



NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2008

EU COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

The Heads of the Members States signed the Treaty of Lisbon on December 13. Hungary is the first country to ratify it.

The ceremony of signature of the new Treaty on December 13 in Lisbon was followed by an EU Summit on December 14 in Brussels. Only a few days after, The Hungarian Parliament approved the new Treaty. Slovenia should follow in January. So far, Ireland is the only country expected to hold a referendum to ratify the Treaty but pressure is mounting in the UK, with the Conservative opposition calling for a public vote. The Lisbon Treaty could enter into force on January 1st, 2009.

EC website dedicated to the Lisbon Treaty: http://europa.eu/lisbon_treaty/index_en.htm

Euractiv file on the issue: <http://www.euractiv.com/en/future-eu/hungary-country-ratify-new-eu-treaty/article-169183>

Slovenian EU Presidency will start on January 1st, 2008

The Portuguese Presidency will hand over to the Slovenian Presidency as for January 1st, 2008. Having entered the UE in 2004, Slovenia is the first of the 12 new Member States to hold the EU Presidency. The EU Council of Culture Ministers will be held on May 21 and 22 and an international conference on creative content online will be organized on June 4 to 7, 2008.

Slovenian Presidency website: <http://www.eu2008.si>

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

European Commission approves UK Film Support schemes

The EC has approved until December 2012 12 UK Lottery-funded film support schemes under the EU state aid rules. The schemes administered by the UK Film Council and regional agencies provide over €30.6 million of support for films each year. All films which receive support are required to satisfy the definition of a cultural British film, which was originally assessed by the EC in its approval of the UK film tax incentive scheme in November 2006.

EC Press release:

[http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?](http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/07/1890&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=fr)

[reference=IP/07/1890&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=fr](http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/07/1890&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=fr)

Campaign launch of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008

On December 4, the European Commission C launched the communication campaign for the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue (EYID) with the slogan "Together in Diversity". The EYID aims to contribute to mutual understanding and better living together and will explore the benefits of cultural diversity and active civic participation in European Affairs. It will seek to foster a sense of European belonging with 7 flagship European projects, 27 national projects (one per each Member State) on intercultural dialogue across the EU and 15 personalities from the cultural scene as ambassadors. (5 film directors: Agnieszka Holland, Marjane Satrapi, Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne, Radu Mihaileanu).

Website dedicated to the EYID:

<http://www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu/>

European Commission warns Italy about breaking EU TV advertising rules ("Television Without Frontiers" Directive)

On December 11, the EC sent Italy a letter of formal notice (first stage of the EU's

infringements proceedings) for violating EU advertising rules under the TWF Directive. Independent monitoring revealed that Italian broadcasters do not comply with the directive's quantitative rules, in particular the hourly 12 minute limit for advertising, the rule on 20 minute minimum interval between advertising breaks and the rule on inserting advertising in films. The effectiveness of the procedure foreseen in Italian legislation for penalizing breaches of the TV advertising rules has also been called into question as it is too weak to have a deterrent effect and to protect efficiently consumers. The Italian government has two months to respond to the concerns expressed by the Commission.

EC Press Release:

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/07/1902&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=fr>

MEDIA PROGRAMME

MEDIA Information Day at Berlinale 2008

MEDIA will be hosting an Information Day during Berlinale 2008 Day presenting the various sections of the Programme and recent changes in the guidelines. The MEDIA Info Day will take place on Monday, February 11th, 2008 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., including lunch.

Reform of the MEDIA automatic scheme for theatrical distribution

There are now 4 groups of countries instead of 3:

- Large countries: Germany, Spain, France, Italy
- Medium countries 1: Austria, Belgium, Holland, Poland, Switzerland, UK
- Medium Countries 2: Denmark, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Czech republic,
- Small countries: Bulgaria, Estonia, Island, Ireland, Leetonia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Malta, Slovakia, Slovenia, Chypre

The main element of the reform is to increase the automatic support on a first rung of admissions (150%), to maintain it as today on a second rung of admissions (100%) and to minor it on a third rung of admissions (35%)

	1 st rung of admissions	2 nd rung of admissions	3 rd rung of admissions
Rate	150%	100%	35%
Large countries	75 000	300 000	600 000
Medium countries 1	25 000	100 000	200 000
Medium countries 2	18 000	75 000	150 000
Small countries	4 000	16 000	32 000

Guidelines 2007-2013:

http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/media/distrib/schemes/auto/docs/27_2007/guidelines27_2007_en.pdf

Reform of the MEDIA selective scheme for theatrical distribution

- Budget: 12,5M€
- Films with a production budget of more than €15 million are not eligible.
- A group of at least 5 distributors (for small films with a production budget of less than 3M€) or 7 distributors (for medium films with a production budget between 3 and 15M€) should respond (through a coordinator) to the call for proposals.
- **40% of the budget will be dedicated to small films and 60% to medium films.**
- The period of the eligible costs is bigger: 6 months before the theatrical release and 10 months after.
- **The selective support will remain to the exclusive benefit of the distributor. (cf p.19 of the guidelines)**

Guidelines 2007-2013:

http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/media/distrib/schemes/select/docs/28_guidelines_en.pdf

Switzerland remains a provisional member of the Media Programme

Whereas on October 2007 the Swiss Federal Council signed the agreement for participation in the Media 2007 programme, on December 10, the Swiss Parliament refused to ratify the condition attached to this participation: the application of the "Television Without Frontiers Directive" by the end of 2009, especially the provisions related to advertising for alcoholic beverages which are more flexible than currently applicable in Switzerland. The Parliament sent the agreement back to the Council in order to continue the negotiations with the EU on this issue, but it adopted €26 millions of credits for the participation of Switzerland to the programme for 2008 and 2009.

Media Desk Switzerland (in French and German) : <http://www.mediadesk.ch/news.php?ID=55&language=fr>

EUROPEAN CINEMA

Romania is the great winner of the 20th European Film Awards

Cannes Palm d'Or winner, Romanian *4 Months 3 Weeks and 2 Days* wins Best European Film and Best Director (**Christian Mungiu**) awards at the European Film Academy ceremony held on 1 December in Berlin. The title will be now released in 13 European territories with €450,000 of MEDIA distribution support. The Artificial Eye is releasing the film in the UK on 11 January 2008. The most nominated title of the night, *The Queen*, also picked up two awards: best actress for **Helen Mirren** and best composer for **Alexandre Desplat**.

See all the winners on the European Film Academy website:
<http://www.europeanfilmacademy.org/htm/3Winners.html>