

FNE Market Analysis 2020: NORTH MACEDONIA

By [Marina Lazarevska](#)



Honeyland by Ljubo Stefanov and Tamara Kotevska

SKOPJE: It was a challenging year for the industry in North Macedonia, as everywhere. Filming became complicated, cinemas went dark, festivals were moved and canceled.

However, the year started with one of the greatest chapters in Macedonian film history. The documentary *Honeyland* directed by Tamara Kotevska and Ljubomir Stefanov was nominated in the Best Documentary Feature and Best International Feature Film categories at the Academy Awards. It was not only the first time when a Macedonian film got two Oscar nominations, but also the first time when a documentary was nominated at the Oscars in the two categories.

In March 2020 *Honeyland* cinematographers Samir Ljuma and Fejmi Daut received the ASC Documentary Award for exceptional cinematography in non-fiction filmmaking as well as the International Federation of Cinematographers IMAGO International Award for Best Cinematography in a documentary.

Honeyland became the most watched domestic film at the box office with approximately 5,000 admissions from January until the cinemas closed in early March 2020.

In the same period, the Macedonian short film *Sticker / Nalepnica* directed by Georgi M. Unkovski premiered in the International Narrative Short Films at the Sundance Film Festival and won the Best Narrative Short Prize at the Brooklyn Film Festival. The film received over 40 awards (at over 170 festivals) and qualified for a further Oscar nomination.

The government adopted several decisions to support filmmakers at the beginning of May 2020, providing financial support for independent film workers. The procedures were carried out through the [North Macedonia Film Agency](#).

Academy Award nominee Milcho Manchevski's *Willow / Vrba* was selected as North Macedonia's candidate for the 93rd Academy of Motion Picture Arts



In December 2020, Bojan Lazarevski was named acting director of the [North Macedonia Film Agency](#).

Irena Stefanoska was appointed the Minister of Culture of North Macedonia on 31 August 2020.

PRODUCTION

In 2020 North Macedonia produced three feature films supported by the [North Macedonia Film Agency](#) (excluding minority coproductions), which were shot under the safety guidelines for filming prepared by the North Macedonia Film Agency and the [Association of Macedonian Film Professionals](#) in May-June 2020.

These three films are: Eleonora Veninova's debut feature *Sabattier Effect / Preekspovirano* produced by [DNF Films](#) and coproduced by Serbian Lilit, Goce Cvetanovski's debut feature *The Day of the Woman / Denot na zenata* produced by Makedonska krepost, and Darijan Pejovski's sophomore feature *Mimi* produced by [Skopje Film Studio](#) in coproduction with Croatia's [Maxima Film](#) and Kosovo's In My Country Post Production.

The Day of the Woman is the first feature film shot by cinematographer Fejmi Daut after *Honeyland*.

Two more short films produced by the Agency were filmed under strict protocols: *Common Eli / Obicnata Eli* by Lav Sofronievska, produced by Minimal kolektiv, and *Tina's Problem / Problemot na Tina* by Radovan Petrovic, produced by Partizans.



The independent low-budget feature film *The Other Side / Drugata strana* directed by Martin Cicovski and produced by Marvi Productions was also shot in the summer of 2020.

The shootings for the debut features *Everybody Calls Rexho* by Ibrahim Deari, produced by Manufaktura Produkcija, and *Osvetlen* by Srđan Janičijević, produced by Novo Makedonsko Video, were postponed for 2021.

The Croatian/Macedonian coproduction *Do Pigs Go to Heaven? / Nosila, rubac crleni* directed by Goran Dukic, completed filming in 2020. The film produced by Croatian [Svenk](#) and coproduced by Macedonian [Vertigo Vis](#).

The Slovenian/Croatian/Macedonian coproduction *Grandpa Goes South* also began production in August 2020 after had been postponed twice due to the pandemic. The film is produced by the Slovenian A Atalanta in coproduction with [Sektor film](#) (North Macedonia) and [MP Films](#) (Croatia).

