A Comparative Study of Rating Systems

It is a misconception in India that film certification is an anachronism of the democratic ethos of the country and it is India specific. Nothing can be farther from truth. Film certification or classification is prevalent in almost all countries of the world in different forms and different level of participation of the government or the civil society.

A motion picture rating system is designated to classify films with regard to suitability for audiences in terms of issues such as sex, violence, substance abuse, profanity, impudence or other types of mature content. A particular issued rating is called a certification.

This is designed to help parents decide whether a movie is suitable for their children. Yet, the effectiveness of these systems is widely disputed. Also, in some jurisdictions a rating may impose on movie theaters the legal obligation of refusing the entrance of children or minors to the movie. Furthermore, where movie theaters do not have this legal obligation, they may enforce restrictions on their own. Ratings are often given in lieu of censorship.

In countries such as Australia, an official government body decides on ratings; in other countries, such as the United States, it is done by industry committees with no official government status. In most countries, however, films that are considered morally offensive have been censored, restricted, or banned. Even if the film rating system has no legal consequences, and a film has not explicitly been restricted or banned, there are usually laws forbidding certain films, or forbidding minors to view them.

The influence of specific factors in deciding a rating varies from country to country. For example, in countries such as the US, films with strong sexual content are often restricted to adult viewers, whereas in countries such as France and Germany, sexual content is viewed much more leniently. On the other hand, films with violent content are often subject in countries such as Germany and Finland to high ratings and even censorship, whereas countries such as the US offer more lenient ratings to violent movies.

A film may be produced with a particular rating in mind. It may be re-edited if the desired rating is not obtained, especially to avoid a higher rating than intended. A film may also be re-edited to produce an alternate version for other countries.

1. Australia

Australian Ratings

The Office of Film and Literature Classification is a government funded organization which classifies all films that are released for public exhibition.

Theatrical advertising is accompanied by a colour-coded symbol for each classification category. This is accompanied by consumer advice such as mild, moderate, strong or high level coarse language, nudity, sexual references, themes etc. Only the MA15+, R18+ and X18+ classifications are legally restricted.

The E rating, is used in films which do not have a need to be classified, such as documentaries. However, documentaries or concerts that may exceed the guidelines of the PG classification must be submitted for classification.

- **E** - Exempt from classification. Films that are exempt from classification must not contain contentious material (i.e. material that would ordinarily be rated M or higher).
- **G** - General. The content is very mild in impact.
- **PG** - Parental guidance recommended. The content is mild in impact.
- **M** - Recommended for mature audiences. The content is moderate in impact.
- **MA15+** - Not suitable for persons younger than 15. Persons younger than 15 years must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. The content is strong in impact.
- **R18+** - Restricted to adults 18 years and older. The content is high in impact.
- **X18+** - Restricted to adults 18 years and older. This rating applies solely to sexual content - no violence or "fetishes", including spanking, may be shown (legally may be sold in the ACT and the NT only but may be purchased interstate via mail order).
- **RC** - Refused Classification. Banned from sale or hire in Australia.

2. Austria

2.1. Cinema

Motion pictures are rated in Austria by a commission of the Austrian Federal Ministry for Education, the Arts and Culture (Bundesministerium für...
Unterricht, Kunst und Kultur). This commission issues an age recommendation for each title from the following list:

- Freigegeben für alle Altersstufen - no age restriction
- Freigegeben ab 6 Jahren - not recommended for persons younger than 6 years of age
- Freigegeben ab 10 Jahren - not recommended for persons younger than 10 years of age
- Freigegeben ab 12 Jahren - not recommended for persons younger than 12 years of age
- Freigegeben ab 14 Jahren - not recommended for persons younger than 14 years of age
- Freigegeben ab 16 Jahren - not recommended for persons younger than 16 years of age

The ratings are published on the ministries website and can be either accepted or changed by the nine federal states.

2. DVD and video

Storage media, such as DVDs, are not rated in Austria. Usually the german FSK-ratings are printed on the cases, although they don't have any legal meaning. For this reason many films which are banned in Germany can be bought on DVD in Austria.

3. Belgium

There are only three classifications for movies shown in Belgian movie theatres:

- KT/EA - Kinderen Toegelaten/Enfants Admis (Children Admitted) - Allowed for all
- KNT/ENA - Kinderen Niet Toegelaten/Enfants Non Admis (Children Not Admitted) - Not allowed for children younger than 16 of age
- E - Exempt

For DVD releases, Belgium uses the same system as the Netherlands.

