	15 725 547	34.5 %	45.3 %	46.4 %
25	1 058 094	9 624 928	22.1 %	26.5 %	28.4 %
12	534 694	3 880 884	10.6 %	13.4 %	11.5 %
15	347 198	2 784 785	13.3 %	8.7 %	8.2 %
8	193 401	1 569 120	7.1 %	4.8 %	4,6 %
5	24 003	95 106	4.4 %	0.8 %	0.3 %
3	9 0204	78 403	2.7 %	0.2 %	0.2 %
2	6 336	48 324	1.8 %	0.2 %	0.1 %
2	4 725	25 096	1.8 %	0.1 %	0.1 %
1	3 201	21 190	0.9 %	0.1 %	0.1 %
0	3 968	14 884	0.0 %	0.1 %	0.0 %
1	1 417	9 864	0.9 %	0.0 %	0.0 %

Source: Bulgarian National Film Center, 2011

\*1 BGN=0.51129 Euros

**Top 20 theatrical releases in Bulgaria by admissions (1998- 2011)**

<b>Film</b>	<b>Distributor</b>	<b>Studio</b>	<b>Released</b>	<b>Admissions</b>	<b>Box office</b>
AVATAR	ALEXANDRA	FOX	18 Dec 09	473 118	5 346 851
TITANIC	DUGA	FOX	27 Mar 98	431 219	1 865 269
MISSION LONDON	A+ FILMS	BG	16 Apr 10	375 754	2 624 689
TROY	ALEXANDRA	WB	14 May 04	289 708	1 172 371
ICE AGE 3 (DUB)	ALEXANDRA	FOX	03 Jul 09	237 591	2 551 166
THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE RETURN OF THE KING	ALEXANDRA	IND	09 Jan 04	223 622	951 151
STAR WARS: EPISODE I	DUGA	FOX	17 Sept 99	222 208	913 352
ARMAGEDDON	SUNNY	BVI	28 Aug 98	215 886	842 807
MATRIX RELOADED	ALEXANDRA	WB	23 May 03	212 909	836 652
THE MATRIX	ALEXANDRA	WB	03 Sept 99	197 963	830 467
GLADIATOR	SUNNY	BVI	04 Aug 00	182 402	727 263
PRINCE OF PERSIA	FORUM FILM BULGARIA	BVI	21 May 10	172 171	1 336 419
2012	ALEXANDRA	SONY	13 Nov 09	160 547	1 180 339
STAR WARS: EPISODE 3	ALEXANDRA	FOX	19 May 05	150 298	150 298
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHEST	SUNNY	BVI	12 July 06	146 326	748 916
DA VINCI CODE	ALEXANDRA		19 May 06	144 253	759 061
INDIANA JONES AND THE KINGDOM OF THE CRYSTAL SKULL	PROOPTIKI	UIP	23 May 08	133 237	924 810
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT THE WORLD'S END	SUNNY	BVI	24 May 07	132 462	771 503
TILT	A+ FILMS	BG	11 Feb 11	128 789	856 207
TANGLED	FORUM FILM BULGARIA	BVI	03 Dec 10	125 799	1 241 909

Source: Bulgarian National Film Center, 2011

\*1 BGN=0.51129 EUR



**Top 20 Bulgarian releases of local films by box office (1998- 2011)**

Film	Distributor	Released	Admissions	Box office
MISSION LONDON	A+ FILMS	16 Apr 10	375 754	2 624 689
TILT	A+ FILMS	11 Feb 11	128 789	856 207
LOVE.NET	ALEXANDRA	01 Apr 11		
FOOTSTEPS IN THE SAND	PRO FILMS	28 Jan 11	49 329	312 843
DZIFT	ALEXANDRA	28 Sept 08	35 166	255 896
THE WORLD IS BIG AND SALVATION LURKS AROUND THE CORNER	ALEXANDRA / ART FEST	10 Oct 08	35 579	180 954
EASTERN PLAYS	MVM INTERNATIONAL	16 Oct 09	19 567	113 298
HDSP	A+ FILMS	17 Sep 10	16 386	104 656
FORECAST	ALEXANDRA	17 Apr 09	12 425	88 722
FLY WITH ROSSINANT	ALEXANDRA	10 Nov 07	13 668	84 983
MILA FROM MARS	ALEXANDRA	28 Jan 05	20 563	83 295
SEAMSTRESSES	BDK	12 Oct 07	9 506	52 645
TIME FOR WOMEN	NIKE I	23 Mar 07	13 574	38 781
L'S REVOLT	PRO FILMS	22 Sept 06	9 544	36 616
STOLEN EYES	KANINA FILM	09 Sept 05	10 005	35 193
SPANISH FLY	DUGAART	30 Jan 98	11 751	31 898
HINDEMITH	BDK	21 Nov 08	4 426	29 011
LETTER TO AMERICA	FX CINEMA	02 Mar 01	6 156	20 202
DAN KOLOV	TORNADO PICTURES	23 Jul 99	4 498	16 021
EMIGRANTS	FX CINEMA	21 Feb 03	4 229	15 541

Source: Bulgarian National Film Center, 2011

\*1 BGN=0.51129 EUR

# V CINEMAS

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Over the last decade, the number of cinema theaters in Bulgaria has significantly decreased. In 2002 there were 202 screens with 71 313 seats, but in 2010 the number of screens went down to 122 with 25 345 seats (including 9 Multiplexes with 92 screens and 16 730 seats) or the cinema theaters totaled 29. The number of cinema theaters in Bulgaria in 2010, excluding these in the Multiplexes, reached a historical low of 20 cinemas with 8615 seats, situated in 14 towns.