The minority coproduction *Deadlock / Zastoj* directed by Vinko Möderndorfer and produced by [Forum Ljubljana](#) in coproduction with Delirium (Serbia) and [Sektor Film](#) (North Macedonia), was completed in 2020.

The long documentary *Ganja Will Set You Free / Konoplja osvobaja* directed by Miha Čelar entered postproduction in 2020. The film is produced by Astral film in coproduction with [Wolfgang&Dolly](#) (Croatia), Platforma (Serbia) and [Aw Film & Video](#) (North Macedonia).

COVID-19 GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

Several aid measures for filmmakers and projects were put in place by the Government throughout 2020.

On 24 March 2020, the [North Macedonia Film Agency](#) gave out an emergency financial support from its annual budget to film projects that were completed or in the process of completion, to be used to cover contractual costs towards freelancers and others.

The Agency then set up a commission, together with the [Macedonian Film Professionals Association](#), to establish the standards based on which filmmakers would receive further necessary assistance. At that time the North Macedonia Film Agency also started to actively prepare the basic safety guidelines for filming.



In April 2020 the Government decided to subsidise the companies for their employees' April and May salaries in the form of a payment of a monthly net of approximately 250 EUR / 14,500 MKD. Although it was a general measure for all businesses, private cinemas and production and distribution companies applied as well.

On 27 May 2020, the [Government of North Macedonia](#) adopted a decision to provide financial support for independent film workers (freelancers) in the form of a payment of a monthly net of approximately 250 EUR / 14,500 MKD for May and April provided from the COVID-19 Crisis Management Assistance and Support Fund. The procedure was carried out by the Agency.

The **Government of North Macedonia** approved financial support for film workers affected by COVID-19 at its 11 December 2020 session. The new package of measures included 404,529 EUR / 24,948,000 MKD for artists and film workers, among others.

A total of 462 beneficiaries who applied through the call announced by the **Ministry of Culture** were planned to receive from 235 EUR to 350 EUR (depending on their income) for a period of three months.



Additionally, film workers could also qualify for one-time financial support buy domestic products and services in the amount of 97 EUR / 6,000 MKD per person.

The list of film workers-beneficiaries of this Law was prepared by the **Public Revenue Office** using data from the **Ministry of Culture**, in cooperation with the **North Macedonia Film Agency**. The **Ministry of Culture** had announced public call for the preparation of a list of artists and other persons engaged in cultural activities on 9 December 2020.

As a consequence, film workers were temporarily able to access funds to alleviate hardship, while film and TV production continued to operate under the COVID-19 Film Production Guidelines.

DISTRIBUTION

Three domestic feature films were released in 2020, compared to five majority productions in 2019.

A total of 22 domestic films shot in 2019 (five feature films, six documentaries and 11 short films) were screened at the second edition of the Golden Frame Macedonian film review in February 2020, organised by the Association of Macedonian Film Professionals and the **North Macedonia Film Agency**.

The year 2020 was again very successful for the international recognition of Macedonian films. Following the Oscars, *Honeyland* directed by Tamara Kotevska and Ljubomir Stefanov, and produced by Trice Films and Apollo Media, was released by Umbrella Films in Australia and New Zealand from 5 March 2020. As of February 2020 *Honeyland* grossed 727,169 EUR in the USA and Canada, and 20,379 EUR in other territories, for a total worldwide gross of 747,548 EUR since it was released in the USA by Neon on 26 July 2019.

A release in other European countries, South and North America, China, Japan, South Africa and Turkey should have followed, but was disrupted by the pandemic. Deckert Distribution is handling the sales.

The minority coproduction *The Flying Circus* by Fatos Berisha was presented the Jeffrey C. Barbakow Award for Best International Feature Film during the 35th Santa Barbara IFF in January 2020. The film is a Kosovan/Albanian/Macedonian coproduction between B2 Kosovo, B2 Albania, Macedonian Black Cat Production and Ikone Studio Kosovo.

