How Has the European Union Counterbalanced Respect for Multiculturalization with the Protection of European Cultures?

Taro NISHIKAWA

Graduate School of Intercultural Studies, Kobe University, Kobe, Japan

This article analyzes the approach of the European Union (EU) to the trade and culture debate and its development. Focusing on the potential conflict between the respect for multiculturalization and the protection of European cultures, this paper examines not only the historical background of the EU's stance on the trade and culture debate but also the clauses regarding audiovisual services in the EU-South Korea Free Trade Agreement (FTA) as an example of the EU's policy development after the adoption of the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (the UNESCO Convention on Cultural Diversity). Through these analyses, this article arrives at the following conclusions. First, the EU's traditional approach in the trade and culture debate was based on the protection of European cultures; this approach was caused by fear of the diffusion of the US Hollywood cinema and by the importance of the audiovisual industry to European identities and unity. Second, since the introduction of the concept of cultural diversity in the UNESCO Convention on Cultural Diversity, the rhetorical focus of the EU's stance on the trade and culture debate has changed from the protection of European cultures to the combination of the respect for multiculturalization and the protection of European cultures. This new focus of the EU has two guiding principles: the promotion of European cultures and reciprocity. However, given the paucity of actual results of audiovisual co-production through the cultural protocol in the EU-South Korea FTA, it can be argued the EU's traditional focus on the protection of European cultures continues to dominate its approach mainly because of the EU's continuing fear of competitive foreign cultural content.

Keywords: trade and culture, audiovisual services, multiculturalization, cultural diversity, reciprocity

1. Introduction

"Trade and culture" or "trade versus culture"? This issue is a highly controversial effect of globalization, and it has been discussed in both the global trade and the global cultural arenas, namely in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the World Trade Organization (WTO), and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Although the necessity of finding an appropriate link between the law of the WTO and the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (the UNESCO Convention on Cultural Diversity) has been shown, that link is unlikely to be achieved because of strong path dependence in the trade and culture debate. In this context, the European Union (EU) conducted an experiment to transform "trade versus culture" to "trade along with culture," which is an innovative cultural cooperation protocol in the EU's "new generation" free trade agreements (FTAs).

This article analyzes the EU's approach to the trade and culture debate and its development. In the section which follows, the research question is presented. In addition, in the debate on trade and culture: trade in cultural goods and services can diversify cultures within each nation state, which may lead to a multicultural society, the potential conflict between respect for multiculturalization and the protection of European cultures is introduced as an analytical viewpoint. The third section analyzes the historical background of the EU's stance on the trade and culture debate prior to the introduction of the recent cultural protocol. In the fourth section, clauses on audiovisual services in the EU–South Korea FTA, especially its cultural protocol, are selected as a

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¹ Burri (2015), p.195.

² Ibid., p.205.

case study for analysis of the EU's policy development following the adoption of the UNESCO Convention on Cultural Diversity. The last section presents the conclusions of this article regarding the development of the EU's stance on the trade and culture debate and offers recommendations for further research.

2. Research Design

2.1 Analytical Viewpoints

The purpose of this article is to analyze the development of the EU's stance concerning trade and culture issues in audiovisual services. More precisely, as a case study, this article focuses on the EU–South Korea FTA as one of the EU's "new generation" FTAs. In terms of analytical viewpoints, this article focuses on the potential conflict of respect for multiculturalization with the protection of European cultures and how to counterbalance those two objectives.

2.1.1 Respect for Multiculturalization

First, since the advent of economic globalization and the subsequent (or simultaneous) cultural globalization,³ various foreign cultures have flowed into nation states and multiculturalization has occurred.⁴ Here, multiculturalization is a movement toward

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³ Bekemans (2002), p.3.

