

FNE Market Analysis 2019: NORTH MACEDONIA

SKOPJE: It was a truly exciting year for Macedonian cinematography with great box office results, international success for feature and documentary films, worldwide distribution for domestic titles and their participation in more than 200 film festival selections, and over 60 awards.

Honeyland / Medena zemja directed by Tamara Kotevska and Ljubomir Stefanov won three awards at the Sundance International Film Festival, where it had its world premiere, and it has been screened in more than 50 film festivals worldwide, scooping more than 20 awards, alongside a nomination in the European Documentary 2019 category of the [European Film Awards](#).

The film was the official Macedonian submission for an Oscar in the Best International Feature Film category and on 13 January 2020 it was nominated for the Academy Awards in Best Documentary Feature and Best International Feature Film categories. It is not only the first time when a Macedonian film gets two Oscars nominations, but it is also the first time in the history of the Oscars when a documentary is nominated in two categories.

Teona Strugar Mitevska's *God Exists, Her Name is Petrunya / Gospod postoi, imeto l e Petrunija*, which had its world premiere in the Competition at the 2019 Berlin Film Festival, was later distributed in 28 countries worldwide. North Macedonia had a film in the official competition at the Berlin International Film Festival for the first time in the last 20 years. *God Exists, Her Name is Petrunya* was selected for over 70 festivals and won 25 awards. It also received the European Parliament LUX Prize 2019.

Young Macedonian director Eleonora Veninova's short film *The Sign* was selected for the 51st Directors' Fortnight of the Cannes Film Festival. *The Sign* was among the five films selected to launch the 2019 Cannes Directors' Fortnight within the collaborative project the South East European Factory.

Renowned Macedonian director Milcho Manchevski's sixth feature film *Willow / Vrba* had its world premiere at the Rome FF in October, and it gathered 26,000 admissions domestically in one month. In 2019 Milcho Manchevski celebrated 25 years since the premiere of his debut feature *Before the Rain / Pred dozdot* (a Macedonian/British/French coproduction produced by Poligram), which won the Golden Lion at the Venice Film Festival.

The year 2019 ended with another Sundance Film Festival selection. Georgi M. Unkovski's short film *Sticker / Nalepnica* was selected to compete in the International Narrative Short Films section of the festival's 2020 edition.

In June 2019, Hisni Ismaili was named new Minister of Culture.

PRODUCTION

In 2019 North Macedonia produced seven feature films, six of them supported by the [North Macedonia Film Agency](#).

Igor Ivanov launched the production of his third feature film *Homo*, a coproduction between North Macedonia, Bulgaria, Serbia, Slovenia and Kosovo, in March 2019. The film is

produced by [Skopje Film Studio](#), while Bulgaria's [Gala Film](#), Belgrade-based [Art & Popcorn](#), Slovenia's [Iridium Film](#) and Kosovo's Trigger are coproducing.

Stojan Vujcic shot his debut feature [Stela](#), the first Macedonian feature film for children and also the first eco (green) production in North Macedonia. The film was shot in the summer of 2019, produced by [Dream Factory](#) in coproduction with Serbian Akcija Production and German MOUNA GmbH Film & Media Studio.

Macedonian [Sektor Film](#) finished work on [The Hardest Thing / Najteskoto nesto](#), the first Macedonian film in the Turkish language, directed by the acclaimed Turkish director Serdar Akar. The film is a coproduction with Turkish NTC Medya. The release is planned for 2020.

Vardan Tozija launched the production on his second feature film [M](#). The coming of age fantasy drama was shot from August to September 2019, produced by [Focus Pocus](#) in coproduction with Croatia's [4 Film](#), Kosovo's In My Country and Greek 2|35. The premiere is planned for the second half of 2020.

In October 2019, Kristijan Risteski wrapped filming on his debut feature [Snow White Dies at the End / Snezana umira na krajot](#), produced by [Vertigo Visual](#). The premiere is scheduled for 2020.

Dina Duma finished shooting her debut feature [Sister / Sestra](#), an intimate drama about testing the limits of friendship, in December 2019. The film is produced by [List Production](#) and coproduced by Videa Production (Montenegro) and Added Value Films SH.P.K. (Kosovo).