4. Brazil

Movies are rated in Brazil by the DJCTQ, or Department of Justice, Rating, Titles and Qualification (Departamento de Justiça, Classificação, Títulos e Qualificação in Portuguese), controlled by the Brazilian Ministry of Justice (Ministério da Justiça). No "parental guidance" ratings are used. It's interesting to notice that this rating system is also used for television shows.

The DJCTQ uses the following system:

- ER Especialmente Recomendado para Crianças e Adolescentes (Especially Recommended for Children and Adolescents): This rating means that the film is especially advised for children and adolescents. Contains educational material, and doesn't have any inappropriate content. Examples: Go Diego Go, Dora the Explorer, Sesame Street ...

- L Livre para Todos os Públicos (General Audiences): This rating means that the film contains no objectionable content and can be viewed by anyone, regardless of age.

- 10 Não Recomendado para Menores de 10 Anos (Not Recommended for Viewers younger than 10 Years of Age): This film is recommended for persons with or over 10 years of age. May contain little inappropriate language, sex insinuations, or mild violence. Examples: Naruto, Chuck, My Wife and Kids, The Simpsons ...

- 12 Não Recomendado para Menores de 12 Anos (Not Recommended for Viewers younger than 12 Years of Age): This film is recommended for persons with or over 12 years of age. May contain a mild inappropriate language, mild sexual innuendo, or mild violence. Examples: Smallville, Bleach, Black Jack ...

- 14 Não Recomendado para Menores de 14 Anos (Not Recommended for Viewers younger than 14 Years of Age): This film is recommended for persons with or over 14 years of age. May contain moderate inappropriate language, moderate sexual innuendo, mild sexual content, or brief allusions to drug use. Examples: Supernatural, Gossip Girl, The Mentalist, Cold Case ...

- 16 Não Recomendado para Menores de 16 Anos (Not Recommended for Viewers younger than 16 Years of Age): This film is recommended for persons with or over 16 years of age. May contain strong language, sexual innuendo and/or mild sex with or without mild nudity, strong violence, or moderate scenes of or allusions to drug use. Examples: Amusement, The Unborn, My Bloody Valentine ...

- 18 Não Recomendado para Menores de 18 Anos (Not Recommended for Viewers younger than 18 Years of Age): This film is forbidden for people younger than 18 years of age. It may contain strong language, explicit sexual content, frequent nudity, strong violence, or explicit scenes of drug abuse. It is also used to rate pornographic films. Examples: Martyrs, Inside, Silent Hill ...

People younger than the minimum age indicated by the rating can watch the movie accompanied by their parents or an adult guardian, except for pornographic films. The films are rated by trained raters and, more recently, the DJCTQ has surveyed the audience's opinions on
5. Bulgaria

The Bulgarian film rating system is defined in the Film Industry Law (or Act) of 2003. The National Film Rating Committee examines every film that is going to be distributed in the country and gives it a rating. In practice, the ratings are rarely displayed on posters and in film advertisements, but almost all DVDs have them on the back cover.

Before 2003 there was another rating system which was very similar to the current one (the same letter ratings were used, but the meaning of most letters was different; for example, "B" stood for "no recommended for persons under the age of 12").

In practice, the rating "B" is given to most popular American films, even if they receive a more restrictive one in other countries.

In 2007, a few changes to the law were made, the effect of which will probably not be big for the rating system, though a film's rating could change. These changes are in effect from January 1, 2008.

Note: parts of the table above uses quotes from the English translation of the Bulgarian Film Industry Act published on the website of the Union of Bulgarian Film Makers.

6. Canada

Main article: Canadian motion picture rating system

Movie ratings in Canada are a provincial responsibility, and each province has its own legislation, rules and regulations regarding rating, exhibition and admission. Ratings are required for theatrical showings of movies, but are not required for home video. Film festivals which show unrated films (because they are independent films or foreign films not submitted for ratings) are treated as private showings by selling memberships to the festival, which circumvents the theatrical rating requirement.

There are currently six film classification offices rating movies in Canada, each an agency of a provincial government:

- in British Columbia, Saskatchewan and the Yukon, the British Columbia Film Classification Office;
- in Alberta, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut, Alberta Film Ratings;
- in Manitoba, the Manitoba Film Classification Board;
- in Ontario, the Ontario Film Review Board;
- in Quebec, la Régie du cinéma du Québec;
- in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, the Maritime Film Classification Board.

The province of Newfoundland and Labrador has not legislated on film ratings and does not have a dedicated agency; some theatres use the ratings of the Maritime Film Classification Board.