⁴ Japan's version of multiculturalism is the concept of *tabunka kyosei* or "multicultural coexistence." Although the concept of multicultural coexistence emphasizes the presence of people of different nationalities and ethnicities, it has been also suggested that the economic and social developments of the late twentieth century have led to a "multiculturalism within" (*uchinaru kokusaika*). Therefore, multiculturalism is an issue linked not only with

multiculturalism. Heywood introduced the definition of multiculturalism as a descriptive term referring to "cultural diversity arising from the existence within a society of two or more groups whose beliefs and practices generate a distinctive sense of collective identity." In addition to Heywood's definition, it should be mentioned multiculturalization can occur without immigration or the presence of people; it may take the form of flows of cultural goods and services instead. This article focuses on this view of cultural goods and services, which is recognized by the UNESCO Convention on Cultural Diversity:

[T]o give recognition to the distinctive nature of cultural activities, goods and services as vehicles of identity, values and meaning.⁶

2.1.2 Protection of European Cultures

Along with multiculturalization, economic and cultural globalization could make it more difficult to preserve the traditional cultures of one country or one region.

Therefore, it has become more necessary to reaffirm the sovereign right to maintain and introduce cultural policy measures to protect and promote traditional cultures. This necessity is confirmed in the UNESCO Convention on Cultural Diversity:

Recognizing the importance of traditional knowledge as a source of intangible and material wealth, (...), as well as the need for its adequate protection and promotion.⁷

transnational migration but also with the nation state's adaptation to today's globalized world. See Guarné et al. (2015), pp.58, 60.

⁶ UNESCO (2005), Article 1-Objectives-(g). Author's underlining.

⁵ Heywood (2014), p.192.

⁷ Ibid., Preamble. Author's underlining.

[T]o reaffirm the sovereign rights of States to maintain, adopt and implement policies and measures that they deem appropriate for the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions on their territory.⁸

2.2 Research Question

In the context of the abovementioned research objective and analytical viewpoints, this article seeks to answer the following research question:

 Concerning the debate on trade and culture, is the EU's renewed stance following the adoption of the UNESCO Convention on Cultural Diversity really different from its traditional stance?

To answer this research question, more concrete questions must be answered first. From the historical viewpoint, two questions present themselves:

- What was the EU's traditional approach toward the trade and culture debate?
- What factors were behind that approach?

In terms of the current EU approach in the EU–South Korea FTA, the following questions should be answered:

- What developments have occurred in the EU's stance on the trade and culture debate?
- What intention of the EU, and especially of the European Commission, lies behind these developments?
- Has the renewed EU stance been implemented effectively?

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⁸ Ibid., Article 1-Objectives-(h). Author's underlining.

3. Historical Background

3.1 Film Import Restrictions, Screen Quotas, and the GATT Exception

The historical background of trade and culture debates needs to be analyzed to clarify the EU's traditional stance on that debate, before looking at the EU–South Korea FTA itself. The international policy debate on trade and culture began after the First World War, and two factors featured in this development. The first factor in this development was the change from print media, such as books, newspapers, and magazines, to audiovisual media, especially film. The second factor in this development was the decline of the initial predominance of European cinema; Hollywood in the US had clearly become the new center of global filmmaking and was exporting vast amounts of visual entertainment.

Consequently, some European countries were frightened of the economic and cultural impact of Hollywood, and their concern was for the dual nature, economic and cultural, of trade liberalization, especially in the field of audiovisual services since the 1920s. ¹⁰ Some European countries tried to institutionalize an appropriate balance between economic gains and cultural values. First, at the domestic level, countries such as the United Kingdom, France, Austria, and Italy introduced import restrictions on foreign films and screen quotas for domestic films. ¹¹ After the Second World War, Article 4 of the GATT in 1947 institutionalized these concerns as an exception for national treatment in terms of film screen quotas. This is proof cultural exceptions were

⁹ Burri (2015), p.196.

¹⁰ Kawase (2013), p.20.

¹¹ Ibid., p.20.

indeed accepted by GATT members, even though the focus of the exception was limited to audiovisual media.¹² Because of Article 4, GATT members were able to maintain their screen quotas for domestic films, which can be regarded as an expression of "embedded liberalism."¹³

3.2 Tough Debate in the GATT Uruguay Round

Under the GATT international trade regime after the Second World War, trade liberalization, as one aspect of economic globalization, contributed to economic growth around the world. At the same time, the transborder commerce of goods and services led to the transnational movement of cultural elements. Thus, multiculturalization began to take place within each nation state. In the 1980s and 1990s, as technology—especially satellites—facilitated the diffusion of cultural content, both in film and on television, ¹⁴ tough discussions about "cultural exceptions" to liberalization took place, mainly between the European Community (EC) and Canada, on the one hand, and the US, on the other hand, in the GATT Uruguay Round (1986–1994).