The Romanian director Cristi Puiu won Best Director at the Berlinale's new Encounters section for *Malmkrog*, which was produced by **Mandragora** (Romania) and coproduced by **iadasarecasa** (Romania), **SENSE Production** (Serbia), **Cinnamon Films** (Serbia), **Film i Väst** (Sweden), **Doppelganger** (Sweden), **Bord Cadre Films** (Switzerland), **Produkcija 2006 Sarajevo** (Bosnia and Herzegovina) and **Sisters and Brothers Mitevski** (North Macedonia).



Eleonora Veninova's debut feature *Sabattier Effect*, produced by **DNF Films**, was selected for the 17th edition of the **Sofia Meetings**. Also, Macedonian films *M* by Vardan Tozija, produced by **Focus Pocus** in coproduction with Croatia's **4 Film**, Kosovo's *In My Country* and Greek *2|35*, and *Sister* by Dina Duma, produced by **List Production** in coproduction with Kosovo's **Added Value Films**, Montenegro's **Videa Production** and France's **Arizona Productions**, were selected for **Sofia Meetings Works in Progress**.

Sister also participated in the cocoWIP Projects 2020 of the 22nd edition of **connecting cottbus**. Director Gjorce Stavreski and producer Ivana Shekutovska from **Fragment Film** pitched the film *Swaps* in development in the cocoPITCH Projects 2020.

The Sign by Eleonora Veninova was selected for **We Are One: A Global Film Festival** held on YouTube from 29 May to 6 June 2020. The film was part of an omnibus project of Southeast European Factory (SEE Factory) inspired by the concept "La Factory" founded by Cannes Directors' Fortnight 2019, where it had its premiere.

Snow White Dies in the End / Snezana umira na krajot by Kristijan Risteski was presented at **Karlovy Vary's** Easter

North Macedonia's writer-director and LUX Award winner Teona Strugar Mitevska participated in Thessaloniki Film Festival's initiative Spaces on YouTube, alongside renowned directors from all over the world, who prepared short at home. Mitevska also participated with her project *The Happiest Man in the World* in the 16th edition of Cannes L'Atelier- Cinéfondation (14-21 May 2020).



The Macedonian minority coproduction *Andromeda Galaxy / Galaktika e Andromedes* directed by More Raça had its world premiere in the Competition Programme - Feature Film 2020 of the 26th [Sarajevo Film Festival](#). The film was produced by Arena (Kosovo) in coproduction with : Films (Italy), Ad hoc studios (Spain), Deluxe (Italy), Nephilm Produccione (Spain), No problem sonido (Spain), [DMF Films](#) (North Macedonia).

The main distributors in Macedonia are: [MCF MK](#), Konstantin film MKD, [Film & Media](#), [Cutaway](#) and [Uzengija](#), which dominate mostly the art hou market. The leading distributors of mainstream cinema on the Macedonia market are the Croatian Continental Film doo, [2iFilm](#), the Croatian Blitz Film and Video Distribution and Premium F

In 2020 Macedonian distributors applied for distribution support from the Creative Europe [MEDIA Programme](#) for th third time, with [MCF MK](#) and [KT Film & Media](#) supported in the call for selective distribution, and [Cutaway](#) in the ca automatic distribution.

The biggest Macedonian distribution success in 2020 was the documentary *Honeyland / Medena zemja*, which was screened in 30 cities in North Macedonia since its release in August 2019. The film racked up around 5,000 admis from January 2020 until the cinemas closed in March 2020, making it the most watched domestic film of 2020 in Macedonian cinemas.

Two domestic feature films supported by the [North Macedonia Film Agency](#) had their premieres in 2020 – the Macedonian/Serbian/German coproduction *Stela* directed by Stojan Vujicic and produced by [Dream Factory](#) in coproduction with Akcija Production and MOUNA GmbH Film & Media Studio, whose premiere was postponed from March to 1 October 2020, and *Homo* directed by Igor Ivanov and produced by [Skopje Film Studio](#) in coproduction v Bulgaria's Gala Film, the Belgrade-based [Art & Popcorn](#), Slovenia's [Iridium Film](#) and Kosovo's Trigger, which was domestically released on 22 October 2020.

