

MACEDONIA: Country Report 2016

In 2016 Macedonia celebrated 25 years of filmmaking as an independent country. Macedonian film production remained high in 2016 with an annual budget from the [Macedonian Film Agency](#) of 6.5 m EUR. Macedonian producers continued to get involved in international coproductions, and most of the films made in 2016 were majority and minority coproductions. A Macedonian-Italian coproduction development fund was launched in 2016.

In 2016 Macedonian Parliament voted to amend the Film Law to harmonise it with the current European practices.

Macedonian [MEDIA Desk](#) launched in April 2016 and General Assembly of the Board of Management of [Eurimages](#) decided that Macedonia will take over the hosting of the General Assembly of [Eurimages](#) in October 2017. Macedonia will also host the next General Assembly of [SEE Cinema Network](#) in June 2017.

In 2016 Macedonian films screened at 145 film festivals and received 20 awards. Macedonian Cinemateque celebrated 40 years of activity.

Mimi Gjorgoska Ilievska, the director of the [Macedonian Film Agency](#), was awarded Knight of the Order of Arts and Literature by the French Ministry of Culture and Communications.

Macedonia was in focus with eight feature films at the [Festbiofest](#) Prague International Film Festival.

Liberation of Skopje / Osloboduvanje na Skopje by Danilo and Rade Serbedzija was selected as Macedonia's candidate for the Foreign Language Academy Award in 2016.

[FX3X](#), a visual effects and CGI animation company founded in 1997, worked on eight of 20 films shortlisted for an Oscar nomination: *Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice*, *Independence Day: Resurgence*, *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children*, *Passengers*, *Suicide Squad*, *Sully*, *Warcraft* and *X-Men: Apocalypse*.

PRODUCTION

Four domestic feature films were shot in Macedonia in 2016: Kole Angelovski's *Oh, My Love* (produced by [Award Film & Video](#) in coproduction with [KT Film & Media](#) and [Quasar Film](#) and supported by [Macedonian Film Agency](#)), Vladimir Blaževski's Macedonian/Serbian/Kosovo/Slovenian coproduction *Freedom or Die* (produced by [Pank Film Production](#) and supported by [Eurimages](#), [SEE Cinema Network](#), the [Macedonian Film Agency](#), [Film Center Serbia](#), the [Kosovo Film Centre](#) and the [Slovenian Film Centre](#)), Marija Dzidzeva's Macedonian/Serbian coproduction *Victim* (produced by [Small Moves Films](#) and supported by [Macedonian Film Agency](#) and [Film Center Serbia](#)) and Macedonia/Kosovo/Albania coproduction *Unforgettable Spring in the Forgetful Village* by Kushtirm Bekteshi (produced by [Manufaktura Production](#), [Media & Film](#) and [Ska-ndal](#) and supported by [Kosovo Film Centre](#), [Albanian National Film Center](#), [Macedonian Film Agency](#) and [Albanian Public Radio Television](#)).

Scenes from Serbian/Bulgarian/Macedonian coproduction *Requiem for Mrs J* by Bojan Vuletic were shot in Macedonia. The film will premiere in the Panorama section of 2017 Berlin Film Festival.

In June 2016 scenes for the American film *Angels Fallen*, directed by Ali Zamani and produced by Az Films, were shot on different locations across Skopje. Postproduction services were provided by the Macedonian visual effects and animation company [FX3X](#).

Slovenian/Macedonian coproduction *Slovenia, Australia and Tomorrow the World* by Marko Nabersnik (produced by [Perfo Production](#), coproduced by [Kino Oko](#) and supported by [Macedonian Film Agency](#)) went to postproduction in Macedonia in November 2016.

DISTRIBUTION

The main distributors in Macedonia are [MCF MK](#), Konstantin film, [Kt Film & Media](#), [Cutaway](#) and [Uzengija](#).

In 2016 Eurimages once again supported Macedonian distributors. Since Macedonia became a member of the Creative Europe [MEDIA Programme](#) in 2016, as of 2017 it can use the cinema and distribution support granted by the [MEDIA Programme](#).

The list of the films with most admissions in 2016 includes: *Deadpool*, *Suicide Squad*, *Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice*, *Bridget Jones's Baby* and *Warcraft*.

There is still little interest in domestic achievements and regional films.

EXHIBITION AND BOX OFFICE

There are 11 commercial cinemas and two art house cinemas operating with a regular repertoire in the Republic of Macedonia, and 14 cultural centers screening films occasionally.