In the Uruguay Round, GATT members negotiated measures that went far beyond the dismantling of tariff barriers: new trade issues such as intellectual property and services. In the context of liberalization of services, the US urged the inclusion of audiovisual services in the negotiations and opposed any cultural exceptions, which the US considered as "disguised protectionism." The US's stance stemmed from heavy

¹² Burri (2015), p.196.

¹³ Ruggie (1984).

¹⁴ Burri (2015), p.197.

lobbying from its entertainment industry.¹⁵ In contrast, the main concern for the EC was the influx of US films, which accounted for approximately 70 percent of the European film market in the 1990s.¹⁶ The "cultural proponents," led by the EC and Canada, were eager to establish an "exception culturelle," the exemption of any cultural products and services from WTO rules.¹⁷

Consequently, the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), an outcome of the Uruguay Round, covers all services. This means that no services, including audiovisual services, are excluded in principle from the GATS. However, this did not result automatically in the liberalization of audiovisual services, because the GATS adopted the positive list approach, whereby WTO members could choose the service sectors and subsectors to be liberalized; only those sectors that were listed explicitly were to be liberalized. This flexibility enabled the EC to avoid committing itself to the liberalization of audiovisual services. ¹⁸ The special status of audiovisual services is worth noting here: whereas the EC entered into a full commitment for other cultural services, such as printing, publishing, and press and agency services, it introduced a resolute "all-or-nothing" approach for the audiovisual services. ¹⁹

¹⁵ Ibid., pp.199, 200.

¹⁶ Miura (1996), pp.48, 49.

¹⁷ Burri (2015), p.197.

¹⁸ This EC stance is not necessarily unique, because almost all WTO members were reluctant to commit to liberalization of audiovisual media services. Ibid., p.201.

¹⁹ Ibid., p.202.

3.3 Change of Arena from the WTO to UNESCO: The Concept of Cultural Diversity

Although the debate on culture and trade remained unresolved under the GATT/WTO regime, a new discussion began in UNESCO in the 2000s at the EU's initiative. This represents the EU's pursuit of a specific status for cultural goods and services through economic and political rationales. The economic rationale is the indispensability of state intervention because of market failure. The political rationale is the enduring negative attitudes toward globalization,²⁰ as reflected in the importance of the audiovisual industry to European identities and unity. (This can be observed in the EU's "double standard policy" explained in the next section.)

Therefore, the twofold nature—economic and cultural—of cultural goods and services was institutionalized in the UNESCO Convention on Cultural Diversity, adopted in 2005. Cultural diversity constitutes the more positive and more ambitious agenda, and it was developed primarily under the International Network for Cultural Policy.²¹ Although the rhetoric of "cultural exception" contained elements of negativism

²⁰ This attitude can be seen in the strategy of Pascal Lamy, Commissioner for Trade at the European Commission from 1999 to 2004, "harnessing/managing globalization." See Lamy (1999).

²¹ Burri (2015), p.202, 203. The network comprises 68 member countries, including a small group of core members, namely Canada, Croatia, France, Greece, Mexico, Senegal, South Africa, Sweden, and Switzerland. See the website of the Ministry of Culture and Communications in the Government of Québec in Canada (http://www.diversite-culturelle.qc.ca/index.php?id=105&L=1&tx_bulletinsirre_pi2%5Byear%5D=2006&tx_bulle tinsirre_pi2%5Barticle%5D=2010).

and latent "anti-Americanism," cultural diversity is embodied in the uniqueness and plurality of the identities of the groups and societies who make up humankind, and it is a source of exchange, innovation, and creativity. In addition to protecting and promoting cultural diversity, the convention, emphasizes the sovereign right of states to maintain, adopt, and implement appropriate cultural policies, interactions, and development. He EU tried to implement the convention, following its adoption, with its FTAs by introducing the Protocol of Cultural Cooperation with the exception of audiovisual services.