By the beginning of this decade most of the cinema theaters in Bulgaria (90%) were state-run. With the privatization of *Sofia Film*, Bulgaria's biggest cinema chain, most of the state-run cinema theaters were acquired by private companies or owners. Among the reasons for the slump in the number of cinema theaters in 2004 (56 screens and 19 076 seats) is the closure of the *Sofia Film* cinema chain, being declared insolvent in the same year, and the snowballing closure of cinema theaters in a number of smaller towns for economic reasons.

Nevertheless, in the second half of the decade, starting from 2005 (104 screens and 21 350 seats) a relative increase in the number of cinema theaters was witnessed. It is not due to the fact that new cinema theaters have opened doors, rather because the closed old single-screen cinemas have been replaced by 6, 8 or more screens modern multiplexes. It was in 2005, when most of the small cinema theaters closed for good, while, in Sofia, the second Multiplex of the Alexandra Group, the Arena Cinemas chain opened doors with 15 screens each (a total of 5992 seats). Over the following years, the Arena Cinemas chain expanded with two other multiplexes: in the Mall of Varna with 8 screens (1177 seats), in the Park Mall of Stara Zagora with 6 screens (946 seats).

Though almost no public investments have been made in the opening of new cinemas and the number of cinemas has decreased by half, in the recent years a growing number of new multiplexes with more than 8 screens opened doors as well as new cinemas with several screens. In 2005 in Plovdiv one cinema closed down, was renovated and reopened again by a new operator under a new name *Flamingo* with 4 screens (377 seats). In 2006, a new 6-screen Cineplex theater opened doors in the Sofia City Center shopping center (1367 seats). In 2006 the first IMAX screen (404 seats) was opened in the Mall of Sofia as part of Cinema City with still other 12 screens (2470 seats).

Over the next years, the number of cinemas in Bulgaria has started to increase gradually. The Arena Cinemas chain expanded in Veliko Tarnovo with 3 screens (309 seats) and another one Arena Cinema in the Central Mall of Pleven with 1 screen (133 seats). A few new cinemas started functioning in the country, in cities without any cinemas for years now: Botevgrad, Mezdra, Silistra, Targovishte. In 2009, with the opening of a second Cinema City in the Mall of Plovdiv with 11 screens (1686 seats) yet another cinema theaters chain, Cinema City, establishes its presence within the territory of Bulgaria. The two companies seem to start competing with each other for investing in and opening of new multiplexes.

In April 2010, two new multiplexes of the Arena Cinemas chain opened doors: in The Mall of Sofia with 10 screens (1794 seats) and in Grand Mall of Varna with 8 screens (1897 seats). In end-2010, two more multiplexes, this time of Cinema City chain, welcome their first viewers: Cinema City in Galeria Mall of Stara Zagora with 7 screens (1306 seats) and Cinema City in Mall of Rousse with 10 screens (1871 seats). Interestingly, it was in the city of Ruse, where a century ago the first cinema theater in Bulgaria was built, *Modern Theater*.

In this way, the cinema theaters in Bulgaria in the beginning of 2011 reached a total of 34 cinemas with 141 screens (26 348 seats).

Now there are only 17 single-screen cinemas left. Of them only a few cinema theaters in small towns do not yet have the necessary scanners for the analogue track (Cyan Dye Track), which has, since 2005, been used in 90% of the released films.

On the other hand, the number of Digital screens increases reaching 52 in the early 2011.

In 2010, Bulgarian Multiplexes were visited by 3 611 338 viewers, which is 90% of all the viewers, who paid admission fees amounting to 29 965 920 BGN (15 321 331 EUR). This amount represents 88% of the GBO of all the cinemas. In 2010, the viewers in cinema theaters in Bulgaria totaled 3 993 709 with 33 879 494 BGN (17 322 310 EUR) in revenue.

There are five Bulgarian cinemas that are members of the Europa Cinemas network. Those are Cinema Lumiere, Sofia (352 seats), Cinema House, Sofia (284 seats), Euro Cinema, Sofia (84 seats) and 6-screen Cineplex in Sofia (1367 seats), Hall Europe (230 seats), located in the Festival Complex in Varna. The total of Europa Cinemas network seats is 2317.

### Screens, 2002-2011

Year	Number of screens	Number of digital screens	Seats
2002	202	0	71 373
2003	194	0	74 393
2004	56	0	19 076
2005	104	2	21 350
2006	112	2	24 923
2007	114	2	25 301
2008	95	12	21 425
2009	104	22	22 657
2010	122	40	25 345
2011	141	52	29 021

Source: Bulgarian National Film Center, 2011

### Multiplexes, 2008-2011

Year	Number of multiplexes	Number of screens	Seats
2008	6	63	12 356
2009	7	74	14 042
2010	9	92	16 730
2011	11	109	19 907

Source: Bulgarian National Film Center, 2011

### CINEMAS, 2011

Cinemas with	Number of cinemas	Number of screens	Seats
1 screen	17	17	2962
2 screens	4	8	5466
3-5 screens	2	7	686
6-7 screens	3	19	3619
8-11 screens	5	47	7422
12-15 screens	3	43	8866
	<b>34</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>29 021</b>

Source: Bulgarian National Film Center, 2011

### Cinemas, excluding multiplexes, 2011

Cities	Cinemas	Screens	Seats
Sofia	4	5	4 662
Plovdiv	3	7	593
Burgas	2	3	305
Veliko Tarnovo	1	3	309
Varna	1	2	980
Shumen	1	1	750
Rousse	1	1	599
Blagoevgrad	1	1	234
Pleven	1	1	133
Silistra	1	1	130
Yambol	1	1	78
Mezdra	1	1	70
Botevgrad	1	1	61
Byala	1	1	60
Targovishte	1	1	52
Dimitrovgrad	1	1	49
Sevlievo	1	1	49
<b>17</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>9 114</b>