6. 1. Home video ratings

For more details on this topic, see Canadian Home Video Rating System.

6. 1. 1. Outside Québec

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Letter(s) meaning</th>
<th>Rating meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>General Audience</td>
<td>All ages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PG</td>
<td>Parental Guidance</td>
<td>Parental guidance is advised for people under 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14A</td>
<td>14 Accompaniment</td>
<td>Under 14 must be accompanied by an adult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18A</td>
<td>18 Accompaniment</td>
<td>Under 18 must be accompanied by an adult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>Restricted</td>
<td>Only for adults at least 18 years old</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>Only for adults at least 18 years old, has explicit sex and/or explicit violence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All the provincial film boards (except the Québec Régie du cinéma) participate in the Canadian Home Video Rating System (CHVRS), a classification applied to home video products such as DVDs, Blu-ray Discs and VHS tapes. The ratings of the individual film boards are averaged.
and applied by the distributor on home video packaging. Major studios and distributors usually print the CHVRS ratings along with the Motion Picture Association of America ratings, on materials destined for North-American markets.

### 6. In Québec

In Québec, the Régie du cinéma ratings apply to home video products. Sticker rating labels must be provided by the distributor, and displayed on rental material.

### 7. Chile

The Council of Cinematographic Classification (Consejo de Calificación Cinematográfica) uses the following system:

- **TE (Todo Espectador)** - For all audiences.
- **Mayores de 14 años** - Inappropriate for children younger than 14.
- **Mayores de 18 años** - Suitable for people aged 18 and older. Children younger than 18 may be accompanied by a parent or guardian 18 or older.

**Subcategories**

- **Inconveniente para menores de 7 años (Inconvenient for children under 7 years)** - Not Suitable for children younger than 7 years
- **18/S** - Suitable for people aged 18 and older with sexually explicit content. This indication signifies that the film essentially contains scenes of real and explicit sexual activity.
- **18/V** - Suitable for people aged 18 and older with extreme violence

### 8. People's Republic of China

See also: Film industry in China

The first film rating system of the People's Republic of China was expected to come out in 2005 as a part of the Motion Picture Industry Promotion Law (Chinese: 电影促进法). However, the National People's Congress has not passed such a law.

### 9. Colombia

As of June 22, 2005, the Ministry of Culture issued its new rating system. The classifications are:

- **T**: for general audiences. The T means "Todos", meaning "all."
- **7**: for movies suitable for children aged 7 and above.
- **12**: for movies suitable for children aged 12 and above.
- **15**: for movies suitable for children aged 15 and above.
- **18**: for movies suitable for people aged 18 and above.
- **X**: for pornography.
- **Banned**: for movies "containing elements inciting to crime or making a concrete endorsement of it."
- **E**: Exempt.

### 10. Czech Republic

- **U** - Suitable for all audiences. Examples: Psycho, Clueless, Halloween
- **12** - Suitable for children 12 and over. Examples: Tideland, Silent Hill, Trick’r Treat
- **15** - Suitable for children 15 and over. Examples: The Tattooist, Prom Night, Slumdog Millionaire
- **18** - Suitable for viewers 18 and over. Examples: Swimming Pool
- **E** - Exempt from classification

### 11. Denmark

The Media Council for Children and Young People uses the following classifications.
A Approval of the film for general admittance.

7 Approval of the film for general admittance, but not recommended for children younger than the age of 7.

11 Approval of the film for admittance of children from the age of 11.

15 Approval of the film for admittance of children from the age of 15.

E: Exempt.

Children who have turned 7 are allowed admission to all films if accompanied by an adult (a person turned 18). Consequently it is the responsibility of the parents to ensure that their children do not watch violent and hard-core pornographic films.

Films accessible to the public do not have to be classified by the Media Council but consequently must be labeled as 15 -Approval of the film for admittance of children from the age of 15 - no matter the content of the film.

12. Egypt

The Egyptian government has only three movie classifications:

- **General Audience** Everyone is admitted.
- **Adults Only** Restricted to audiences 18 and above.
- **Exempt from Classification**

Usually excessive violence, nudity, and sexuality is cut from motion pictures in order to release with a General audience certificate.