The low-budget independent feature film *TM* directed and produced by Ivica Dimitrijevic and Martin Ivanov through Film, was released in cinemas on 8 October 2020.

The crisis largely disrupted the festivals cycle. As a result, festivals were canceled, postponed and challenged to go hybrid or fully online.

The first to go fully online was the [Philosophical Film Festival](#) from 21 to 31 May 2020.

The 23rd edition of the Skopje Film Festival, which had been due in April, was held 9-16 September 2020 with open-air screenings and a limited number of seats.

The 41st edition of the [International Cinematographers' Film Festival Manaki Brothers](#) was celebrated by a formal one-hour event in Bitola on 19 September 2020 as well as several online activities, which didn't include online competition screenings. The highest awards, the Golden Camera 300 for Lifetime Achievement was presented to the Polish-American cinematographer Janusz Kaminski, and the Big Star of Macedonian Film Award to the director Stole Popov.



The [CINEDAYS Festival of European Film](#) celebrated its 19th edition with a reduced programme from 18 to 24 September 2020, two months earlier than its regular November dates.

The Festival of Creative Documentary Film [Makedox](#) celebrated its 11th edition from 19 to 26 August 2020 as a hyl edition and without foreign guests.

The [North Macedonia Film Agency](#) organised a Macedonian promotional e-pavilion within the virtual Cannes' March du Film from 22 to 26 June. The Agency presented eight feature films, as well as the latest catalogues with all the n film projects from 2019-2020 and films in development.

VOD PLATFORMS AND ONLINE DISTRIBUTION

The pandemic has accelerated the experimentation with the length of theatrical windows for TV and other platform launches. The crisis has created favourable conditions for platforms offering online film streaming, whose users

During the quarantine the only Macedonian VoD platform [Cinesquare](#) made more than 200 films available online at free of charge to its users as an act of solidarity. The free films were available from 1 April until 15 May 2020 as part of the #StayHome campaign. The feature films, documentaries and short films were available for free in Romania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slovenia, Montenegro, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Albania, Greece, Cyprus and Turkey for viewers who registered on [cinesquare.net](#) or the Android app available on Google Play.



Additionally, Cinesquare offered free of charge all the films selected for its edition of the SEE Online Film Festival in April 2020.

[Cinesquare](#), which is an initiative of the [Cutaway Distribution Company](#) supported by [Eurimages](#), the [North Macedonia Film Agency](#) and [MEDIA Creative Europe](#), recorded a two-to-threefold increase in traffic and had requests to put on festivals online, including the [Philosophical Film Festival](#) (21-31 May 2020), the [Flipbook Film Festival](#) (7-13 August 2020), Festival of Creative Documentary Film [Makedox](#) (19 August – 20 September

2020) and the [Galichnik Film Festival](#) (28-30 August 2020).

In April 2020, Cinesquare signed a partnership with the [Macedonian Cinematheque](#) to screen online the documentary *Galichnik*, filmed in 1940 by the amateur filmmaker Sifrid Miladinov. Ten more archive films were presented and screened within this collaboration. The [Cinematheque of North Macedonia](#) also shared more than 20 films from its archive for online watching on its platform, including the early Manaki Brothers films.

The short film *Sticker / Nalepnica* directed by Georgi M. Unkovski premiered on HBO GO in 2020.

In June 2020, due to the increased number of Covid cases in the country, Milcho Manchevski shared a free online streaming of his 2001 film *Dust / Prasina*, which was produced by UK's History Dreams, Germany's ena Film, Italy's Fandango Film and Macedonia's Shadow Films.

The most watched domestic film in 2020, *Honeyland* was free for streaming on Hulu and also available for buying on Apple iTunes, Vudu, Amazon Video, Microsoft Store, FandangoNOW, Google Play Movies, YouTube, DIRECTV on Dafilms, BFI player, Picl and Cinetree Netherlands, Cinobo Greece, and many more.

Amazon also acquired the streaming rights for the Serbian historical thriller TV series *Black Sun aka Shadow over the Balkans* directed by Dragan Bjelogrić and produced by [Cobra Film Production](#) in coproduction with [United Media Group](#), Slovenian [Perfo Production](#) and Macedonian [Skopje Film Studio](#).

