



Report of the Bulgarian Association of the Film, Television and Radio Scriptwriters - BAFTRS

10th Oct 2020

1. Membership

As of today, the Association amounts to 32 registered professional scriptwriters. 4 screenwriters were removed from membership for consistently not paying the membership fee.

2. Activities in 2020

In 2020 the most important activity of the association was related to the changes in the major law regulating the cinema industry – The Film Industry Act proposed by the Ministry of Councils. The amendments will bring the existing state film aid schemes in line with the [European Commission's](#) Communication on State Aid for Films and Other Audiovisual Works (2013/C 332/01). BAFTRS as well as other industry representatives and guilds had one month for providing comments and suggestions to the proposed amendments in the Film Industry Act. The suggested amendments were received with huge dissatisfaction from the industry professionals in terms of the administrative process for consultations that was only one month and not all the industry representatives were an active part of this process. A lot of the industry professionals are having mixed opinions about the overall intention of the proposed changes: some approve of the opportunity for receiving European funding in the scheme of de minimis aid. The other schemes for funding aid transnational opportunities for co-productions and tax incentives for international companies. As of today the submitted opinions by the guild representatives are being discussed with the working committee with the Parliament.

COVID-19 Measures

Due to the COVID-19 situation Bulgaria was in lock-down until the end of July. Therefore, a lot of the processes with the National Film Fund were held online. Due to the fast reaction of the administration, not all scheduled film companies were affected by the lockdown and in July many companies managed to successfully execute their shooting plans. The deadline for project proposals was not postponed and filmmakers could apply with their projects on time. At the same time no alternative sources from the Film Center were proposed to the film industry. Only the Ministry of culture proposed several programs for artists in all fields that were not appropriate for the film professionals. In this regard, the measures taken by the government and the Ministry of Culture and the Film Center were not enough to compensate the huge economic costs of the COVID-19 situation. For the last three months the Bulgarian people are protesting against the government's measures to handle the crisis.

Best regards,

Stanislav Semerdjiev, President BAFTRS