13. Estonia

- **Pere** - Family film
- **L** - For All Audiences
- **MS-6** - Younger than 6 Not Recommended
- **MS-12** - Younger than 12 Not Recommended
- **K-12** - Younger than 12 Prohibited
- **K-14** - Younger than 14 Prohibited
- **K-16** - Younger than 16 Prohibited
- **K-6** - Younger than 6 Prohibited. Commonly known as **K-E**

14. Finland

The Finnish Board of Film Classification has a film classification system under which films are classified into one of the following categories:

- **K-3** (formerly S) - For all ages
- **K-7** - Only for persons 7 years or older
- **K-11** - Only for persons 11 years or older
- **K-13** - Only for persons 13 years or older
- **K-15** - Only for persons 15 years or older
- **K-18** - Only for persons 18 years or older
- **K-E** - Exempt

A person two years younger than the given rating is permitted to see a film in a movie theater when accompanied by an adult. The only rating which this rule is not applied was **K-18**, because this classification is legally restricted.

Only material intended to be accessible to minors (those below 18 years of age) is subject to mandatory inspection. A proper notification is sufficient for adult material. However, the board has the right to inspect material suspected of violating laws or material which was not properly notified.

Rated material has also limits on when they can be shown on Finnish television:

- **K-3** and **K-7** can be broadcast anytime
- **K-11** - not before 17:00
- **K-13** - not before 19:00
- **K-15** - not before 21:00
- **K-18** - not before 23:00

Pay-TV channels can show any material at any time.
15. France

Prior to showing in theaters, a license (visa d’exploitation) must be obtained from the Ministry of Culture. Upon the advice of the commission pertaining to cinema movies, the minister decides either not to grant the license (a very rare occurrence), or to grant a license among the 6 following:

- **U** (Tous publics) valid for all audiences; Examples: Most spaghetti western films.
- **10** (Déconseillé aux moins de 10 ans) unsuitable for children younger than 10 (this rating is only used for TV shows)
- **12** (Interdit aux moins de 12 ans) unsuitable for children younger than 12 or forbidden in cinemas for under 12s; Examples: Most splatter films.
- **16** (Interdit aux moins de 16 ans) unsuitable for children younger than 16 or forbidden in cinemas for under 16s; Examples: Scream, The Tattooist, Cabin Fever
- **18** (Interdit aux mineurs) unsuitable for children younger than 18 or forbidden in cinemas for under 18s. (extremely rare; the most recent use of this rating was when the American film Saw III was released)
- **E exempt**

Each rating can be accompanied by a special "warning". In practice, the ministry always follows the decision of the commission.

In addition, a movie bearing the "-18" rating may be considered "pornographic or inciting to violence" (colloquially referred to as "X-rated"). In this case, it bears high taxation and may be showed only in specific theatres, which are now rare in France. This classification is not used for merely violent movies, or movies containing mere erotic scenes.

Classifications, as all administrative decisions, may be appealed before the courts (Conseil d'État at litigation). The movie Baise-Moi went from -16 to -18 and was branded as "pornographic".

16. Germany

The Freiwillige Selbstkontrolle der Filmwirtschaft (Voluntary Self-Regulation of the Film Industry, FSK) has a film classification system under which films are classified into one of the following categories:

- **Ohne Altersbeschränkung (FSK 0):** no age restriction (white sign)
- **Freigegeben ab 6 Jahren (FSK 6):** no children younger than 6 years admitted (yellow sign)
- **Freigegeben ab 12 Jahren (FSK 12):** children 12 or older admitted, children between 7 and 11 only when accompanied by parent or legal guardian (green sign)
- **Freigegeben ab 16 Jahren (FSK 16):** children 16 or older admitted (blue sign)
- **Keine Jugendfreigabe (FSK 18):** "no youth admitted", only adults. This rating was previously called "Nicht freigegeben unter 18 Jahren." (red sign)
- **Infoprogramm or Lehrprogramm:** "educational programming". This rating is not issued by the FSK, but may be self-applied to films seeking to educate their audience (e.g. documentaries, instructional films, etc.), provided they do not contain any material "evidently harmful to the development of children and youths". [2]. Films with this rating may be sold without any age restriction.

All the above ratings also contain the phrase "gemäß §14 JuSchG" (in accordance with §14 of the Youth Protection Law), signifying that they are legally binding, rather than being mere recommendations.

- **SPIO/JK:** This certificate, issued by the Spitzenorganisation der Filmwirtschaft (Head Organisation of the Film Industry, SPIO), attests that, in the eyes of the SPIO, a particular film does not violate German law, such as the ban on "glorification of violence." However, films with such a certificate may still be banned and are frequently put on the "Index." The certificate simply protects the producer/seller of a film that later gets banned from prosecution, as he or she can claim that they had reason to believe the film did not, in fact, violate any laws. Since films with this certificate are not rated by the FSK, they may be sold only to persons aged 18 or older.