One more independent low-budget feature was shot in the summer of 2019 – [I Love You, I Swear / Te dua, zimi mene](#), the second feature by Marjan Gavrilovski, which was produced by PEAK Production.

The Serbian/Macedonian/Croatian/Slovenian/Montenegrin/German coproduction [Heavens Above / Nebesa](#) by Srđan Dragojević began production in 2019. The beginning and the end of the film were shot in North Macedonia in a total of nine shooting days. The film is produced by Delirum Films Beograd (Serbia) and coproduced by [Studio Dim](#), [Sektor Film](#), [Forum Ljubljana](#), [Max Film](#) and [Ma.ja.de. Fiction](#). The release is planned for August 2020.

The Kosovo/North Macedonia/Albania coproduction [Vera Dreams of the Sea / Vera sonuva za more](#), directed by Kaltrina Krasniqi, completed filming in 2019. The film is produced by Isstra Creative Factory (XK) in coproduction with [Dream Factory Macedonia](#) (MK) and Papadhimitri Production (AL).

[The Stork / Roda](#) by writer/director Isa Qosja also began production in 2019. The film is produced by Montenegro's [Artikulacija Film](#) in coproduction with ABHO Film and [Aba Film](#) from Montenegro, One Draft LLC from Kosovo and Tunnel Film from Albania, and Pigmento Film from North Macedonia.

The long-awaited Slovak/Czech/Macedonian drama [Piargy / Fašiangy](#), directed by Ivo Trajkov, which started shooting in May 2016, entered postproduction in 2019. The film is produced by [Arina](#) and coproduced by the Czech company [i/o post](#), Story Scope of North Macedonia and [RTVS](#). Reel suspects is handling the sales.

Dušan Kovačević began production on his new feature film *It's Not So Bad to Be Human / Nije loše biti čovek*, produced by Serbian *Art & Popcorn*, Les Films Fauves (Luxembourg), Terminal 3 (Croatia) and Black Cat Production (North Macedonia).

The French/Belgian/Macedonian coproduction *A Mermaid in Paris / Une sirène à Paris*, directed by Mathias Malzieu, began shooting in North Macedonia on 30 August 2019. This debut feature is produced by French Overdrive Productions in coproduction with Belgian Entre Chien et Loup and Macedonian *Sisters and Brother Mitevski*. The film is benefiting from the film incentive programme available as a 20% cash rebate on qualifying Macedonian spend.

Also, a Netflix series was filmed for the first time in North Macedonia in 2019. Netflix's first international original series from Belgium, *Into the Night*, which featured actors from across Europe, began shooting at the Skopje International Airport on 1 October 2019. North Macedonia's *Sisters and Brother Mitevski* provided the services for the three days' shoot in Skopje.

DISTRIBUTION

The main distributors in Macedonia remain *MCF MK*, Konstantin film MKD, *Kt Film & Media*, *Cutaway* and *Uzengija*, which dominate mostly the art house market. The leading distributors of mainstream cinema on the Macedonian market are Croatian Continental Film doo, *2iFilm*, Serbian *Blitz Film and Video Distribution* and Premium Film.

In 2019 Macedonian distributors applied for distribution support from the Creative Europe *MEDIA Programme* for the second time, with *MCF MK* and *Kt Film & Media* supported in the call for selective distribution, and *Cutaway* in the call for automatic distribution.

Macedonian distribution company *Cutaway* received 270,000 EUR from the *MEDIA Programme* for the promotion and marketing of the Video on Demand platform *Cinesquare* and for the distribution of audiovisual works online, and *launched subscription offer in 13 CEE countries*.

The biggest Macedonian distribution success in 2019 was *Willow / Vrba* by the Academy award nominated Macedonian helmer Milcho Manchevski. This Macedonian/Hungarian/Albanian/Belgian coproduction was produced by Jane Kjordosev through *Banana Film* in coproduction with Baba Film, Pioneer Pictures (Hungary), Tirana Film Institute (Albania), and Belgian companies Saga Film and BNP Paribas Fortis Film Finance. The film was released in cinemas by *Banana Film* on 1 November 2019 and racked up over 26,000 admissions in 26 cities, out of which 12,000 admissions in the first week. The film was picked up by French sales agent Reel Suspects.