Four majority Macedonian coproductions premiered in Macedonian cinemas in 2016: *Amok* directed by Vardan Tozija (produced by Macedonia's [Dream Factory](#) in coproduction with Albania's Red Helicopter Films), *Liberation of Skopje* by Danilo and Rade Serbedzija, *Golden Five* directed by Goran Trenčovski (produced by Revolution Production in coproduction with [Art & Popcorn](#)) and *Lazar* (Macedonia, Croatia, Bulgaria, France) directed by Svetozar Ristovski (produced by [Small Moves](#), in coproduction with Gala Film, Arizona Productions and [MP – Film Production](#)).

In 2016 the first multiplex in the country, [Cineplexx](#) celebrated its fourth birthday with almost 1.5 m visitors, 500 titles and 50,000 screenings in four years. The cinema registered a total of 320,151 visitors in 2016. The cinema screened 216 titles in 2016, representing an increase of 8% compared to 2015.

The 3D Cinema within the [Cultural Center in Bitola](#) had 40,000 visitors in 2016. Together with the admissions during [ICFF Manaki Brothers](#), this number could easily exceed 50,000.

Digitalisation of cinemas was underway in 2016. Since 2012, the Government of the Republic of Macedonia and the [Macedonian Film Agency](#) started equipping cultural centers in all bigger cities with high quality digital projectors. Cinemas in those cultural centers are functioning as art house cinemas with programming based on occasional screenings.

GRANTS AND NEW LEGISLATION

There is one call (with two deadlines in March and August) for production support for feature films, documentaries, short films and animated films.

There is a separate call for supporting Film Industry Projects of National Interest, which includes organising domestic festivals and other film events of international character, funding expert and professional education of individuals in film industry professions, supporting educational programmes which promote film culture, the membership of the Republic of Macedonia in international film organisations and associations and publications in relation to the film industry.

In 2016 a total of 47 projects were financed with 4,043,089 EUR: seven majority feature films, eight minority feature films, nine majority long documentaries, one majority long animated film and 22 short films (including fiction, animated and documentary films).

Fifteen domestic film festivals were supported by the [Macedonian Film Agency](#) in 2016. Established festivals such as the [Manaki Brothers International Cinematographers Film Festival](#), [Cinedays Festival of European Film](#), [Makedox Festival for Creative Documentaries](#), [Giffoni Youth Film Festival](#), [Asterfest Short Films Festival](#), [Animax Animated Films Festival](#) and [Skopje Film Festival](#), as well as eight other festivals, had successful editions in 2016.

The [MEDIA Programme](#) support for Macedonian filmmakers, festivals and distributors was more than 220,000 EUR in 2016.

A Macedonian–Italian coproduction development fund was launched in 2016 created by the [Macedonian Film Agency](#) and the Italian Ministry of Cultural Heritage Activities and Tourism - Directorate General Cinema (DGC-MiBACT). Four projects received a total support of 60,000 EUR in the [first session](#). The projects are: *Stella* by Stojan Vujicic, *Shame* by Ivo Trajkov, *Walking Pace* by Francesco Falaschi and *Stidda Maris* by Renato Giuliano. The first two are Macedonian majority coproductions and the second two features are Macedonian minority coproductions.

[Macedonian Film Agency](#) supported two minority coproductions by [Sisters and Brother Mitevski Production](#) - Cristi Puiu's Romanian/Bosnian/Macedonian/Croatian/French coproduction [Sieranevada](#), which was selected for the 2016 Cannes Official Competition, and Slovenian/Macedonian/Bosnian coproduction [Nightlife](#) by Damjan Kozole, which premiered in the official competition of the 2016 Karlovy Vary International Film Festival. Another film produced by Sisters and Brother Mitevski Production is Macedonian/Belgium/Slovenian coproduction *When the Day Had No Name* by Teona Mitevska, which will premiere at the Berlin Film Festival 2017 in the Panorama Special section.

Kosovo/Macedonian coproduction *Home Sweet Home* by Zymber Kelmendi was selected for the East of the West section of the [Karlovy Vary International Film Festival](#). [Macedonian Film Agency](#) also financially supported the Croatian/Macedonian/Czech/Slovenian coproduction [The Constitution](#) by Rajko Grlic, which won Best Film Award at the Montréal World Film Festival.