Overall, the EU's traditional approach toward the trade and culture debate was a defensive one that involved the protection of European cultures by excluding audiovisual services from trade liberalization. The principal factors behind this approach were the fear of the diffusion of cultural content, especially US Hollywood cinema, and the importance of the audiovisual industry to European identities and unity. The adoption of the UNESCO Convention on Cultural Diversity, however, seems to have triggered a new approach on the part of the EU toward the trade and culture debate. In the next section, the EU–South Korea FTA is examined as a case study, in order to clarify this new approach.

4. Case Study: The EU-South Korea FTA

In this section, EU policy development after the adoption of the UNESCO Convention on Cultural Diversity is analyzed. For two specific reasons, this article selects

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²² Burri (2010), p.1063.

²³ UNESCO (2001), Article 1.

²⁴ UNESCO (2007), pp.4, 5.

audiovisual services in the EU–South Korea FTA as a case study. First, as shown in the discussion of the historical background, the audiovisual sector, including films and TV programs, is traditionally a focus of cultural concerns in trade. Second, the EU–South Korea FTA is the first "new generation" FTA under the EU trade strategy, "Global Europe," launched in 2006, which emphasizes economic interests alongside the promotion of "our [European] values," such as cultural diversity.²⁵

4.1 Clauses on Audiovisual Services

Next, a brief overview of clauses on audiovisual services in the EU–South Korea FTA is provided. The first key point is the exemption of audiovisual services from liberalization is stipulated in Articles 7.4 and 7.10, which embody the EU's traditional stance from the GATT Uruguay Round.

The second key point is that the Protocol on Cultural Cooperation is combined with the FTA. The Protocol states the intention to effectively implement the UNESCO Convention on Cultural Diversity and recognizes the multifaceted nature of cultural goods and services in its preamble. In terms of audiovisual services, a co-production mechanism is introduced in Article 5, whereby the entitlement of "co-produced audiovisual works" is granted under collaboration between both parties' capital and producers. For example, in terms of audiovisual works that are not animations, the conditions of "co-produced audiovisual works" are as follows: (a) a minimum financial contribution of at least 10 percent from each of the EU Member State producer(s); (b) a total of at least 30 percent contribution from the EU Member State producers; (c) a total of at least 30 percent contribution from Korean producer(s); (d) technical and artistic

²⁵ Commission of the European Communities (2006), p.5.

contribution from EU and Korean producers that shall not vary by more than 20 percentage points of their respective financial contribution and cannot be more than 70 percent of the overall contribution.²⁶ These co-produced works qualify as European works in the EU and as Korean works in Korea, and each benefits from schemes for supporting local or regional cultural content.

4.2 Analysis: The Intentions of the European Commission

This subsection analyzes the intention of the EU, especially the European Commission's intention of adopting the clauses mentioned in the previous subsection. Simply put, this article argues the European Commission utilized two rhetorical guiding principles in order to counterbalance the respect for multiculturalization with the protection of European cultures. Based on the analysis of related European Commission documents, first the European Commission's goals are clarified, and then its unique rhetorical guiding principles are illustrated.

4.2.1 Two Goals: Protection of European Cultures and Respect for Multiculturalization

If we consider the exemption of audiovisual services from liberalization, the goal is supposedly to protect European cultures. Here it is significant to point out the EU's "double standard policy."²⁷ At the international level, in order to pursue European identity, the EU has tried to protect its audiovisual sector, as we saw in the discussion of

²⁶ In addition, the participation of producers from third countries is permitted under certain conditions. See the explanatory document of the European Commission, "EU–Korea Audiovisual Co-productions."

²⁷ Formentini et al. (2007), p.6.

the historical background. In contrast, at the internal EU level, the European Commission has striven to remove internal trade barriers, that is, the European Commission has tried to develop the concept of collective "European cultures" internally and to protect them externally.

Turning to the Protocol on Cultural Cooperation, the European Commission's goal is to promote cultural exchange and, as a consequence, respect for multiculturalization, as illustrated in its concept paper regarding the Protocol with South Korea:

The draft Protocol also reflects the mandate of the European Union Council (...) in a spirit of <u>promoting</u> cultural and audio-visual <u>exchanges</u> and favouring <u>inter-cultural dialogue</u>.²⁸

4.2.2 Two Rhetorical Guiding Principles: Promotion of European Cultures and Reciprocity

This article argues the Protocol makes use of the European Commission's two rhetorical guiding principles to counterbalance its two objectives.