Source: Bulgarian National Film Center, 2011

### Multiplexes with 6 and more screens, 2011

Cities	Site	Screens	Seats	Opening Date
Sofia	Cinema Arena Zapad	15	3020	4 Apr 2003
Sofia	Cinema Arena Mladost	15	2972	19 May 05
Sofia	Cinema City, Mall of Sofia	13	2874	13 July 06
Plovdiv	Cinema City, Mall of Plovdiv	11	1686	3 Sept 09
Sofia	Cinema Arena, The Mall	10	1791	21 Apr 10
Rousse	Cinema City, Mall of Rousse	10	1871	28 Dec 10
Varna	Cinema Arena, Mall of Varna	8	1 177	12 June 08
Varna	Cinema Arena, Grand Mall	8	897	15 Apr 10
Stara Zagora	Cinema City, Mall Galeria	7	1306	18 Nov 10
Sofia	Cineplex, Sofia Cilty Center	6	1367	5 Dec 06
Stara Zagora	Cinema Arena, Park Mall	6	946	11 Jan 08
<b>5</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>19 907</b>	

Source: Bulgarian National Film Center, 2011

### 5 most successful cinemas according to attendance in 2010

Cities	Multiplex	Screens	Admissions
Sofia	Cinema City, Mall of Sofia	13 screens	850 558
Sofia	Cinema Arena Zapad	15 screens	521 985
Plovdiv	Cinema City, Mall of Plovdiv	11 screens	472 613
Sofia	Cinema Arena Mladost	15 screens	461 674
Varna	Cinema Arena, Mall of Varna	8 screens	349 218
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>2 656 048</b>
<b>GBO (in BGN)</b>			<b>23 197 958</b>

Source: Bulgarian National Film Center, 2011 \*1 BGN=0.51129 EUR

### Europa Cinemas network, 2011

Cities	Site	Screens	Seats
Sofia	Cineplex	6	1367
Sofia	Cinema Lumiere	1	352
Sofia	Cinema House	1	284
Varna	Hall Europe, Festival Complex	1	230
Sofia	Euro Cinema	1	84
<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>2317</b>

Source: Bulgarian National Film Center, 2011

## VI FESTIVALS

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Several national and international festivals are held on a yearly basis (except for the *Golden Rose* and the *Golden Rhyton*, which are held on a biennial basis).

### **SOFIA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL**

Sofia International Film Festival is the leading film event in Bulgaria and one of the most high-profile festivals in Central East Europe. It is accredited by FIAPF as competitive festival for first and second films. The SIFF familiarizes the local audiences with the best recent works of the world cinema and presents new Bulgarian and regional films to international audiences.

Since 2004 significant part of the festival is the **Sofia Meetings** coproduction market (pitching for feature film projects and showcasing Bulgarian and regional films).

Venue place and date: *Sofia, March*; Submission deadline: *mid November*

### **FILM PALACE FEST**

Film Palace Fest is the biggest and the most high-profile event, presenting max. 45-minute films of all genres in Bulgaria. It is organized in collaboration with and the support of the Ministry of Culture, the Bulgarian National Film Center, the Municipality of Balchik and the Palace in Balchik.

This is the first single event featuring short films in Bulgaria, which is financed under the EU MEDIA program and under the EC Youth in Action program.

Venue place and date: *Balchik, June*; Submission deadline: *March*

### **FILMINI**

FILMINI International Short Film Festival is a competitive festival of short films. It aims to contribute to the promotion and production of arthouse short films, and to develop a spirit of friendship and cooperation among filmmakers from all over the world.

The festival program includes several competitions of short films as well as non-competitive film programs, retrospections.

Venue place and date: *Sofia, October*; Submission deadline: *late July*

## **LOVE IS FOLLY INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL**

*Love Is folly* is a competitive international film festival. It is held on a yearly basis in the coastal city of Varna. In terms of its genre, the Festival is oriented towards dramas and comedies, melodramas and romances.

Venue place and date: *Varna, late August – early September*; Submission deadline: *early June*

## **FESTIVAL OF EUROPEAN CO-PRODUCTIONS**

A non-competitive international film festival held on a yearly basis both in Sofia, at the National Palace of Culture and in another city, which is different each year. The festival promotes new works made by at least two countries of which one is necessarily a EU member state.

Venue place and date: *Sofia, late May – early June*; Submission deadline: *mid April*

## **THE CINEMANIA WORLD FILM PANORAMA**

The Cinemania started in 1987 as a World Film Panorama. The main program presents leading European cinemas. Part of the program includes the most interesting events in the field of the independent American cinema. Significant film titles of national cinematographies that are less popular in Bulgaria prevail. The Cinemania presents also retrospections (of Yasudjiro Ozu, Milos Forman, Miroslav Ondricek, Krzysztof Kieslowski, Jacques Demy, etc.), portraits of celebrities of the present and the past (Sven Nykvist, Robert Altman, Carlos Saura, Mormarev Bros., prominent Bulgarian scriptwriters). On the sidelines of the fest, other events are held, such as premieres of books by popular filmmakers, round-table-talks and seminars.

The main purpose of the fest is rendered obvious in the very phrasing of the event: Cinemania International Film Panorama. The accent is put on the selection and geography of the offered films. The idea is the Bulgarian spectators to get familiarised in a fortnight with the most essential of the films that have been made in the last 2 or 3 years, winners at European and world film festivals.

Venue place and date: *Sofia, November – December*; Submission deadline: *non competitive*



## **GOLDEN CHEST INTERNATIONAL TELEVISION FESTIVAL**

The *Golden Chest* International TV Festival is a competitive event. The works compete in four categories.

The *Golden Chest* International Television Festival is one of the earliest and most prestigious international festivals in Europe. It was founded in 1968 on the initiative of “Television Drama” Department of the Bulgarian National Television.