Willow is the most watched film in the history of the only multiplex cinema in the country, *Cineplexx*, with 9,351 admissions. The film is also the most watched film in 2019 for *Cinema Milenium*, with 4,907 admissions.

The year 2019 was great for another Macedonian film, the documentary *Honeyland / Medena zemja* directed by Tamara Kotevska and Ljubomir Stefanov and produced by Trice Films in coproduction with Apollo Media. The film was praised at Sundance 2019, where it won the Sundance Grand Prize in the World Documentary Film Programme, as well as the Special Jury Award for cinematography and the Special Jury Award for Originality. It was then picked up for

North American distribution by Neon (which also distributes *Parasite* by Bong Joon-ho, one of the most acclaimed films in 2019.).

Honeyland was released theatrically in the USA in July 2019 and grossed over 635,383 EUR. It was released in the UK in September 2019 and it is currently available to stream on Amazon. Domestically, the film has been screened in 30 cities in North Macedonia since its release in August 2019, with over 21,000 admissions, of which 6,196 admissions in [Cineplexx](#) and 3,169 admissions in [Cinema Milenium](#). The international sales are handled by Deckert Distribution GmbH.

Twenty nine films supported by the [North Macedonia Film Agency](#) had their premieres in 2019. Of those, 10 were feature films (five majority productions and five minority coproductions).

The Macedonian/Belgian/Slovenian/French/Croatian coproduction *God Exists, Her Name Is Petrunya* by Teona Struga Mitevska, which was awarded top prizes including the 2019 LUX Film Prize and the Prize of the Ecumenical Jury at the 2019 Berlinale, was domestically released in March 2019.

The film, produced by [Sisters and Brother Mitevski](#) in coproduction with [Spiritus Movens](#), Entre Chien et Loup, [Vertigo](#), Deuxième Ligne Films and EZ Films, has been sold by Pyramide International to 20 territories including China, Canada, Italy, Austria, Spain, Turkey, Greece, Sweden, Brazil, Romania, Poland, Hungary, Colombia, Denmark and Switzerland.

Domestic films' world premieres included the Macedonian/Serbian debut feature *Second Chance / Vtora shansa*, directed by Marija Dzidzeva and produced by [Small Moves Films](#) in coproduction with [Biberche Productions](#), at the opening of the 22nd edition of the [Skopje Film Festival](#) in April 2019. [This is the first time when the festival opened with a film by a female director.](#)

Kushtrim Bekteshi's *Unforgettable Spring in Forgotten Village / Nezaboravna prolet vo zaboraveno selo* premiered in Skopje in March 2019. The film was produced by Manufaktura Production in coproduction with Albanian Ska-ndal Production, Kosovan Media&Film and Macedonian [Skupi Festival](#).

The Macedonian/Albanian/Kosovan debut feature *The Happiness Effect* by Borjan Zafirovski opened the 18th edition of [CINEDAYS Festival of European Film](#) in November 2019 in Skopje. The film is a coproduction between the Macedonian companies New Macedonian Video, [New Moment](#) and [Video House Animation](#), Albanian Lissus Media and B2 – PR & Media Solutions from Kosovo. Ilija Piperkoski's debut feature film *Grandpa and Grandson / Dedo I vnuk*, a Macedonian/Romanian coproduction (produced by [Pandora's box production](#), in coproduction with [Dream Factory](#) and Romania's [Alien Films Entertainment](#)) premiered in cinemas in December 2019.

Five Macedonian minority coproductions premiered in 2019. Dragan Marinković's *Leeches / Pijavice*, produced by [Zillion Film](#) in coproduction with [InterFilm Produkcija](#) and [Pank Film](#), premiered in Serbian cinemas in September 2019 and was screened at the 18th edition of the [CINEDAYS Festival of European Film](#) in November 2019.