Furthermore, while a rating by the FSK is not legally required for a film to be sold, "unrated" films may be sold only to adults, and since most retail chains and virtually all cinemas will sell/show only films with an FSK rating, all films are normally submitted to the FSK for classification, with the exception of films that will most likely be refused a certificate (pornography or films containing extremely strong violence, for example).

After a title has received a rating for a cinematic release, the FSK must approve this rating again for a home entertainment release. Some titles therefore have different FSK certificates for the cinematic release and for the DVD release.

After 10 years, films may be resubmitted to the FSK for re-rating. Older films which have gained a FSK 18 certificate during the '50s or '60s often gain a much lower certificate now, due to a more liberal approach the FSK now takes in issuing ratings. However, due to the cost involved in resubmitting a film, it is common practice to keep the old certificate for the cinematic release and only submit bonus materials or extended scenes for classification. This leads to the seemingly paradoxical result of extended, and more violent versions of previously-rated films gaining a lower certificate than the "tamer" version.

Almost all major online distributors have declined to distribute FSK 18 or Keine Jugendfreigabe films due to the legal difficulties in the past. Shopping Centres, Malls and Amazon Germany have started selling films with this certificate since 2002. Amazon Germany started selling films with this certification in November 2006. Many smaller online retailers provide an FSK 18 section which may be accessed only by sending a scanned copy of the buyer's identification card or providing the ID card's number (which includes the date of birth encrypted). The legality of this
practice, however, is as yet untested. In September 2006, Amazon.de became the first major retailer to provide FSK 18 rated films, by making use of an ID checking service offered by the German postal service.

17. Greece

Any movies that will be shown in Greek movie theatres, whether local or foreign, must be classified. There are four ratings for movies shown in Greece and they are:

- **K** - Suitable film for everyone, including children. The film does not contain violence, drug abuse, or sexual content.
- **K-13** - Suitable film for children over the age of 13. The film may contain mild violence and adult themes.
- **K-17** - Suitable film for adults over the age of 17. The film may contain violence, drug abuse, and mild pornographic scenes. An ID card certifying the age is required in all Greek cinemas and DVD rental shops in order to get a cinema ticket or rent a DVD of a "K-17" rated film.
- **E** - Exempt

K-17 is a restricted category. No persons under 17 is allowed as ID card has to be checked before a person can watch or buy a DVD of a movie that was classified as K-17.

18. Hong Kong

Main article: Hong Kong motion picture rating system

An official government agency issues ratings for any movie that will be shown in Hong Kong movie theatres, instead of a private institution. They are:

- **I** — suitable for all ages
- **IIA** — some content is unsuitable for children; parental guidance suggested
- **IIB** — some content is unsuitable for children and young persons; parental guidance suggested
- **III** — for aged 18 or above only

Of the four levels, Levels I, IIA, and IIB are unrestricted. Only Level III is a restricted category. Ticket sellers in movie theatres have a legal right to check the identity of a person who wishes to watch a Level III film to ensure legal compliance.

19. Hungary

Hungarian ratings are decided by the Rating Committee of the National Office of Film:

- **KN** - suitable for all (category I.)
- **12** - parental guidance suggested for children under 12. (category II.)
- **16** - not suitable for children under 16. (category III.)
- **18** - not suitable for people under 18. (category IV.)
- **X** - only for adults (category V.)

Before 2004, there was **14** instead of **12**, and there wasn't any fifth category.

20. Iceland

*Kvikmyndaeftírítli Ríkisins* was started in 1932 and ran until 1997. That year the name changed into *Kvikmyndaskoðun* and ran until 2006. Since 1997 the board does not edit movies. The old rating system from *Kvikmyndaeftírítli Ríkisins* and *Kvikmyndaskoðun* is still valid and is as follows:

- **L**: Suitable for all
- **LH**: Not suitable for very young viewers (video only) replaced by **7**
- **10**: Passed only for children 10 and older (theatrical only) replaced by **7**
- **12**: Passed only for children 12 and older
- **14**: Passed only for children 14 and older (theatrical only)
- **16**: Passed only for children 16 and older
- **AB**: Banned (1932 - 1997) replaced by **18**

From July 1, 2006 *Kvikmyndaskoðun* was closed and *Smális* has taken over the responsibility of rating systems in Iceland. Simultaneously, a new rating system started and is as follows:

- **L**: Suitable for all
- **7**: Passed only for 7 and older
- **12**: Passed only for 12 and older
21. India

In India, Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) is responsible for certifying films meant for public exhibition.