The first guiding principle is the promotion of European cultures. The European Commission's intention is to go beyond the traditional trade-versus-culture debate, as in the cultural exception discussion in the GATT Uruguay Round, under the gear-shift from the WTO to the UNESCO.²⁹ It can be argued the European Commission legitimizes the international exchange of audiovisual services under the guiding principle of building up the international position of European audiovisual works, although this international exchange also contains elements of a controversial

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²⁸ European Commission (2009b), p.1. Author's underlining.

²⁹ Loisen et al. (2011), pp.256, 267.

liberalization of audiovisual services toward non-EU countries. The following concept paper of the European Commission shows this:

[T]he provision on co-productions would also constitute a tool to <u>foster the</u> <u>international circulation of European works</u> in a region that is difficult to penetrate.³⁰

The second guiding principal is reciprocity. Cultural industries in South Korea, especially the animation sector, are strongly competitive; exports of Korean animations to the EU increased between 2006 and 2010 from \$0.7 million to \$1.95 million. That is the reason for the European Commission's legitimization of the promotion of audiovisual exchange under the rationale of "balanced" and "reciprocal" exchange. More specifically, monitoring and safeguard mechanisms are introduced in Articles 5.9 and 5.10, respectively. Monitoring is implemented by Domestic Advisory Groups consisting of cultural and audiovisual representatives, and these Groups report relevant problems to the Committee on Cultural Cooperation, consisting of senior officials from each party who have expertise and experience in the cultural matters and practices. The safeguard mechanism allows one party to suspend the entitlement of "co-produced audiovisual works," with prior notice of two months, if the rights reserved for co-produced works are adversely affected because of legislative changes by the other party. This reciprocity is shown explicitly in the following concept paper of the European Commission:

³⁰ European Commission (2009b), p.2. Author's underlining.

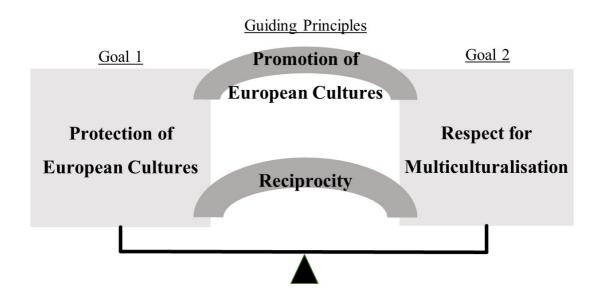
³¹ Le Sourd et al. (2012), p.68.

³² Ibid., p.259.

It is crucial that <u>a logic of reciprocity is preserved</u> and Parties are able to maintain their capacity to elaborate and further develop their public cultural policies with a view to protecting and promoting cultural diversity.³³

In summary, on the rhetorical dimension, the EU's stance on the trade and culture debate has changed from the protection of European cultures to the combination of respect for multiculturalization and the protection of European cultures. To pursue this stance, the European Commission uses two guiding principles: the promotion of European cultures and the reciprocity (see Figure 1). However, the question remains whether, on the implementational dimension, this development has truly taken place. In other words, has the traditional EU's stance on the trade and culture debate been really transformed into the new one?

Figure 1. Intentions of the European Commission regarding audiovisual services in the EU–South Korea Free Trade Agreement



³³ European Commission (2009b), p.4. Underlining in the original document.