The festival focuses on the genre of television drama, which has changed in terms of form and contents over the years, from the specific character of television drama to television films and serials.

The *Golden Chest* International Television Festival is one of the few venues in South-East Europe, where international artists can meet and discuss their ideas and experience.

Venue place and date: *Plovdiv, September/October*; Submission deadline: *to be confirmed*

## **GOLDEN ROSE**

The *Golden Rose* Festival of Bulgarian Feature Films is held at the Festival and Congress Centre in the coastal city of Varna. The Festival is a competitive one for Bulgarian fiction films. The event is organized by the *Bulgarian National Film Center* and the Bulgarian National Television with the support of the Bulgarian Ministry of Culture and the Municipality of Varna.

Venue place and date: *Varna, October*; Submission deadline: *mid-August*

## **GOLDEN RHYTON**

The *Golden Rhyton* is a biennial national film festival, hosted by the Novotel-Plovdiv in the city of Plovdiv, in September/October. It is a competitive documentary and animation film festival, organised by the *Bulgarian National Film Center*, the Bulgarian National Television with the support of the Bulgarian Ministry of Culture and the Municipality of Plovdiv.

Venue place and date: *Plovdiv, December*; Submission deadline: *mid-October*

# VII AWARD-WINNING BULGARIAN FILMS ABROAD

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## Year of 2010

EASTERN PLAYS (feature), directed by Kamen Kalev, 2009

- International Film Festival of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria; *Award*: Best Director
- Trieste International Film Festival; *Awards*: CEI Award
- Vilnius Ecrans d'Hiver IFF; *Awards*: Best Film, CICAIE Prize
- International Sofia Film Festival; *Awards*: Best Bulgarian Film, Special Jury Award
- Anger International Film Festival, *Award*: Grand Prix
- Mons International Film Festival; *Award*: Best European Film
- Cinemanila International Film Festival, Manila; *Award*: Grand Jury Prize

THE WORLD IS BIG AND SALVATION LURKS AROUND THE CORNER (feature), directed by Stephan Komandarev, 2008

- Palm Springs International Film Festival; *Awards*: runner-up for the audience award
- Fajr International Film Festival; *Awards*: Crystal Simorgh Special Jury Prize
- California Independent Film Festival, USA; *Award*: Best Film
- European Film Festival, Nis, Serbia – Closing Film
- Cannes International Film Festival – Ecran Junior Competition
- Mamers en Mars International Film Festival, France; *Awards*: Audience Award, Graines d'images – Macao Award
- Santa Barbara International Film Festival – Competition
- Valenciennes International Film Festival, France; *Award*: Audience Award

EUROPOLIS: THE TOWN OF THE DELTA (documentary), directed by Kostadin Bonev, 2009

- Festival der Neue Heimatfilm de Freistadt, Austria; *Award*: Grand Prix
- Volokolomsk's Frontier FF, Volokolamsk, Russia; *Award*: Best Documentary
- Golden Knight International Film Festival, Moscow; *Award*: Best Script

A FAREWELL TO HEMINGWAY (feature), directed by Svetoslav Ovcharov, 2008

- South-East European Film Festival, Los Angeles, US; *Award*: Audience Award for Best Fiction

CORRIDOR No 8 (documentary), directed by Boris Despodov, 2008

- International Documentary Competition of the TRT TV, Istanbul, *Award*: Special Jury Prize

FELINICITA (animation), directed by Andrey Tzvetkov, 2009

- Golden Mummer International Animation Film Festival, Sofia; *Award*: Mummer Grand Prix

STANKA GOES HOME (feature), directed by Maya Vitkova, 2010

- Festival de Cine de Huesca, Spain; *Award*: Francisco García de Paso
- Sarajevo Film Festival; *Award*: Special Award

SEUTHES THE IMMORTAL (documentary), directed by Zlatina Rousseva, 2009

- Arts & Film International Festival, Telc, Czech Republic; *Award*: Jury Award

ANNA BLUME (animation), directed by Vesela Dancheva, 2009

- International Animation Festival, Wissembourg, France; *Award*: Special Jury Prize

WATER (short), directed by Rozalia Dimitrova, 2010

- eDIT the Filmmaker's Festival, Frankfurt; *Award*: eDward - The Young Filmmaker's Award

WARM NOVEMBER (feature), directed by Valentin Goshev, 2009

- FILMINI International Short Film Festival, Sofia; *Award*: Best Bulgarian Short

VOICE OVER (feature), directed by Svetoslav Ovcharov, 2010

- Cairo International Film Festival; *Awards*: Silver Pyramid for Best Director, FIPRESCI Award

## **Year of 2011**

SHELTER (feature), directed by Dimitur Sholev, 2010

- Sofia International Film Fest; *Awards*: Grand Prix, Kodak Award for Best Bulgarian Feature Film

FOOTSTEPS IN THE SAND (feature), directed by Ivailo Hrsitov, 2010

- Sofia International Film Fest; *Award*: Best Balkan Film

## **BULGARIAN NATIONAL FILM CENTER**

The Bulgarian National Film Center is the Executive Agency of the Bulgarian Ministry of Culture that administrates the implementation of the Cinema Industry Act (CIA). The main functions of the Agency are to finance film production, film managing, distribution and exhibition of films, to support the promotion of Bulgarian films in this country and abroad, to keep the register under the CIA, to stimulate the development of the film culture.

The Bulgarian National Film Center administers producer's rights of Bulgarian films, when granted such rights under an act or a contract. It represents Bulgaria at the Board of Management of *Eurimages* Fund of the Council of Europe; it is the coordinator for Bulgaria of the European Audiovisual Observatory and of the MEDIA program of the EU.