The Censor Board presently gives four categories of certificates, namely,

- **U**: Unrestricted Public Exhibition throughout India,
- **A**: Public exhibition restricted to adults above 18 years only,
- **U/A**: Unrestricted public exhibition with parental guidance for children below the age of 12
- **S**: Exhibition to restricted audience such as doctors etc.

22. Indonesia

Motion pictures shown in Indonesia must undergo reviewing by the Indonesian Film Censor Board (Lembaga Sensor Film). Other than issuing certificates, the LSF also reviews and issues permits for film-related advertising, such as movie trailers and posters. LSF has the authority to cut scenes from films. Certificates are issued based on the following categories:

- **SU** (*Semua Umur*): All ages
- **A** (*Anak-anak*): Children (3-12 years)
- **BO** (*Bimbingan Orangtua*): Parental Guidance (parental supervision is recommended for persons under 13 years)
- **R** (*Remaja*): Teen (13-15 years and over)
- **D** (*Dewasa*): Mature (17 years and over)

23. Ireland

The Irish Film Classification Office (IFCO) under which theatrical films are placed into one of the following categories:

- **G** - 'General' - Suitable for viewing by anyone.
- **PG** - 'Parental Guidance' - Parental guidance is recommended for children under the age of 12.
- **12A** - 'Parent supervision required for children under 12' - A person over 18 years of age must accompany a child under the age of 12 when seeing a film theatrically. This is very similar to the 12A certificate that the BBFC introduced in August 2002.
- **15A** - 'Parent supervision required for children - A person over 18 years of age must accompany a child under the age of 15 when seeing a film theatrically.
- **16** - Films classified in this category are considered to be suitable for persons of sixteen or over. Children under this age cannot be
admitted to screenings. Violent content, crude and sexual content, and depiction of violence may be stronger than in films designated 15A.

- **18** - 'Adults only' - The film is suitable only for adults. A person under this age will not be admitted. *9 Songs* in October 2004 became the first film featuring explicit sex scenes to receive a certificate.

Films without certification are not ipso facto banned and have been shown at film festivals and arthouse clubs such as the Irish Film Institute.

For video releases (VHS and DVD), categories G, PG and **18** share the same meanings as above, however, there is no **16**, and categories **12** and **15** are mandatory, not advisory.

### 24. Italy

- **T**: All ages admitted.
  
  Examples: *The Dark Knight, Star Trek, Titanic, Donnie Darko.*

- **VM14**: Nobody under the age of 14 allowed. The movie is likely to contain either strong sexual content or very strong violence.
  
  Examples: *No Country For Old Men, Watchmen, Inglourious Basterds, The Departed.*

- **VM18**: Adults only. Pornographic/explicit depiction of sex and/or extreme violence and gore.
  

- **X**: ADULTS ONLY. These films are only sold in home media (e.g. DVD/Video) and cannot be broadcast on television.

  In addition, televisions in Italy have adopted a common rating system that requires them to mark contents not suitable for all audiences: generally movies, prime-time broadcasts and TV shows are labeled with a green mark if they are suitable for all audiences; with a yellow mark if parent supervision is suggested for children view; and with a red mark if their content is not suitable for children. Generally broadcasts featuring the red mark have strong graphic contents, ranging from violence to nudity and mild-to-medium sexual contents (pornographic broadcasts are forbidden on open-channel TVs and allowed only on satellite, DTT or otherwise pay-per-view channels, and only after 23:00 hours). TV channels also respect a "Protected Time Schedule" (14:00 to 19:00) similar to the old Family Viewing Hour used in the United States, when children or otherwise underage audience is more likely to be watching, when non-suitable contents are not to be broadcast. Film that are rated VM14 can only be broadcast after Prime time.

### 25. Japan

A Japanese film rating studio known as: “Eirin” has a film classification system under which films are classified into one of the following categories:

- **G**: General Audiences, all ages admitted.
- **PG12**: Some material may be inappropriate for children under the age of 12. Parental or adult accompaniment recommended.
- **R15+**: No children under 15 admitted. The film contains adult themes, nudity, strong language, violence, and/or sex, etc. which is inappropriate for people under 15.
- **R18+**: No children under 18 admitted. The film contains adult themes, detailed violence, explicit sex, sexual violence, pornographic content, hentai, and/or drug use, etc. which are unsuitable for people under 18.