4.3 Unsatisfactory Results of the European Commission's New Stance

In this subsection, the actual results of this European Commission's stance are analyzed. Briefly put, the level of implementation of co-production under the Protocol is relatively low.³⁴ The main reason for this low implementation is the European Commission's top-down approach to the adoption of the Protocol, which has led to a lack of social support. For example, organizations of cultural professionals, such as the International Network on Cultural Diversity Europe, and some EU Member States, such as France, have shown strong reluctance to the Protocol.³⁵ Therefore, the necessary linkage among co-production agreements, film co-productions, and film distribution has not been developed. For example, while the EU–South Korea FTA has been provisionally applied since 2011, it is reported no film was co-produced between South Korea and any EU country (apart from France) between 2007 and 2013.³⁶

In contrast, outside of FTA schemes, co-production agreements have had relatively positive effects on co-production activities. For example, under the France—

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³⁴ In 2014, as a response to the low implementation rate, the Council of the EU decided that the period of entitlement for audiovisual coproductions would be extended for a duration of three years, from July 1, 2014, to June 30, 2017. In 2017, the period was extended again by the Council for a duration of three years, from July 1, 2017, to June 30, 2020. Council of the European Union (2014); European Commission (2014), p.2; Council of the European Union (2017)

³⁵ Vlassis (2016) pp.450, 456.

³⁶ Le Sourd et al. (2012), p.69.

South Korea Film Co-Production Agreement,³⁷ at least two co-productions, *La rivière Tumen* and *Une vie toute neuve*, have benefited.³⁸ Interestingly, France, which is a strong opponent of the protocol in the EU–South Korea FTA, is the only EU country to have signed a film co-production agreement with South Korea in 2006.³⁹ The French government pointed out the Protocol did not conform with the UNESCO Convention on Cultural Diversity or with the commitments of the European Commission in favor of the diversity of cultural expression, because the European Commission intended to include the cultural industries within the FTA agenda in order to use them as a selling point for proceeding with trade deals and for gaining concessions in other economic areas.⁴⁰

More collaboration and co-production projects exist also outside official agreements. For example, the European Association of Animation Film (CARTOON) held the event "Cartoon Connection Korea" for the third consecutive year in Busan with the Korean company, Kotra, with the participation of more than 100 European, Korean, and Asian companies.⁴¹

This agreement was signed between the French Government and the Government of South Korea, and the competent authorities are the Centre National de la Cinématographie (CNC) in France and the Korean Film Council (KOFIC) in South Korea. See the text of the agreement.

³⁸ Le Sourd et al. (2012), p.70.

³⁹ France is also the leading EU country in terms of audiovisual co-productions, signing 45 bilateral co-production agreements in total; Germany has signed 18, Spain 17, and the United Kingdom 13. Vlassis (2016), p.451.

⁴⁰ Ibid., pp.450.

⁴¹ Le Sourd et al. (2012), p.68.

5. Conclusion

First, as shown in the historical background, the EU's traditional approach toward the trade and culture debate prioritized the protection of European cultures, and this approach was caused by the fear of the diffusion of US Hollywood cinema and by the importance of the audiovisual industry to European identities and unity.

Second, following the introduction of the concept of cultural diversity in the UNESCO Convention on Cultural Diversity, the EU's stance on the trade and culture debate has changed, on the rhetorical dimension, from the protection of European cultures to the combination of respect for multiculturalization and the protection of European cultures. Two guiding principles govern this change: the promotion of European cultures and reciprocity.

Third, looking at the implementational dimension of this stance, the actual results can be seen in the exemption of audiovisual services from liberalization only and not in audiovisual co-production. Therefore, although on the rhetorical dimension the European Commission has been motivated to go beyond its traditional approach and to counterbalance respect for multiculturalization with the protection of European cultures, it can certainly be said little change can be seen on the implementational dimension; the traditional EU stance, namely a focus on the protection of European cultures, continues. In other words, although the EU has tried to overcome its fear of competitive foreign cultural content by introducing an audiovisual co-production scheme, it maintains its suspicion toward the industries of its co-production partner counties, such as the competitive South Korean animation industry, under the rationale of reciprocity.

Fourth, in terms of the implementation rate, film co-productions outside FTAs (such as the use of film co-production agreements and event-based initiatives by private companies) may be a more efficient way to achieve respect for multiculturalization.

Consequently, these initiatives might enable European countries to counterbalance respect for multiculturalization with the protection of European cultures.

Finally, since my research has utilized a policy-level approach, it is recommended that further research should examine the field-level situation in audiovisual co-production, such as the amount of co-produced content and its topics. However, as official statistics on these numbers do not appear to be in the public domain, field research—it will be necessary to conduct interviews and questionnaires with public officials and film makers.

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