The Albanian/Macedonian coproduction *Inane* by Besnik Bisha premiered in Albania in 2019. The film was produced by B&G Film Production in collaboration with ArbFilm & 7AAFilm.

The Slovenian/Macedonian/Serbian/Croatian coproduction *Half-Sister / Polsestra* directed by Damjan Kozole, premiered in the Slovenian cinemas in September 2019 and was screened at the 18th edition of the [CINEDAYS Festival of European Film](#) in November 2019. The film was produced by Danijel Hočevar through [Vertigo](#) in coproduction with [RTV Slovenia](#), Macedonian [Sisters and Brother Mitevski](#), Serbian [Baš Čelik](#) and Croatian [Propeler](#) film.

Ognjen Sviličić's *The Voice / Glas* celebrated its world premiere in the World Cinema section of the 24th Busan IFF and it was also screened at the 18th edition of the [CINEDAYS Festival of European Film](#) in November 2019. The film is a coproduction between [Maxima Film](#), [Skopje Film Studio](#) and [Biberche Productions](#).

Serbian filmmaker Goran Paskaljević's *Despite the Fog / Nonostante la nebbia*, a coproduction between Italy, France, Serbia and North Macedonia, opened the International Film Festival of India 2019 (IFFI 2019) in November 2019. The film was produced by Cinemusa S.r.l. (IT) in coproduction with Nova Film (RS), Rosebud Ent. Pict. (FR) and [Sektor Film](#) (MK).

The [International Cinematographers' Film Festival Manaki Brothers](#) celebrated its 40th edition in 2019 and honoured the cinematographers Edward/Ed Lachman and Yorgos Arvanitis with the Lifetime Achievement Award Golden Camera 300, while the composer Ljupcho Konstantinov received the Great Star of Macedonian Cinema Award 2019.

The [CINEDAYS Festival of European Film](#) celebrated its 18th edition in 2019 and the second year as "Competitive film festival specialised in European first and second feature films", as approved by the General Assembly of FIAPF.

The Festival of Creative Documentary Film [Makedox](#) celebrated its 10th edition by screening 70 films in six sections. The first coproduction forum dedicated to documentary coproductions was held as part of the 10th MakeDox Creative Documentary FF, jointly organised by the festival, the North Macedonia Film Agency and [Creative Europe MEDIA Desk MK](#). The purpose of the forum was to exchange experiences, knowledge and practices for the financing, presentation and promotion of documentary film. The forum was attended by representatives from the funding bodies from the region and the Nordic countries, producers of successful documentary films realised as coproductions, international film festivals for documentary films and TV broadcasters.

Macedonian actor Blagoj Veselinov was selected for the 2019 Shooting Stars, which took place during the 69th Berlin IFF. His selection was proposed by the [North Macedonia Film Agency](#), which is a member of [European Film Promotion](#). The Shooting Stars programme has so far involved the participation of two Macedonian actresses: Labina Mitevska (1998) and Nataša Petrovic (2011).

Macedonian director Eleonora Veninova's short film *The Sign* was selected for Cannes Film Festival's Directors' Fortnight. The film is one of five short fiction films produced within the Southeast European Factory (SEE Factory), a project made under the concept of 'La Factory', founded by Dominique Welinski and Directors' Fortnight. SEE Factory involves five countries in the region, including the Republic of North Macedonia.

In 2019, the [North Macedonia Film Agency](#) organised the Macedonian promotional stand in the South East European pavilion within the Cannes' Marché du Film for the 9th time.

EXHIBITION AND BOX OFFICE

Three commercial cinemas (one multiplex, **Cineplexx**, with nine cinema halls, Cinema **Milenium** and **3D Cinema Bitola**) and two art house cinemas with a regular repertoire (Cinema Frosina and the **Macedonian Cinematheque**) currently operate in North Macedonia. Another 18 cultural centres (equipped with digital cinema projectors by the **North Macedonia Film Agency**) screen films occasionally. In 2019, more cultural centres screened *Honeyland* and *Willow*, but the **North Macedonia Film Agency** is still collecting the admissions data.