For the creation, the distribution and the preservation of Bulgarian films the Bulgarian National Film Center collaborates closely with the Bulgarian National Television, the Bulgarian National Film Archives, the Union of Bulgarian Filmmakers.

The Bulgarian National Film Center is the organizer of *Golden Rose* Festival of Bulgarian Feature Films (Varna), and the *Golden Rose* Documentary and Animation Film Festival (Plovdiv). Under its initiative and with the efforts of its team since 1996 the Festival of European Co-productions is held in Sofia.

The most popular recently made films:

- LOVE.NET, directed by Ilian Jevелеkov
- TILT, directed by Viktor Chouchkov
- EASTERN PLAYS, directed by Kamen Kalev
- DZIFT, directed by Yavor Gyrdev
- THE WORLD IS BIG AND SALVATION LURKS AROUND THE CORNER, directed by Stefan Komandarev (the Bulgarian entry for foreign language Oscar)

The Bulgarian National Film Center is an EFP member since May 2005.

## **NATIONAL FILM ARCHIVE**

The Bulgarian National Film Archive is a Member of the International Federation of Film Archives (FIAF) since 1959. It holds the national film archive, which consists of about 15000 titles with more than 40 000 copies. There are 9528 Bulgarian films (including features, documentaries and animations) and 4348 foreign films from 54 countries. The absolute priority of the Bulgarian Film Archive is to preserve “the moving pictures” for the posterity.

## **UNION OF BULGARIAN FILM MAKERS**

The Union of Bulgarian Filmmakers is a creative professional organization with its own contribution to the development of film art and audiovision in Bulgaria as an active party in the process of devising of all concepts, legislation, models and decisions, which correspond to the problems of audiovisual culture.

The Union represents its structures and members in international organizations: FERA, FIPRESCI, ASIFA, CIFEJ, UNI-MEI (EURO-ME).

With its activities the Union of Bulgarian Filmmakers contributes to the development and protection of Bulgarian cinema; to the development of the film theory and film history; to the aesthetic education of the cinemagoers; to applying of high art criteria.

## **FILMAUTHOR**

Filmautor, established in 1993, is the Bulgarian society for collective management of copyrights and the neighboring rights in the audiovisual field. It is a member of CISAC.

Its members are Bulgarian directors, scriptwriters and cameramen that are copyright holders under the Bulgarian Copyright and Neighboring Rights Act. Members are also Bulgarian producers of the audiovisual works.

Filmautor has reciprocal representation agreements with 25 sister societies from across the world.

## **NATIONAL CULTURE FUND**

The National Culture Fund was established within the framework of the Ministry of Culture and started functioning in November, 2000. The National Culture Fund supports the development of Bulgarian culture through subsidizing different arts, cultural activities and authors. Its main goal is to support the development of culture by raising, managing and allotting funds for the purpose of

pursuing the national policy in the field of culture as set forth in the Program of the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria for the respective period and the Law on Protection and Development of Culture.

The priorities in the NCF activity are also in compliance with the criteria set forth in Chapter “Culture & Audio-visual Policy” of the EU Accession Treaty of Bulgaria.

## **INSTITUTE FOR CULTURE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

The institute supports and works towards priority delivery of national and international cultural projects and programs. It offers assistance to Bulgarian diplomatic missions abroad in their effort to expand the bilateral and multilateral cultural relations and cooperation. It preserves, makes acquisitions and promotes the artwork collection of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Bulgaria. Along with the Diplomatic Institute it delivers training in the area of cultural diplomacy for young diplomats.

## **OBSERVATORY OF CULTURAL ECONOMICS**

The Observatory of Cultural Economics, Sofia, was established in the early 2008 as an open research platform. Its major mission is to provide sustainable support for arts and culture through devising and disseminating economic and financial analyses and prognoses, facilitating the development of the cultural sector.

The goal of the Observatory of Cultural Economics is to develop and encourage the theory and practice of economic analyses in the cultural sector; to act as a mediator between the arts, society, politicians, researchers, i.e. to foster the efficient inclusion of the cultural institutions in the processes of building cultural policies and strategies. For this purpose the Observatory initiates discussions, develops cultural projects, encourages the establishing of networks and communities in the field of the economics of culture.

## MEDIA PROGRAM

Over the past 16 years, MEDIA, the EU's support program for the European audiovisual industry, has supported the development and distribution of thousands of films as well as training activities, festivals and promotion projects throughout the continent. From 2001-2006, more than half a billion euros were injected into 8.000 projects from over 30 countries.

The new **MEDIA 2007** program (2007-2013) is the fourth multi-annual program since 1991 (previous programs) and has a budget of € 755 million. It simplifies the program's administration but certainly not its objectives:

- to strive for a stronger European audiovisual sector, reflecting and respecting Europe's cultural identity and heritage;
- to increase the circulation of European audiovisual works inside and outside the European Union;
- to strengthen the competitiveness of the European audiovisual sector by facilitating access to financing and promoting use of digital technologies.

The MEDIA program is implemented via annual work program. MEDIA 2007 is divided into five action lines:

- training of professionals;
- development of production projects and companies;
- distribution of cinematographic works and audiovisual programs;
- promotion of cinematographic works and audiovisual programs, including the support for film festivals;
- horizontal actions/pilot projects.

Independent production and distribution companies can apply for development or distribution funding in the form of grants and interest free loans. Financial assistance is available for training providers and organisers of markets and festivals. Practitioners in the audiovisual industry such as producers of film, television, animation, new media companies, distribution and sales companies and also 'enabling' organisations such as training bodies or film schools, promotional events or festival organisers.

The European Union adopted a new **MEDIA Mundus** programme, a broad international cooperation programme for the audiovisual industry to strengthen cultural and commercial relations between Europe's film industry and film-



makers of third countries. The EU will provide €15 million of funding from 2011-2013 for projects submitted by audiovisual professionals from Europe and from third countries.

