

Film heritage: collection and preservation, competitiveness of related industrial activities

2004/0066(COD) - 02/07/2010 - Follow-up document

This Commission working document constitutes the second implementation report on film heritage and the competitiveness of related industrial activities (Film Heritage Recommendation).

Main objectives of the 2005 Recommendation: this Recommendation was the follow-up to the Commission Communication on certain legal aspects relating to cinematographic and other audiovisual works and of a number of political statements from the Council and the European Parliament underlying the importance of European film heritage.

The Recommendation gave new impulse to the protection of the European film heritage. It initiated a dynamic process based on Member States' periodical reporting. The Commission committed itself to monitor and assess the extent to which the measures set out in the Recommendation were working effectively, and to consider the need for further action.

The principles on which the Film Heritage Recommendation is based are still valid: Cinematographic works are an essential component of our cultural heritage and therefore merit full protection. In addition to their cultural value, cinematographic works are a source of historical information about European society.

In order to ensure that the European film heritage is passed down to future generations, there is a need for it to be systematically collected, catalogued, preserved and restored. In addition, European film heritage should be made accessible for educational, academic, research and cultural purposes.

As cinematography is an art contained on a fragile support, it therefore requires positive action from the public authorities to ensure its preservation.

A second implementation report: the first implementation report on the Film Heritage Recommendation was adopted in August 2008. This current reports on the implementation of the Film heritage recommendation based on Member States' implementation report is based on implementation reports prepared by the Member States in December 2009 on the basis of a questionnaire circulated by the European Commission. The questionnaire covered all the aspects of the Film Heritage Recommendation. In addition, it raised two other issues, which are not contemplated in the Recommendation: challenges and opportunities for European Film heritage arising from the transition from the analogue to the digital area as well as the link between film funding policies and film heritage. Therefore, these aspects are also included in this report.

This report is divided into three chapters:

1. Analysis of the situation of film heritage in Europe in those areas covered by the Film Heritage Recommendation;
2. Challenges and opportunities of the digital era for film heritage institutions;
3. Access to European film heritage.

It also contains two annexes:

- Annex I - List of EU Activities in relation to film heritage;

- Annex II - Summary of the situation in Member States, in relation to each subject raised in the questionnaire.

Next steps: the results presented in this report are only a first evaluation of the challenges and opportunities of the digital era for European film heritage. The Commission will launch an independent study in 2010, which will look in detail into this issue. The Commission would consider a Communication or a revision of the Film Heritage Recommendation, taking into account the results of the study.

According to the Film Heritage Recommendation, Member States will make their next application report by November 2011.

The Commission will continue to examine the options for a balanced legal solution permitting an efficient access to film heritage for cultural and educational purposes.