In its 7th year of existence, the only multiplex in the country, **Cineplexx**, screened 148 titles. According to the cinema, *Joker* was the most watched film in the history of Cineplexx with 34,165 admissions. *Avengers: Endgame* holds the record of most pre-sold tickets in the first week (2,159).

Cinema **Milenium**, based in Skopje, registered an increase in admissions of approximately 24% compared to 2018. *Willow* by Milcho Manchevski is the most watched film in 2019 in Cinema **Milenium**, with 4,907 admissions, followed by *Frozen 2* with 3,485 admissions, *Joker* with 3,243 admissions, *Honeyland* by Tamara Kotevska and Ljubomir Stefanov with 3,169 admissions and *Maleficent: Mistress of Evil* with 2,591 admissions.

The **Cinematheque of the Republic of North Macedonia** registered an increase of 35% in admissions compared to 2018, with a total of 20,486 admissions in 2019. The Government of the Republic of Macedonia appointed the Cinematheque as the institution responsible for the digitalisation of the Macedonian film heritage in 2011. In 2012, the Cinematheque launched a long-term project to digitalise and digitally restore the national audiovisual heritage.

In March 2019, four digitalised films of Kiril Cenevski were promoted and released on DVD. Unfortunately, three months later the creator of the first Macedonian feature film that competed and won awards at international film festivals, *Black Seed / Crno Seme* (produced by **Vardar Film**), **passed away**.

The top 5 in the Macedonian overall box office is topped by *Joker* with approximately 40,000 admissions (distributed by **Blitz Film and Video Distribution**), followed by *Avengers: Endgame* (**2i Film**), *The Lion King* (**2i Film**), *Frozen 2* (**2i Film**), *Aladdin* (**2i Film**), *Maleficent: Mistress of Evil* (**2i Film**), *Fast & Furious Presents: Hobbs & Shaw* (Premium Film), *Captain Marvel* (**2i Film**), *Spider-Man: Far From Home* (**Continental Film Doo**), *2 Gisht Mjaltë* (Ermal Mamaqi).

The domestic films with the highest number of admissions in 2019 were *Willow / Vrba* with 26,000 admissions (distributed by Banana Film) and *Honeyland / Medena zemja* with 21,000 admissions (distributed by Tris Films doel).

GRANTS AND NEW LEGISLATION

Throughout 2019 the **North Macedonia Film Agency** has been drafting a new version of the Law on the Film Industry and actively developing a new and comprehensive strategy to enhance the quality of national cinematography and increase its competitive advantage in the regional and wider framework.

This strategy includes activities for developing the domestic film culture, with an emphasis on tapping into the young talents, while developing a system for supporting national production and

coproduction, and services for shooting foreign productions in the country. Support will be provided as part of this strategy for expanding distribution and marketing, while activities will be undertaken for developing existing professional film workers and for addressing the insufficient supply of film professionals.

In this new strategy and in all other activities planned for the coming years, the Agency will place special emphasis on nurturing women directors and encouraging new women directors to conceive and initiate original and innovative films. At the same time, greater openness and logistical support will be provided for foreign producers interested in shooting their films at attractive locations in North Macedonia, with stimulus provided by the production incentive programme.

In particular, the Agency is focused on boosting the country's film production tax incentive, increasing it from 20% to 30%, as an effective measure to bring about significant benefits for the national film industry and the economy. Innovation is a top priority in the Agency's strategy and one that will be achieved by encouraging new film professionals and new ideas and talents, with activities to increase the quality of Macedonian cinematography, investing in new forms and models of promotion. Apart from deepening the already established cooperation with existing partners, the Agency will seek new forms of cooperation that complement mutual work, all of which will help achieve new and greater successes.

There is one call in January every year (with deadlines in March and August) for production support for feature films, documentaries, short films and animated films. The results are announced in April and October.

The Macedonian film budget saw more than 15% cuts in 2019 compared to 2018, with a total of 4.3 m EUR provided by the Budget of the Republic of North Macedonia and from other sources, but the Agency maintained its regular schedule of financial support calls. Ninety two percent of the funds were used to support films and other projects of national interest selected by the Agency as a result of its public call for applications, as well as activities for the development of the film industry and the international promotion of Macedonian cinematography, while eight percent of the funds was used to cover salaries, fees, taxes and the operating expenses for the maintenance of the institution.