**The official site of the MEDIA program is available at:**  
[www.ec.europa.eu/media](http://www.ec.europa.eu/media)

## **MEDIA and Bulgaria**

Bulgaria is part of MEDIA family since 2002. The MEDIA's information desk in Bulgaria is opened since 2003.

### **Some of the most successful films, supported by MEDIA, are:**

- TILT (feature), produced by CHOUCHKOV BROTHERS Ltd., directed by Viktor Chouchkov-Son
- MISSION LONDON (feature), produced by SIA Ltd; directed by Dimitar Mitovski
- DIVORCE ALBANIAN STYLE (documentary), produced by ADELA MEDIA, directed by Adela Peeva
- A FAREWELL TO HEMINGWAY (feature), produced by PROFILM Ltd., directed by Svetoslav Ovcharov
- THE MOSQUITO PROBLEM AND OTHER STORIES (documentary), produced by AGITPROP Ltd., directed by Andrey Paounov
- CORRIDOR N 8 (documentary), produced by AGITPROP Ltd., directed by Boris Despodov

### **MEDIA support for Bulgarian projects (2006-2010)**

<b>Activities</b>	<b>2006 (in Euro)</b>	<b>2007 (in Euro)</b>	<b>2008 (in Euro)</b>	<b>2009 (in Euro)</b>	<b>2010 (in Euro)</b>
Training	153 094	80 000	90 000	90 000	90 000
Development	260 000	---	---	132 802	182 751
Distribution	219 000	276 363	247 923	327 423	282 689
Festivals	32 000	35 000	50 000	57 000	84 663
Promotion	45 000	55 000	75 000	75 000	75 000
MEDIA International	n/a	n/a	n/a	100 000	n/a
MEDIA Mundus	n/a	n/a	n/a	100 000	---
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>695 120</b>	<b>446 363</b>	<b>462 923</b>	<b>782 225</b>	<b>715 703</b>

Source: MEDIA Desk - Bulgaria, 2011

**MEDIA's development support for 2010 is as follows:**

• **Single projects**

company name	project title	category	MEDIA support (in Euro)	call (deadline)
ACTIVIST 38 Ltd	BEAST	documentary	21 751	20/2009 (27.11.2009)
ADELA MEDIA 99	SPAICH	documentary	23 000	20/2009 (27.11.2009)
MK PRODUCTION	FREEDOM FROM FEAR	documentary	24 000	20/2009 (12.04.2010)
ODAVISION PRODUCTIONS Ltd	THE PURSUER OF SOUNDS	fiction	24 500	20/2009 (27.11.2009)
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>92 751</b>	

• **Slate funding**

company name	slate genre	MEDIA support (in Euro)	call (deadline)
AGITPROP Ltd	documentary/ fiction	90 000	20/2009 (12.04.2010)
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>90 000</b>	

## **EURIMAGES**

Eurimages is a cultural support fund established in 1989 within the framework of the Council of Europe. Since 2011 Russia has become its 35<sup>th</sup> member state.

Eurimages promotes the European audiovisual industry by providing financial support to European cinematographic works. In doing so, it encourages cooperation between professionals established in different European countries.

The Board of Management defines the policy of the Fund and takes the decisions on support. It is composed of representatives of all member states and meets four times a year. Eurimages has four support schemes: coproduction, theatrical distribution, exhibition, theatre digitisation.

A main condition of obtaining Eurimages support is the project to be an international coproduction between at least two member states. Every coproducer has to have at least 50% of the financing in place.

**The official site of Eurimages is available at: [www.coe.int/eurimages](http://www.coe.int/eurimages)**

## **Eurimages and Bulgaria**

Bulgaria has been a member of Eurimages since 1993. The state has signed the European Convention of Cinematographic Coproduction in 2005 and has bilateral coproduction agreements with France, Italy, Canada and Russia.

### **Some of the most successful coproductions, supported by Eurimages, are:**

- TILT (feature), coproduced by Bulgaria and Germany, directed by Victor Chuchkov; 130 000 admissions;
- MISSION LONDON (feature), coproduced by Bulgaria, Hungary, Macedonia, UK, and Sweden, directed by Dimitar Mitovski; selected for Cannes IFF's market screening (2010). Its screenings have reached the highest level of admission for national films - 380 000.
- THE STATE OF SHOCK (feature), co-produced by Slovenia, Serbia and Bulgaria, directed by Andrej Kosak
- THE POLISH PLUMBER (documentary), co-produced by Bulgaria and Ireland, directed by Boris Despodov
- THE ISLAND (feature), co-produced by Bulgaria and Sweden, directed by Kamen Kalev.

## TV broadcasters, programs, zoning, audiences

- In the period 2000–09, relatively stable dynamism is witnessed in the growing number of TV broadcasters: from 86 in 2000 up to 113 in 2009 while in the period 2006–08 a growing number of TV broadcasters has been witnessed: by 8–9 on a yearly basis (Table 1). 2009 makes an exception to this growth.
- According to a report of the Council for Electronic Media ([www.cem.bg/cat.php?id=110](http://www.cem.bg/cat.php?id=110)), by December 31st, 2010 there are 24 suppliers of audiovisual services functioning in the TV sector, licensed to create 33 TV programmes, meant for either land **analogue or digital broadcasting**. Of them, four are **national TV programmes**, meant for networks of land analogue broadcasting: BNT 1 of BNT; bTV of bTV Media Group EAD, Nova TV of Nova Broadcasting Group EAD and ProBG of ProBG Media EOOD; The Bulgarian National Television being a national public TV supplier holds also licences to create its four regional programmes’.
- 136 TV programmes are broadcast by 102 suppliers of audiovisual media services via **cable electronic broadcast networks and/or satellite**.
- Twenty suppliers already hold individual licences to create TV programmes, meant for **national land digital broadcasting**.
- In 2009 the first ever supplier of **nonlinear media services of the Video-On-Demand type as well as of Pay-Per-View** appeared. By March 2011 the number of suppliers stood at 7: a new trend on the Bulgarian market of audiovisual services with four of them capable to offer both services.
- In terms of hours, the TV program has seen almost double dynamism in the period under review 2000–09: from 395 369 in 2000 up to 694 778 by the end of the period. Once again, the last years show the highest dynamism.