EXHIBITION AND BOX OFFICE

The country's film distributors and exhibitors began 2020 confidently, after 2019 when the admissions were at the highest point ever. The data released by the [European Audiovisual Observatory](#) in 2020 shows that North Macedonia registered the best results at the box office in 2019 with a 25 percent increase in admissions, from 0.4 m admissions in 2018 rising to 0.5 m admissions in 2019.



The first two months of 2020 had robust results, but later the cinema closures for six months and release cancellations that began with the first national lockdown on 11 March, resulted in a drop of 85% in comparison to 2019. Although open air cinemas were opened in early July and the traditional cinemas reopened on 24 September and stayed open till the end of the year, the admissions were lower than ever.

Three commercial cinemas (one multiplex, [Cineplexx](#) with nine cinema halls, Cinema [Milenium](#) and [3D Cinema Bit](#) and two art house cinemas with a regular repertoire (Cinema [Frosina](#) and the [Macedonian Cinematheque](#)) operate in North Macedonia. Another 18 cultural centres, equipped with digital cinema projectors by the [North Macedonia Film Agency](#), which screen films occasionally, only screened one or two titles and the majority remained without cinema activity since March until the end of 2020.

The domestic film with the best results in cinemas in September-December among the domestic films released in 2020 is Igor Ivanov's *Homo*, distributed by [Skopje Film Studio](#). According to the biggest cinema in the country, [Cineplexx](#) film had approximately 700 admissions. The official statistics were not ready at the beginning of 2021.

Stojan Vujicic's debut feature *Stela*, distributed by [Dream Factory](#), came second in September-December 2020 with approximately 500 admissions.

Honeyland, which was released by Tris Films doel in North Macedonia in 2019, had 45,200 admissions throughout the country and was distributed in 30 cities in North Macedonia since its release on 29 August 2019, while *Willow /*



Honeyland is also the most watched domestic film in the history of the on multiplex cinema in the country, **Cineplexx**, with 11,113 admissions, followed by *Willow / Vrba* with 9,777 admissions.

In its eighth year **Cineplexx**, the largest exhibitor in North Macedonia, with over 70% of market share, screened 91 titles compared to 148 titles screened in 2019. According to the cinema, the US Production *Bad Boys Life* (**Continental Film Doo**) was the most watched film with 14,298 admissions. The multiplex registered 90,801 admissions in 2020, which is a drop of 77% compared to 395,487 admissions in 2019.

Cinema **Milenium**, based in Skopje, registered a decrease of 71% compared to 2019. It screened only 44 titles and sold 13,836 tickets. According to the cinema's statistics, the sales declined by 96.45% from January-March 2020 to October-December 2020.

The second film in the Macedonian overall box office is the Albanian *I Love Tropoja* directed by Ermal Mamaqi, with estimated 9,320 admissions, followed by the US production *Jumanji: The Next Level* (**Continental Film Doo**) with estimated 7,420 admissions.

Only three open-air cinemas were operating in the entire country in the summer of 2020: the **Cinematheque of North Macedonia**, the **Youth Cultural Center**, which runs **Cinema Milenium** and Cinema Frosina and **3D Cinema Bitola**.

Additionally, in August and September 2020 there were many open-air initiatives organised by the municipalities, NGOs and private companies.

On 6 September 2020, the first drive-in cinema opened in Shtip. From 14 to 16 August 2020, three films were screened during the first drive-in cinema organised in Ohrid, and another drive-in cinema was organised in Veles in July and August 2020. On 3 and 4 September open-air screenings of German films took place in Prilep. The telecom provider **A1** also organised a seven-day drive-in cinema in Skopje from 29 September 2020.

The **Cinematheque of North Macedonia** launched open-air screenings on 10 July 2020.



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 2020, the Cinematheque digitalised around 20 short films made between 1957 and 2006, and worked on the digitalisation of the first Macedonian feature film, *Frosina* directed by Voislav Nanovic and produced by Vardar Film.

