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European Cinema and Television Year
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EUROPEAN CINEMA AND TELEVISION YEAR 1988

SUMMARY

1. The paper begins by outlining the background to the initiative which stems from a proposal by the ad hoc Committee on a People's Europe approved by the Milan European Council and a Commission presentation to the Council on 20 December 1985. It goes on to indicate the objectives pursued, namely to promote public awareness of the economic and social importance of the audiovisual industry in tomorrow's Europe and to encourage creativity. The links between the initiative and the action programme for the audiovisual industry are stressed.

2. The main targets will be political circles, cinema and television professionals and opinion leaders, who will act as conveyor belts, passing information on to the general public.

The detailed action programme will be drawn up by a Management Committee.

3. The organization will be based on a network of national agencies. The directors of these will be members of a Management Committee to be chaired by a Commission appointee. The Management Committee will deliver opinions on the projects to be undertaken at European level and coordinate the campaign as a whole.

The Commission will appoint a consultant as Secretary-General for European Cinema and Television Year. A Coordinating Secretariat will be provided by the Cultural Activities and Audiovisual Policy Division. This will assume responsibility for liaison and the management of Community funds.

INTRODUCTION

In a memorandum dated 24 April 1985¹, the Italian Permanent Representation suggested that 1988 be designated "European Image Reproduction Year" to coincide with the centenary of the invention of the cine camera by the French physician and physiologist Etienne Jules Marey. On 28 May 1985, the Council and the Ministers for Culture meeting within the Council, took note of the memorandum and instructed the Permanent Representatives Committee to examine it². A month later the Milan European Council (28/29 June 1985) approved the final report of the ad hoc Committee on a People's Europe, paragraph 3.7 of which proposed that "in celebration of a hundred years of film-making... 1988 should be declared 'European Film and Television Year'."

On 20 December 1985 at the meeting of the Council and the Ministers for Culture meeting within the Council, the Commission's representative made a presentation on the objectives to be pursued during European Cinema and Television Year.

With the rapid progress of new techniques, the audiovisual media are booming and the audiovisual industry has become highly complex and complicated.

If the initiatives taken under the umbrella of European Cinema and Television Year are to produce valid results for the future of the industry, they must link up with the Commission's action programme for the audiovisual industry (see below). This will be finalized during 1987, and major projects will get under way in 1988.

Arrangements for the funding of such actions at European level - essentially a matter for the industry and the Member States - will have to be agreed by the organizations concerned, notably the Council of Europe and the Community.

OBJECTIVES

Cinema and television have developed into an industry with many ramifications and unique promise for the future. It is therefore worthwhile taking a close interest in the industry and accepting the challenge which leads directly into the twenty-first century.

¹ 6294/85 CULTURE 31 (Council).

² 6902/85 Min/Council 26 CULTURE 62.

In designating 1988 European Cinema and Television Year, the Community wants to stress the importance it attaches to the audiovisual industry and to give further encouragement to a sector which presents a challenge to Europe as a whole, not only to defend its identity but also to seize new opportunities of affirming that identity. The Community also intends to promote cooperation and co-productions in all the media involved.

The Commission has defined a comprehensive audiovisual policy at Community level. This involves various initiatives bearing on technology, the internal market and industrial policy.

In relation to technology, the Commission has launched a standardization policy for technical equipment. It has already presented a proposal for a Council directive on the adoption of common technical specifications for the MAC/packet family of standards for direct broadcasting by satellite¹. The aim here is to unify the potential market for home receivers for DBS systems.

In relation to the internal market and industrial policy for the audiovisual sector, the Commission has adopted a proposal for a directive on the coordination of certain national provisions on the pursuit of broadcasting activities². The object here is to create a common market for broadcasting by promoting exposure within the Community of each Member State's radio and television programmes and assisting the production of television programmes by Europe's cultural industries.

¹ COM(86) 1 of 22 January 1986.

² COM(86) 146 of 23 April 1986.

In this way the Commission hopes:

- to promote awareness of the importance of the audiovisual industry for the future of Europe, particularly so in this period of restructuring.
The economic and social stakes are high.
- to encourage creativity, given the growing need for programmes to feed the multitude of channels already available or coming on stream in the near future.

Moreover, an audiovisual industry matching the large integrated market could counter competition from the United States and Japan and give a higher profile to smaller European countries.

With these objectives in mind, the Commission has also launched an action programme for audiovisual production covering a variety of fields including:

- new techniques and new production methods;
- issues relating to technological standardization;
- cooperation between national television networks;
- improvement of structural links between cinema and television;
- funding/distribution;
- multilingualism of productions and broadcasts;
- profitability of equipment, investment and productions;
- national and international training for the industry;
- promotion of Europe's audiovisual heritage.

"European Cinema and Television Year" should provide the Community with an opportunity of giving a powerful boost to a European audiovisual market" by mobilizing the professionals to make the most of the effects of scale offered by the exercise.