**Table 1. Licensed and registered TV broadcasters in the period 2000–09**

Year	2000	2003	2006	2007	2008	2009
<b>Number of TV broadcasters</b>	86	98	102	110	119	113
<b>Programs (h)</b>	395 369	498 091	599 135	661 872	747 036	694 778

Source: National Statistical Institute, 2011, [www.nsi.bg/otrasal.php?otr=24](http://www.nsi.bg/otrasal.php?otr=24)

- The regional distribution of the TV broadcasters is nonequilibrium, being concentrated in the South-western region, part of which is Sofia, with the number of broadcasters amounting to 47 in 2007 and to 54 in 2009, while the TV broadcasting there accounts for 50% of the total of hours, as seen in Table 2.

**Table 2. TV broadcasters per statistical regions in the period 2007–09**

Statistical regions	2007		2008		2009	
	Number of TV broadcasters	TV Broadcasts (h)	Number of TV broadcasters	TV Broadcasts (h)	Number of TV broadcasters	TV Broadcasts (h)
<b>Countrywide</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>661 872</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>747 036</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>694 778</b>
<b>Northern and South-Eastern Bulgaria</b>						
• North-Western	9	44 301	9	42 667	6	30 660
• Central Northern	10	69 900	8	55 422	8	51 154
• North-Eastern	13	71 928	13	75 648	9	48 560
• South-Eastern	14	72 335	16	91 590	18	88 902
<b>South-Western and Southern Central Bulgaria</b>						
• South-Western	47	335 995	55	398 927	54	407 980
• Southern Central	14	67 413	18	82 782	18	67 522

Source: National Statistical Institute, 2011, [www.nsi.bg/otrasal.php?otr=24](http://www.nsi.bg/otrasal.php?otr=24)

- According to information of the Council for Electronic Media and of the Ministry of Culture (provided by the TV broadcasters), the distribution of the audiences of the TV broadcasters in 2008 retains a relative stability (Table 3). Slight decrease in the relative share of the three leading channels (nationwide broadcasters) is witnessed with the emerging of TV broadcasters with smaller shares in 2007. Balkan News Corporation (bTV) is the leader with 36.9% in 2007 and 36.7% in 2008 respectively. Second in terms of audience share ranks the Nova TV with its 17.8% in 2007 and 17.1% in 2008. Third, but only in 2007 is the public Bulgarian National Television (BNT) with 14.6%, however in 2008 it went down by 1% and the BNT ranks fourth in terms of its audience share.

## Audiovisual Media Services Directive: Broadcasting European works and productions of independent producers

- In conformity with the Directive, encouraging broadcasting of European works, almost all the TV broadcasters have seen a growth over the recent couple of years (according to information of the Council for Electronic Media and of the Ministry of Culture, provided by the TV broadcasters). However, some of them do not meet the requirement that more than half of all programs broadcast ought to be European productions (Article 19a of the Radio and Television Law), maybe because of the wishful nature of the text “where possible”. The Bulgarian National Television is leading with 87.5% in 2007 and 89% in 2008 (Table 4). According to the same information (which does cover just a few of the TV broadcasters), the program time share of European productions, made by independent producers, varies between 1.5% and 22%.

**Table 3. TV broadcasters according to the audience share, broadcast European productions and productions of independent producers (%)**

Television	2007			2008		
	Audience share	European productions (as a percentage of the total broadcast time)	European productions (independent producer as a percentage of the total broadcast time)	Audience share	European productions (as a percentage of the total broadcast time)	European productions (independent producer as a percentage of the total broadcast time)
Balkan News Corporation (bTV)	36.9	56.5	21.1	36.7	61.0	21.9
Nova TV	17.8	65.1	15.1	17.1	67.1	13.8
Bulgarian National Television (BNT)	14.6	87.5	10.4	13.6	89.0	11.8
Evropa TV	11.4	30.0	0.5	12.6	42.0	1.5
Bulgaria Cable	9.0	85.0	18.0	14.0	84.0	22.0
Diema	2.0	5.5	-	2.8	5.7	-
Diema Family	1.7	13.6	-	3.2	17.3	-
Diema 2	1.0	2.2	-	0.9	3.1	-
TV 7	0.7	55.0	8.0	2.6	52.0	15

Source: Observatory of Cultural Economics, author's table. According to information provided by the CEM and the MoC for the period 2007–08

## The Bulgarian National Television and Bulgarian TV filmmaking

- Pursuant to Article 71 (2) of the Radio and Television Law, the Bulgarian National Television supports the making and broadcasting of national audiovisual production, allotting for new Bulgarian TV film production no less than 10 percent of the support allocated from the national budget for television.

Table 4 is indicative of the degree to which these obligations are met, showing: the amount of the state subsidy adopted for the BNT budget, used as a basis for forming funds pursuant to Article 71, paragraph 2 of the Radio and Television Law, as well as the amount of the utilized sum according to the reports on the budget cash performance of the BNT in the period 2007–09.