GRANTS AND NEW LEGISLATION

The main film institution in the country is the **North Macedonia Film Agency**, first established in 2008 as a film fund. Its goal in recent years is to enhance the quality of national cinematography and to increase its competitive advantage within the regional and wider framework.

The new strategy of the **North Macedonia Film Agency** since 2019 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 year 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.

The Agency supports script development, production, postproduction, distribution and film festivals. Its majority funding sources come from the budget with the amount depending on the annual budget of the country.

The annual state support for film industry in 2020 was 2,632,028 EUR / 161,869,732 MKD.

The [North Macedonia Film Agency](#) distributed 2,889,430 EUR / 177,700,000 MKD in production grants for 20 films the first grant call of 2020. The Agency supported six majority feature films including four debut features, three minority coproductions, four majority long documentaries, one minority long documentary, one minority long animated film and five short films. Some of the supported films will start principal photography in 2021 and 2022.

Directors Milcho Manchevski and Teona Strugar Mitevska received the highest amounts of support of 487,805 EUR / 30 m MKD each for their new films, *Kaymak* produced by [Banana Film](#), and *The Happiest Man in the World / Najsrekn covok na svetot*.

The three minority feature films receiving production support include *Escort* by Lucas Nola, coproduced by [Skopje I Studio](#), *Behind the Haystacks* by Assimina Proedrou, coproduced by [Sektor Film](#), and *Forever Hold Your Peace / Ž zdravi* by Ivan Marinović, coproduced by Krug Film.

In the first films category, the biggest grant of 374,599 EUR / 23 m MKD went to Agim Abdula's *Coma / Koma*, produced by [Galaktika Pictures](#).

There is an annual Call for applications (with two deadlines in March and August) for production support for feature films, documentaries, short films and animated films.

The results of the second deadline of the Call for applications were not published by the end of the year.

As North Macedonia joined the revised Council of Europe Convention on Cinematographic Coproduction, the conditions that must be met by the productions to be considered coproductions were reduced by half starting 1 October 2020. As a result, multilateral coproductions have now a minimum share of 5% (compared to 10% previously), while bilateral coproductions have a minimum share of 10% (compared to 20% previously).



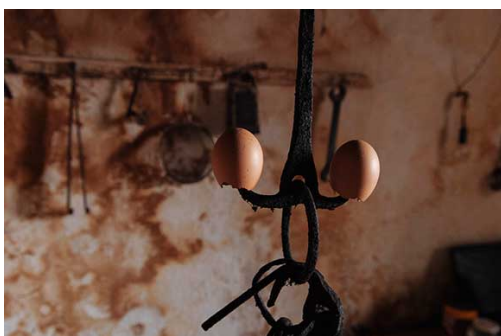
Starting from 2014, the North Macedonia Film Agency has been encouraging the investment of funds in film or television projects applying for the right of refund in the amount of 20% of the gross costs incurred in the country for the realisation of a film or television project, which is not less than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

In 2020 there were no applications for projects to use the right of refund. The last issued decision for payment was made on 23 January 2020, but it referred to 2019. The film in question is *A Mermaid in Paris / Une sirène à Paris* directed by Mathias Malzieu and produced by French Overdrive Productions in coproduction with Belgian Ent Chien et Loup and Macedonian [Sisters and Brother Mitevski](#).

In February 2020, the [North Macedonia Film Agency](#) announced its decision to boost 22 festivals and events according to the announced Call for financing projects of national interest in the film industry, for organising domestic festivals and other international film events in 2020. Established festivals such as the [International Cinematographer's Film Festival Manaki Brothers](#), the [Cinedays Festival of European Film](#), the [Skopje Film Festival](#) and the [Tetova International Film Festival ODA](#) received the highest grants. The Agency also supported the second edition of Days of the Macedonia film Golden Frame Review, organised by the [Macedonian Film Professionals Association](#).

In 2020, the Macedonian applicants received a total support of 108,216 EUR at several different calls of the [MEDIA Programme](#).

