

Czech Film Production Incentives Back, but at a Reduced Rate

By Will Tizard



Courtesy of Paul Abell/Netflix

Following outrage from Czech and international producers, the Czech Republic is bringing back its film production incentives – but at a reduced rate that’s being called a stop-gap measure until a new law can fully restore them.

Czech President Milos Zeman has signed a new act to keep the incentives at 20% of rebate on cash spent – lagging behind the 30% rate now in play in Hungary and Poland and also trailing Slovakia and Germany, who each offer 25%.

The new law also caps the fund available for rebates at about \$6 million per project, a limit that the head of the Czech Film Commission, Pavlina Zipkova, says “is going against the pure sense of production incentives, which is to attract inward investment.”

Zipkova adds that industry officials are at work on an improved version of the incentives law to create more competitive conditions to keep the recent flow of mega-productions such as Netflix’s “The Gray Man” and Amazon’s “The Wheel of Time” coming.

Details of the draft measure are still under wraps but Zipkova says it’s expected to pass and take effect in 2024 ideally.

This summer, with incentives depleted, Vratislav Slajer, the head of the country’s main producers’ association, the APA, said government inaction had left the industry “on the edge of a precipice.”

He cautioned colleagues at the Karlovy Vary Intl. Film Festival, that they were witnessing the impending loss of more than a decade of progress in bringing in foreign shoots – and the prospect of witnessing billions going to other countries.

The Czech government suspended film production incentives early in 2020 year, citing a spending crisis brought on by the need to rescue businesses hit by COVID-19 losses and to accommodate war refugees from Ukraine.