**Table 4. Funds for Filmmaking according to the Budget of the Bulgarian National Television in the period 2007–09**

Year	Amount of the subsidy in the BNT budget, used as a basis for forming funds for filmmaking	Funds for filmmaking, adopted for the BNT budget pursuant to Article 71, para 2 of the Radio and Television Law	Budget cash performance on Filmmaking	Difference between the decreed amount of funds for filmmaking under Article 72, para 2 of the Radio and Television Law and the actual cash performance on budget item Filmmaking
1	2	4	5	(5-4)=6
2007	56 000 500	5 600 050	5 369 384	-230 666
2008	57 766 500	5 776 650	3 217 821	-2 558 829
2009	61 022 880	6 102 288	2 714 032	-3 388 256
			<b>Total:</b>	<b>-6 177 751</b>

Source: Observatory of Cultural Economics, author's table. According to information provided by the Bulgarian National Television in the period 2007–09.

- According to information provided by the BNT, the following productions have been made over the recent two years in conformity with Article 71 (2) of the Radio and Television Law:

*In 2008, 15 own film productions were made: Because God Speaks Bulgarian (Hristo Chilingirov), The British and the Climate Change (dir Milan Kuzov), The Basis of the Base (dir Sevda Shishmanova), Lost Neighbours (dir Hrisimir Danev), There Is Only One God for All People (dir Hristo Chilingirov), At the Age of Sixty (dir Damian Serkedjiev), NDE or Stories about Death (dir Damian Serkedjiev), Reserve for Gelini (dir Damian Petrov), Bulgarian Heralds: Meeting in Madrid (dir Milan Kuzov), Estonia's Signs (dir Nadezhda Vasileva and Nedialko Danev), The 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Podkrepa Trade Union*

(dir Svetoslav Draganov), *Mammy* (dir Oleg Kovachev), *Prosecutors* (dir Boris Pankin), *Good Night and Sweet Repose*, *Hero* (dir Suny Suninski), *Letters from the Balkan Mountains* (dir Suny Suninski)

*In the same year the following external productions and coproductions have been made:*

- *Three documentaries: The Independence Day* (dir Hristo Zhivkov), *On Dramatic Performances* (dir Lilia Abadjieva), *The Bulgarian Theatricals* (dir Ralitsa Dimitrova, coproduction with the Bulgarian National Film Center), one fiction film: *The Holy Family* (script, dir Krasimir Krumov);
- *Six fiction films: Tilt –* (script, dir Victor Chuchkov); *Which Way Today?* (script Georgi Danailov, dir Rangel Valchanov); *Behind the Scenes* (script Hristo Totev, dir Svetoslav Ovcharov); *Desert Runner* (script, dir Grigor Lefterov); *The Glass River* (script Emil Andreev and Krasimir Krumov, dir Stanimir Trifonov) and *The Goat* (script Cristin Dimitrova and Georgi Dulgerov; dir Georgi Dulgerov)

*In 2009 the Bulgarian National Television has made 25 own film productions: Ballad of Subaltern Officers* (dir Andrei Apostolov); *The Faces of Japan* (dir Hrisimir Danev); *The Warlord* (dir Hrisimir Danev), *Latina* (dir Zoia Kasamakova); *St. Patrick's Day* (dir Miglena Atanasova); *Direct Democracy* (dir Marta Ilieva); *Politics.com* (dir Elenko Kasaliiski); *March 8: Flowers or Problems* (dir Marta Ilieva); *Survival* (dir Marta Ilieva); *Campus or Hell* (dir Marta Ilieva), *The World Is A Small Place* (dir Daniela Kaneva); *Who Is This Kosta Tsonev* (dir Dimiter Sharkov); *Asen Peikov: The Bulgarian from Rome* (dir Mari Traianova). Besides, 12 of these are part of the "Mass Reading" project: *The Lord of the Rings*; *Time of Violence*; *Le Comte de Monte-Cristo*, *The Iron Oil Lamp*, *The Master and Margarita*, *Le Petit Prince*, *East of Eden*, *Doomed Souls*, *Under the Yoke*, *Tobacco*, *Cien Años de Soledad*, *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*.

*In 2009 the following external productions and coproductions were made:*

- *The documentaries: Beyond the Barrier* (dir. Galina Kraleva), *In Situ* (dir. Atanas Dimitrov); *Saint Ivan of Rila* (dir. Ivan Traikov); *Bulgaria's Cultural Heritage*, Part 2 (dir. Boicho Bozhinovski);
- *Three documentaries in coproduction with the Bulgarian National Film Center: The Rules of Single Life* (dir Tonislav Hristov); *A Stretch of Time: Marin Goleminov* (dir Peter Odadjiev), *Europolis: The Town of the Delta* (dir Kostadin Bonev);
- *Two fiction debuts: Ruth* (working title *Traffic Counter*, script Maria Stankova, dir Vlado Shishkov) and *The Snail's Brother* (script Marin Damianov, dir Ivan Panev);
- *Two fiction coproductions with the NFC: Second Retake* (script Georgi Gospodinov, dir Nadezhda Koseva) and *Shelter* (script. and dir. Dragomir Sholev).



# XI CONTACTS OF INSTITUTION, COMPANIES, AND ORGANIZATIONS

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## FILM SCHOOLS

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### **NEW BULGARIAN UNIVERSITY, SOFIA**

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## BULGARIAN CINEMA 2011

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Published by: Bulgarian National Film Center  
with the support of MEDIA Desk – Bulgaria

Compiled by: Alexander Donev (III, IV) Bilyana Tomova (I, VIII, X),  
Diana Andreeva (X) Gergana Dakovska (IX) Irina Lubenova (V, VIII),  
Mila Petkova (VI, VII), Stanislav Stanev (II, IX)

Editors: Stanislav Stanev, Kamen Balkanski

Translation: Milena Lilova

Graphic Design: Kamen Balkanski, Vladimir Lubenov

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