In 2020, Eurimages financially supported four projects produced and coproduced by Macedonian producers. At its 158th management board meeting the Council of Europe's Eurimages Fund supported [Sabattier Effect / Preeksponirano](#) by Eleonora Veninova with 88,000 EUR.



At its 159th meeting held online, the Board of Management of the Council of Europe's Eurimages Fund gave a production grant of 160,000 EUR to the minority coproduction *Behind the Haystacks* by Assimina Proedrou. The project is a coproduction between Argonauts Productions SA (Greece), [Sektor Film](#) (North Macedonia) and Fiction Park (Germany).

In October 2020, Eurimages decided to support the Albanian/Macedonian coproduction *My Mother Is a Cosmonaut* by Andi Deliana. The film is produced by Red Helicopter Films (Albania) and coproduced by [Dream Factory](#) (North Macedonia).

The Macedonian minority coproduction *The Body / Telo* was supported in

support from [MEDIA Creative Europe](#).

In 2020, two majority Macedonian projects received funding from MEDIA Creative Europe for single project development. In the first deadline, *The Happiest Man in the World / Najsrekniot covek na svetot* directed by Teona Strugar Mitevska and produced by [Sisters and Brother Mitevski](#), received 30,000 EUR for development. The film was the first Macedonian project presented in Cannes's L'Atelier - Cinéfondation 2020.

Land of Sar / Dolinata na Sharko directed by Petra Seliskar is the first Macedonian long creative documentary to receive MEDIA Creative Europe funding (of 25,000 EUR) in 2020. The documentary is produced by PFPF Ltd Skopje (North Macedonia), and coproduced by [Zavod Petra Pan Film](#) (Slovenia) and Cinephage Productions (France).

The mandate of the former director of the Agency Gorjan Tozija expired on 4 August 2020. The Macedonian Government named Bojan Lazarevski acting director of the [North Macedonia Film Agency](#) at its 15 December 2020 session.

On 31 August 2020, the Parliament appointed Irena Stefanoska the Minister of Culture of North Macedonia.

TV

TV production remained low in 2020.

The fifth season of the Macedonian TV Series *Prespav*, directed by Vardan Tozija, Dina Duma, Igor Ivanov and Gero M. Unkovski, went into production. The 20-episode series is produced by [OXO](#) and aired in prime time on the first channel of the [Macedonian Radio Television](#) starting 18 December 2020. The production celebrated 120 episodes at its release and featured a special COVID-19 episode, which was aired on 26 April 2020 on the first channel. On 7 October 2020, the fourth season of *Prespav* premiered on Bulgarian [bTV Comedy](#).

[TV 24](#) started broadcasting *Enemy / Neprijatelj* on 5 December 2020. The 11-episode series was filmed in Bitola during 2020 and is produced by Solza i smeja drama studio. The director is Aleksandar Dimitrovski.

The TV series *Zoki Poki*, based on the best known Macedonian children character, premiered on 4 May 2020 on the [Macedonian Radio Television](#). The 10-episode series, which was shot in 2019, is produced by [Kino Oko](#) and was backed with 309,000 EUR / 19 m MKD by the [North Macedonia Film Agency](#). Aleksandar Popovski is co-directing along with Marija Apchevska, Darijan Pejovski and Radovan Petrovic.



Thirty new episodes of the very popular educational-music series *Dajte muzika*, directed by Marko Gjokovic, premiered on [Macedonian Radio Television](#) on 4 November 2020. The series is a coproduction of the [Macedonian Radio Television](#) and Rifenstahl production.

The TV series *When You Fall*, produced by [OXO](#) and currently in development, received the Script Pool TV Award given by [Industry@Tallinn](#) in partnership with [MIDPOINT TV Launch](#).

The pandemic urged the TV premieres of several domestic films including *Honeyland / Medena zemja*, whose first exclusive television screening came ahead of schedule, disrupting the two-year TV holdback. The film had an early television premiere on [Telma TV](#) on 18 April 2020.