The [North Macedonia Film Agency](#) launched two grant contests in 2019, supporting a total of 30 films (six majority feature fiction films, ten minority coproductions, six long documentaries and eight short films). The total support for the films is 3,535,759 EUR / 217.2 m MKD for production of feature, short, animation and documentary films. Some of the supported films will start the principal photography in 2020 and 2021.

In July 2019 the [North Macedonia Film Agency](#) announced grants for 15 films in the first round of production grants for feature films, short films, animated films and documentaries. *An Evening Act / Večeren akt* directed by Vasil Hristov and produced by [Kino Oko](#) was the only Macedonian majority feature film to receive financial support.

The five minority feature films included: Vinko Möderndorfer's *Deadlock / Zastoj* (produced by Slovenia's [Forum Ljubljana](#) and coproduced by Croatia's [Kinorama](#), Serbia's [Delirium](#), Macedonia's [Sektor Film](#)); Pjer Žalica's *May Labour Day* (produced by Bosnia and Herzegovina's FORUM Association for Art and Culture, Croatia's [Propeler Film](#), France's A.S.A.P. Films, Slovenia's [Staragara](#), Serbia's [Baš Čelik](#), Montenegro's [Artikulacija Film](#) and Macedonia's [Sisters and Brother Mitevski](#)); Isa Qosja's *The Stork* (produced

by Montenegro's [Artikulacija Film](#) in coproduction with ABHO Film and [Aba Film](#) from Montenegro, One Draft LLC from Kosovo, Tunnel Film from Albania and Pigmento Film from North Macedonia); Stanislav Tomic's [Tune Up](#) (produced by Croatia's [Kaos Ltd](#) in coproduction with Serbia's K12, Montenegro's [Cut-Up](#), Macedonia's [Kino OKO](#) and Slovenia's [Supermarket](#)) and Gazmend Nela's [Silence of Sirens](#) (produced by Kosovo's Frame & Ikone Studio and coproduced by Macedonian [Skopje Film Studio](#)).

No debut features were supported in the first call. The Agency received a record number of applications and due to the reduced budget decided to support fewer projects. The total support given was 1,065,040 EUR / 65.5 m MKD.

In December 2019 the [North Macedonia Film Agency](#) announced grants for 15 films in the second round of production grants, distributing 2,470,719 EUR / 151.7 m MKD to five feature films including four debut features, five minority coproductions, two majority long documentaries, one minority long documentary and two short films.

Director Gjorce Stavreski's second feature [Swap / Trampi](#), produced by [Fragment Film](#), received the highest grant of 489,000 EUR / 30 m MKD. In the debut features category, the biggest grant of 374,599 EUR / 23 m MKD went to Sasa Stanisic's [Women's Day / Denot na zenata](#), produced by Makedonska krepost, and also to Ibrahim Deari's [Everyone Call Rexho / Site go vikaat Redzo](#), produced by Manufaktura Production. One of [Honeyland's](#) directors, Tamara Kotevska, also received a grant for her first feature, [Man Vs. Flock](#), produced by Apolo Media, while Srđan Janićijević received 350,169 EUR for his feature film [Osvetlen](#), produced by Novo Makedonsko Video.

[The Lost Secret / Izgubinata tajna](#) by Aleksandra Kardalevska, coproduced by Alka Film, received the highest support of 146,582 EUR / 9 m MKD in the minority feature film category. Among the five minority coproductions there are also [Gym](#) by Bosnian director Srđan Vuletić (a coproduction between Bosnian [Refresh](#) production, Montenegrin Dogma studio, Slovenian Iridium Film, Serbian [Cinammon production](#), Croatian [Kinorama](#) and Macedonian [Skopje Film Studio](#)); Vinci Vogue Anžlovar's [Grandpa Goes South](#) (produced by [A Atalanta](#) and coproduced by [Sektor Film](#)); [A Mermaid in Paris / Une sirène à Paris](#) by Mathias Malzieu (coproduced by Sisters and Brother Mitevski) and [Era](#) by Parta Kelmendi (coproduced by [List Production](#)).