### 26. Latvia

In Latvia, the film presenters added classification is the same as the one applied by the producers of the film. However, this could change from 2008, because in July 2007 the government of Latvia made a law that indicates a more strict classification policy. The classifications are approved by the National Cinema Center (Latvian: Nacionālais Kino Centrs). There is a new ‘refreshed’ rating system from July 2007. (The following classifications will operate as of September 2007)

- **U**: rated for all ages (added in July 2007).
- **7+:** Not recommended until 7.
- **12+:** Not recommended until 12.
- **16+:** Not recommended until 16.
- **18+ (blue)**: Not recommended until 18.
- **18+ (red)**: Prohibited for minors.

### 27. Malaysia

See also: Censorship in Malaysia

Malaysia’s motion picture rating system was introduced in 1996. According to the Ministry of Home Affairs, all films in Malaysia, whether local or
foreign, are scrutinized and then categorized by the Film Censorship Board Film Control Division before being distributed and screened to the public. [1] The board was established under the Film Censorship Act 1952 and was later replaced by the Film Censorship Act 2002. In accordance to this act, the Film Censorship Board is appointed by the Minister of Home Affairs. A panel is then appointed by the chairman of the board to view each film.

The decisions made by the board on any film are categorized as follows:

- Approved
- Not approved

Approved films are classified as follows:

- **U** *(Umum, literally General Audiences)* - For general audiences. (triangle sign)
- **PG-13** - Children under 13 not admitted once accompanied by an adult. Film may contain scenes that are inappropriate for younger children. This classification was introduced in 2007. (half circle sign)
- **18SG** *(Seram, Ganas, literally Graphic Violence and Horror/Terror)* - Under 18 requires accompanying adult. Film may contain strong violence, gore or horror/terror people may find objectionable. (circle sign)
- **18SX** *(Seks, literally Sexual Content)* - Under 18 requires accompanying adult. Film may contain sex scenes, nudity or sexual dialogues/references people may find objectionable. (circle sign)
- **18PA** *(Politik, Agama, literally Strong Religious or Political Elements)* - Under 18 requires accompanying adult. Film may contain elements which include religious, social or political aspects people may find objectionable. (this rating is rarely used) (circle sign)
- **18PL** *(Pelbagai, literally Variety)* - Under 18 requires accompanying adult. Film may contain strong violence, gore, horror/terror, sex scenes, nudity, sexual dialogues/references, religious, social or political aspects people may find objectionable. (Example: A film with strong violence and sexual references will be classified as 18PL). (this rating is mostly used, majority of the 18+ films shown in Malaysia use this rating). (circle sign)

All film and cinema advertisements in newspapers must clearly show the classification for a movie. Some cinema advertisements on newspapers classified all movies as "U" unless stated.

The two main cinema operators in Malaysia, Golden Screen Cinemas, and Tanjong Golden Village are known to be strict in ensuring that no persons under age 18 admitted for films that was rated 18SG, 18SX, 18PA or 18PL. Although movies shown in Malaysian cinemas are slapped with a rating such as 18SG or 18PL, most of the time profanity, and nudity in films which have an 18+ rating are censored, sometimes excessively, which deems the 18+ rating meaningless and strict entry by the cinema operators pointless.

On the other hand, there have been many 18+ films filled with profanity that were hardly, or not even censored. This was evident in movies such as Law Abiding Citizen, Street Kings, Rambo 4 and most recently Legion, whereby profanity such as the many ‘F’-Words’ were not censored at all. This clearly shows a pattern of irregularity and inconsistency with the movie censorship in Malaysia. Rumor says that on the first day or the first week movies are screened in Malaysian cinemas, they are the uncensored version. Later there are taken back to the censors to be censored. However, this is just a rumor that has yet to be confirmed.

The 18SX rating became an umbrella for the rapid growth of pornographic films, however, while considered graphic on Malaysian standards, these films would be more on par with any movies with non-excessive sex scenes, and not "XXX". The movie classification may vary during television broadcast of a movie. For example, a Korean movie, 200 Pounds Beauty, was classified as U while showing in cinemas, later rated as PG-13 during television broadcast. Some 18SG, 18SX, 18PA and 18PL movies later classified as U or PG-13 during the television broadcast of a movie, for example, a Hong Kong movie, Breaking News, which was classified as 18SG during theatrical release, later rated U during television broadcast. If a movie is classified 18SG, 18SX, 18PA or 18PL, it can only be broadcast on television between 10:00 PM and 06:00 AM.

Due to piracy of music CD's and DVD/VCD in Malaysia, all original DVD/VCD/Blu-ray disc of a video is required to have a hologram sticker with the word "Tulen KPDN & HEP Original" and a sticker of a movie certification by Lembaga Penapisan Filem Malaysia with a signature with the word "Pengerusi Lembaga Penapisan Filem Malaysia", a serial number of a DVD/VCD/Blu-ray disc and a classification of a video before it can be sold.