On 29 March 2020 Milcho Manchevski's new feature *Willow / Vrba* also had an early TV world premiere on the public broadcaster [Macedonian Radio Television](#) as part of a Manchevski #StayHome film review.

Three Days in September by Darijan Pejovski, produced by [Skopje Film Studio](#) in coproduction with Ikone Studio Kosovo, had its TV premiere on Telma TV on 20 April 2020.

Gjorche Stavreski's *The Secret Ingredient / Iscelitel* produced by Fragment Film, which was released in 2017, also had its TV premiere on 24 May 2020 on the [Macedonian Radio Television](#).

The TV stations aired multiple reruns of domestic films and TV series during the quarantine.

Beginning on 8 April 2020, the public service broadcaster launched four new TV channels, including a children's channel and sports and entertainment channels.

In 2020 the Macedonian postproduction company [Fx3x](#) worked on nine episodes of the third season of American television series *Star Trek: Discovery*. The season is produced by CBS Television Studios, and premiered on CBS on 15 October 2020. Netflix has the rights to broadcast the series in 188 countries.

In 2020, the **Macedonian Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services** published the analysis of the market of audio and audiovisual media services for 2019. According to the report, revenues in the media industry are declining year by year. In 2019 they decreased by 0.76% and were at the lowest in the last five years.



The **Macedonian Radio Television** saw a revenues decrease of 2.24% compared to 2018 and operated at a loss of 8.5 m EUR.

Among the five terrestrial televisions that broadcast on a national level, **TV** registered loss of around 355,000 EUR. In satellite television, **TV 24** had a loss of about 138,000 EUR. The financial result for the whole industry is that both the public service and the commercial broadcasters operated at a loss.

The total revenue generated in 2019 by all broadcasters (45 television stations and 69 radio stations) was 39.5 m EUR compared to 39.8 m EUR in 2018.

TV Sitel was the most watched television in 2019, with a daily average reach of 38.62% and an average weekly reach of 52.78%. **TV Kanal 5** was the second most watched television with 31.62%, followed by **TV Telma** (15.12%), **Alsa M** (14.02), **Macedonian Radio Television** (11.78), **Alfa TV** and **TV 24**.

The most watched foreign television channels in North Macedonia are again Sport Club, Fox, Discovery, National Geographic. According to the report, the viewers mostly watched the news on all televisions, followed by information programmes, educational and culture programmes, sports and TV series.

Most television connections are available through cable television – 48.5% and IPTV – with 27.6%.

CONTACTS:

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Phone: +389 2 3224 100

Fax: +389 2 3224 111

<http://www.filmfund.gov.mk/>

contact@filmagency.gov.mk

MINISTRY OF CULTURE FOR THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA

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Fax: +389 2 3240 575

<http://www.kultura.gov.mk/>

info@kultura.gov.mk

CINEMATHEQUE OF NORTH MACEDONIA

Nikola Rusinski 1, Skopje, North Macedonia

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Fax: + 389 2 30 71 813

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kinoteka@ukim.edu.mk

ASSOCIATION OF FILM PROFESSIONALS

8 Mart br. 4, 1000, Skopje, North Macedonia

Phone: +389 2 3211811

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contact@dfrm.org.mk

CREATIVE EUROPE DESK MK

MEDIA SUB-PROGRAMME

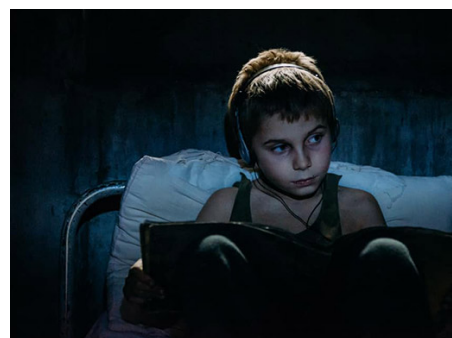
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<http://www.ced.mk/>

bistra.georgieva@ced.mk



Report by Marina Lazarevska (2021)

Sources: the North Macedonia Film Agency, the Macedonian Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services, Cineplexx, Milenium, Cinematheque of North Macedonia