In 2016 four Macedonian minority feature films received support from [Eurimages](#): *Compatibility* by Stefan Komandarev (a coproduction between Bulgaria's [Argo Films](#), Germany's [Aktis Film](#) and Macedonia's [Sektor Film](#)), *Frog* by Elmira Jukic (a coproduction between Bosnia and Herzegovina's [Refresh Production](#), Macedonia's [Skopje Film Studio](#), Serbia's [Living Pictures](#) and Croatia's [Propeler Film](#)), *Neighbors* by Grigol Abashidze (a coproduction between Georgia's [Artizm](#) and Macedonia's [Small Moves Films](#)) and *The Wild*

Pear by Nuri Bilge Ceylan (a coproduction between Turkey's Zeynofilm, France's Memento films, Bulgaria's RFF International, Macedonia's [Sisters and Brother Mitevski Production](#) and Germany's Detailfilm GmbH).

Also, Macedonian feature film *Fear and Love* by Meto Jovanovski and Branko Baletic (produced by Geyzer Film) received financial support from the [SEE-Cinema Network](#).

In 2016 the Macedonian Parliament voted to amend the Film Law to harmonise it with the current European practices in this area. Changes to the law will contribute to the improvement of this sector in the country by creating the conditions for increased film production and improving the conditions and procedures for implementing the provisions of the Law relating to the right to a refund that is acquired in accordance with this Law.

Starting from 2014 Macedonian Film Agency has been encouraging the investment of funds in film or television projects 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. 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. First films that got investment return in the amount of 20% of the gross costs were the French road comedy *A Fond* by Nicolas Benamou, which spent about 2 m EUR in Macedonia, and *Freedom or Die* by Vladimir Blazevski.

According to the film law, several sources will add to the budget, such as levies from the TV (0.9% of the annual turnover), cable operators, internet providers and telecoms (1%), distributors (3%) and exhibitors (5%).

TV

For the first time [Macedonian Film Agency](#) financially supported two Macedonian TV series, *The Red Poet* produced by [Sector Film](#) and *Macedonia* produced by [Jadran Film](#), and also one TV series with minority Macedonian participation - *Shadows of the Balkan* produced by [Skopje Film Studio](#).

The series about the famous Macedonian poet Kosta Racin, *The Red Poet* directed by Nikolce Popovski and produced by [Sektor Film](#) for the [Macedonian Radio Television](#), was shot in November 2016. This series consisted of 10 episodes and received support of approximately 370,000 EUR from the [Macedonian Film Agency](#) in 2016.

In accordance with the legal obligation for the national televisions to produce, shoot and broadcast a programme with elements of public interest every year, according to the Law on Audio and Audiovisual Media Services adopted in 2014, five TV series premiere on Macedonian television stations in 2016.

In October 2016, TV series *Prespav* premiered on [TV Telma](#). *Prespav* is an original 40-episodes prime time series produced by Macedonian non-governmental organisation [OXO](#) with support from the [European Union](#).

Neighborhood Gossip, directed by Dragan Veljanoski and produced by [TV Alfa](#), also premiered on TV Telma in 2016.

On 11 October 2016, mini-series *Pain in the Soul* by Jani Bojadzi premiered on **Kanal 5**. TV series *A Bag Full of Happiness* and *Operation Diamond* by Nikolce Popovski, both produced by **TV Sitel**, premiered in November 2016.

Children TV series *True Stories*, written and directed by Kuzman Kuzmanovski, went into postproduction in 2016. The series is a coproduction between **Auripigment** and the **Macedonian Radio Television**.

In 2016 the **Macedonian Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services** published a report with 2015 statistics. All commercial and public broadcasters generated total revenues of approximately 50 m EUR / 3,102,260,000 MKD in 2015, which is a drop of 2.3% compared to 2014. The advertising revenues in the TV broadcasting sector earned 27,466,970 EUR.

Almost all television stations that broadcast via satellite ended 2015 with a loss, according to a market analysis of audio and audiovisual media services for 2015. Only five of the country's 63 TV broadcasters generated a positive financial result in 2015, mainly from advertisement.

In terms of revenue growth, the leader was **TV Alfa**, whose revenues soared 21.14%, reaching 3,204,878 EUR, followed by **Alsat TV** (an increase of 1.1% to 2,700,162 EUR). On the commercial side, **TV Sitel** had the highest overall revenues with 8,809,756 EUR, an increase of 0.65% over 2014.

The public broadcaster **Macedonian Radio Television**, generated 20,881,138 EUR in revenue in 2015, 25.56% coming from advertisements. This is a drop of 3.2% compared to 2014 level. The cable TV operators and regional and local TV stations recorded a serious drop in revenues in 2015, according to the report.

Television remains the most influential media in Macedonia. TV Sitel was the most watched domestic TV station in Macedonia and Discovery was the most watched foreign TV station in Macedonia in 2015.

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