According to the data available to the Agency, a total of 220 films were produced in all categories, out of a total of 319 supported in the period of 2008-2019, i.e. after the Macedonian Film Fund was established and later transformed into Film Agency, in accordance with the Law on Film Activity.

In February 2019, the [North Macedonia Film Agency](#) announced its decision to boost 18 festivals according to the announced Call for financing projects of national interest in the film industry, for organising domestic festivals and other film manifestations of international character in 2019. Established festivals such as the [International Cinematographer's Film Festival Manaki Brothers](#), the [Cinedays Festival of European Film](#), the [MakeDox International Creative Documentary Film Festival](#), the [Skopje Film Festival](#) and the [Tetova International Film Festival ODA](#) received the highest grants. The Agency also supported the newly established Days of the Macedonian Film Golden Frame, organised by the [Macedonian Film Professionals Association](#).

Two films received refunds through the 20% cash rebate on qualifying Macedonian spend - [The Liberation of Skopje / Osloboduvanje na Skopje](#) directed by Rade and Danilo Šerbedžija, and

produced by Macedonia's **Partysans** in coproduction with Croatia's Lijeni Film and **MP Film Production**, Finland's Art Films and UK's F&ME, in the amount of 41,416 EUR (services provided by **Partysans**), as well as the 14-episodes season 2 of *Star Trek: Discovery*, produced by CBS Television Studios in association with Secret Hideout and Roddenberry Entertainment, with Alex Kurtzman serving as showrunner, in the amount of 78,775 EUR (services provided by **Fx3x**).

Starting from 2014, the **North Macedonia Film Agency** has been encouraging the investment of funds in film or television projects and applying for the right of investment return in the amount of 20% of the gross costs incurred in the country for the realisation of a film or television project, which is not less than 100,000 EUR.

The Film Incentive programme was introduced as part of the new Film Law in 2014. Macedonia started using the cash rebate scheme for film and TV projects in 2015.

In 2019, the Macedonian applicants received a total support of 353,873 EUR in several different calls of the **MEDIA Programme**. The **MakeDox** Creative Documentary Film Festival received support for the third year and the **ICFF Manaki Brothers** received support for the second time. The online platform **Cinesquare**, which is available in 13 countries in the region, got 270,000 EUR support in the call for online promotion of audiovisual works online, which was the highest grant received by a Macedonian project so far.

The **North Macedonia Film Agency** became the 34th member of the European Association of Film Agencies, the **EFADs**, as of May 2019. The Agency joined the EFADs as an associate member, a status open to any film agency located in a member country of the Council of Europe. It allows it to take part in all activities of the association and have partial voting rights.

During the Cannes Film Festival in May 2019, the head of **North Macedonia Film Agency**, Gorjan Tozija, had an official meeting with the head of the Greek Film Centre, Vassilis Kosmopoulos, which was the first official introduction between the agencies, with both sides agreeing on a willingness to overcome the effects of 20 years of disputes and laying the foundation for future communication and cooperation between their countries.

For the fifth consecutive year the **North Macedonia Film Agency**, in cooperation with the European Film Academy, organised the Young Audience Award in 2019.

In 2018 the **North Macedonia Film Agency** signed a one-year partnership with the training programme **Less Is More**, based on which it organised a Pre-Writing Workshop for local film professionals in 2019 during the 40th **International Cinematographers' Film Festival Manaki Brothers**. It was the first workshop of this kind that was organised in North Macedonia, with six Macedonian participants and three from the region (Montenegro, Slovenia and Croatia).

In June 2019, Hisni Ismaili was named new Minister of Culture, following the resignation of Asaf Ademi, who had been appointed Minister of Culture in June 2018.

TV

TV production remained low in 2019, but more domestic series were filmed in 2019 compared to 2018. The fourth season of the Macedonian TV Series *Prespav*, directed by Vardan Tozija, Eleonora Veninova, Darijan Pejovski and Igor Ivanov, went into production. The 20-episode series is produced by **OXO** and it was aired on prime time on the first channel of

the [Macedonian Radio Television](#) starting December 2019. The production celebrated 100 episodes since its release and launched a platform including *Prespav* as well as an App under the name [OXOPlay.mk](#).