TARGETS

Responsibility for attaining the objectives set out above must lie with the public authorities and the professionals.

The targets for campaigns to be mounted throughout 1988 will therefore be:

- law-makers and decision-makers, in short, the political class in the widest sense;
- the professionals: creative writers, producers, television authority administrators, distributors, specialized credit institutions, advertising agencies, current and potential sponsors, audiovisual archivists, etc.;
- opinion leaders: journalists and others.

Opinion leaders will act as conveyor belts, feeding the general public - the end consumer - with information on the objectives pursued, and the medium and long-term success of projects to be launched in 1988. Success would mark the advent of a well-structured European audiovisual industry, in a large, integrated market, capable of offering the general public quality products which can compete with the audiovisual output of the rest of the world.

ACTION PROGRAMMES

An action programme will have to be defined in the light of the objectives and targets described above. This programme, which will be drawn up by the Management Committee, will have to be incorporated into the Commission's longer-term programme (see above) and take the form of specific projects carried out by the professionals.

ORGANIZATION

The organization of a project as ambitious as European Cinema and Television Year presents a special challenge. The priority will be to reach the "political class" and the professionals. For this reason, both the preparatory working party and the management committee must have a high professional profile and a strong political dimension.

(a) National agencies

With the help of the professionals, the Commission will contact the most appropriate agency in each Member State which will assume responsibility for organizing a representative national structure.

The directors of these national agencies will sit on the European Management Committee.

Each national agency will:

1. promote European Cinema and Television Year at national level
2. coordinate projects at national level

3. find the physical and financial resources to implement projects (for example, sponsoring by industry, contributions from government agencies, regional or local authorities, various forms of assistance such as providing halls, museums, parks and so forth)
4. make recommendations to the Management Committee on national, regional and local projects which might be given Community support.

(b) Management Committee

The Committee will comprise the directors of the national agencies and representatives of the main film associations, the EBU, the Council of Europe, the European Parliament and the Commission. The Chairman will be appointed by the Commission.

The Management Committee will meet at regular intervals to coordinate initiatives for European Cinema and Television Year.

A bureau responsible for preparing the ground for meetings of the Management Committee will be set up under the chairmanship of the Chairman of the Management Committee.

The members of the bureau will be appointed by the Management Committee.

The role of the Management Committee will be:

1. to select Community projects and campaigns and make proposals to the Commission.
2. to select, on a proposal from the national agencies, the national, regional or local initiatives which might be given Community support
3. to coordinate Community and national activities and the campaign as a whole.

It will be for the Committee to find any additional technical and financial resources needed for the realization of Community projects selected by the Management Committee and approved by the Commission.

The Management Committee may be advised by an ad hoc working party of experts in selecting projects and campaigns, proposed by the Community or by the national agencies.

(c) Preparatory working party

This working party, to be set up forthwith, will comprise representatives of European film associations, the EBU, the Council of Europe and the European Parliament. A representative of the Commission will take the chair.

The working party's tasks will be:

1. to formulate proposals for the organization of the network of national agencies;
2. to issue opinions on other organizational matters;
3. to prepare the ground for the inaugural meeting of the Management Committee

The preparatory working party will be disbanded as soon as the inaugural meeting of the Management Committee is held.

(d) Secretary-General and Coordinating Secretariat

The Commission will appoint a European expert on organization and international management to act as Secretary-General for European Cinema and Television Year.

A second consultant, expert in the organization of international events similar to those planned for European Cinema and Television Year, will be appointed Assistant to the Secretary-General.

A Coordinating Secretariat for European Cinema and Television Year will be established within the Cultural Activities and Audiovisual Policy Division and may draw on the services of outside experts. It will be provided with the necessary administrative and technical resources.

Its role, in consultation with the Secretary-General, will be:

1. to service the Management Committee and its bureau
2. to organize campaigns to promote European Cinema and Television Year at Community level (press conferences, logo, posters, etc.)
3. to manage the budget provided by the Community
4. to liaise between the national agencies, the Management Committee and the bureau between meetings.

The Cultural Activities and Audiovisual Policy Division will be free to call on the services of a consultant in organizing and implementing promotion and public relations campaigns.

The Secretary-General and his assistant must be appointed by autumn 1986 at the latest. The Coordinating Secretariat must be set up at the same time.

The Coordinating Secretariat must remain in existence until June 1989 at least.

PREPARATORY EXPENDITURE

It is essential to bear in mind that any audiovisual project is expensive and needs to be planned well in advance. This means that if major projects are to be undertaken in 1988, funds must be committed in 1987. They will be needed initially to cover administrative expenditure (Secretary-General, Assistant to Secretary-General, Coordinating Secretariat, Management Committee, etc) plus the cost of studies and consultations.

It is obviously difficult at this stage to put a figure on expenditure in 1988. Estimates will be produced on completion of the preparatory work to be carried out in 1987.

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