The second season of *The Family Markovski / Familijata Markovski* launched production at the beginning of 2019. The series directed by Darijan Pejovski is an original eight-episode prime time series created and produced by Emilija Chochkova through Art Project Lab Production with support from the European Endowment for Democracy ([EED](#)) and the National Endowment for Democracy (NED). The TV series is inspired by the daily lives of Macedonian citizens. *The Family Markovski / Familijata Markovski* was aired on [TV Kanal 5](#) starting 9 November 2019 and it is also available on the VoD platform [Cinesquare](#).

The TV series *Zoki Poki*, based on the best known Macedonian children character, was shot from August to September 2019. The 10-episode series is produced by [Kino Oko](#) and received 309,000 EUR / 19 m MKD from the [North Macedonia Film Agency](#). Aleksandar Popovski is co-directing along with Marija Apchevska, Darijan Pejovski and Radovan Petrovic. The TV premiere on the [Macedonian Radio Television](#) is set for the first half of 2020.

The very popular educational-musical series *Dajte muzika* returned with new episodes on the [Macedonian Radio Television](#) after 27 years. In coproduction between the [Macedonian Radio Television](#) and Rifenstahl production, 30 new episodes directed by Lazar Pakovski and Vladimir Mitrevski were shot in 2019.

[TV 24](#) started broadcasting *Loud House / Glasna kukja* in October 2019. This is the first teen sitcom series produced by KMK Production, along with Vesna Petrushevska's Acting School. The 10-episode series is directed by Vesna Petrushevska.

In 2019, the [Macedonian Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services](#) published the analysis of the market of audio and audiovisual media services for 2018. According to the report, revenues in the media industry are declining year by year. In 2018 they decreased by 6.03% compared to 2017 and are also the lowest revenues in the last five years. Revenues of the [Macedonian Radio Television](#) decreased by 8.44%, of the commercial broadcasters by 4.52%, while commercial radio stations' revenues decreased by 3.60%.

At the end of 2018, the financial results of all three segments of the industry - public service and commercial television and radio - were negative, i.e. there was a loss of 1.6 m EUR / 96.91 million MKD. For the first time in five years, the public broadcaster [Macedonian Radio Television](#), reported a loss in revenues.

It is also worrisome that more and more televisions are shutting down each year. During 2018, the total number of broadcasters decreased by eight. From 2014 to 2019, a total of 30 commercial broadcasting companies have stopped broadcasting. Two TV broadcasting licenses were issued in 2018 (TV 3 and 1TV, which stopped broadcasting in 2019). In 2019, there were 49 televisions in the Agency's registry. There were no new applications for a TV broadcasting license in 2019.

The total revenue generated in 2018 by all broadcasters (the [Macedonian Radio Television](#), 53 commercial television stations and 70 radio stations) was 39.8 m EUR / 2,451,650,000 MKD. Most of them are advertising revenues representing 54.91% of total revenues. A total of 36.16% are the public broadcaster's transferable revenues of the Budget of the Republic of Macedonia for financing broadcasting activity, and 8.93% are revenues accomplished on various grounds.

Of the five televisions broadcasting nationwide through digital terrestrial multiplex, the most watched was **TV Sitel**, whose daily average reach was 38.85%. **TV Kanal 5**, as in 2017, was the second most watched television, with an average daily of 30.84%, and an average weekly reach of 45.41%, followed by **TV Telma** with 18.15% daily reach, **Alsat-M** with 15.36% and the **Macedonian Radio Television** with 14.40% daily reach.

The most watched foreign television channels in Macedonia are Fox, Sport Club, Discovery, the National Geographic. According to the report, the viewers watched mostly the news on all televisions, followed by informative programmes, educational and cultural programmes, sports in the fourth place, and TV series in the fifth. Most television connections are available through cable television, 48.5% and IPTV, with 27.6%.

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