### 28. Maldives

With the formation of National Bureau of Classification on December 29, 2005, a new classification regulation and a new rating system for movies were introduced. A classification certificate must be obtained first, before a movie or a movie-related production is released for commercial use including its trailers. NBC has the authority to cut scenes from movies. Classification certificates issued are based on the following categories:

- **G** - General viewing. No material that may evoke fear or concern, no violence, no sexual acts, no language, no drug abuse, no nudity.
- **PG** - Parental Guidance. No material that may evoke fear or concern, no violence, no sexual acts, no language, no drug abuse, no nudity. However, viewing films of this category requires parental guidance. This rating is rarely used.
- **12+** - For viewers aged 12 and above. Mild violence, no sexual acts, infrequent harsh language, light drug abuse in productions that target this age group.
- **15+** - For viewers aged 15 and above. Moderate violence, no sexual acts, some harsh language, moderate drug abuse.
- **18+** - For viewers aged 18 and above. Strong violence, sexual scenes, harsh language, strong drug abuse, veiled nudity.
- **18+R** - 18+ and Restricted. High level violence, sexual scenes, harsh language, strong drug abuse, veiled nudity. Contents of this category may be inappropriate for some individuals.
- **PU** - Released for PROFESSIONAL USE ONLY and is not classified for commercial use. Under this Category Violence, sexual scenes, harsh language and offensive words, nudity may be released for educational, artistic, and intellectual purposes.
29. Malta

In Malta, all motion pictures are classified by the Government appointed Board of Film and Stage Classification. The renting and selling of videos and DVDs is unrestricted.

- **U (Universal)** Suitable for all.
- **PG (Parental Guidance)** Some material may not be suitable for young children. Children under the age of 12 are to be accompanied by an adult.
- **12** Suitable only for persons 12 years and older. No one under the age of 12 is admitted.
- **14** Suitable only for persons 14 years and older. No one under the age of 14 is admitted.
- **16** Suitable only for persons 16 years and older. No one under the age of 16 is admitted.
- **18** Suitable only for persons 18 years and older. No one under the age of 18 is admitted.

30. Mexico

The General Directorate of Radio, Television and Cinematography (in Spanish, Dirección General de Radio, Televisión y Cinematografía, or RTC [3]) is the issuer of ratings for television programs (although only one channel in Mexico explicitly shows the classification on each program, XEIMTV in Mexico City) and motion pictures. The RTC is a dependency of the Department of State (Secretaría de Gobernación). It has its own classification system, as follows:

- **AA** Informative-only rating: Specially suited for the interests of children under 7. This rating is usually seen in conjunction with animated TV shows or movies aimed at children. TV shows and movies under this rating have little to no violence, offensive language, and/or drug abuse. Sexual content is limited to mild affection and/or platonic friendship.
- **A** Informative-only rating: General Audience. Suited for persons ages 7-11. Minimum or no violence, sexual or drug use content. Examples: Julie & Julia, Whale Rider, Cheaper by the Dozen
- **B** Informative-only rating: For children 12 or over. Parental guidance suggested. Minimum and specifically motivated non-extreme violence. Sex can be shown, so long as it's implied. Nudity might be present, but not in an erotic or degrading manner. Drug use can be referenced, but actual consumption and any scenes condoning or glorifying drug abuse are prohibited. Language may be dirty, but no verbal violence. Examples: Trick 'r Treat, Carriers, The Exorcist
- **B-15** Informative-only rating: For children 15 or over. More explicit content than **B** rating, but extreme violence, explicit sexual content, drug abuse (or scenes of drugs being glorified), and verbal violence is still prohibited. Examples: Amusement, The Unborn, My Bloody Valentine
- **C** Restrictive rating: For adults over 18. High degree of violence (including cruelty), sexual content, and/or drug abuse/references. Verbal violence and offensive language is permitted, but only for narrative purposes. Examples: Martyrs, Inside, Silent Hill
- **D** Restrictive rating: Adults-only. Commonly known as XB rated. May contain strong sexual situations, explicit language, and extreme violence. Examples: Hostel, The Hills Have Eyes, Demons

31. Netherlands

In the Netherlands, the Kijkwijzer system is used, which is executed by the NICAM.

Unrestricted:

- **AL** Suitable for all ages (in Dutch: Alle Leeftijden).
- **6** Not recommended for children younger than 6 years. Replaced the older MG6, where parental guidance was recommended for viewers younger than 6 years.
- **9** Not recommended for children younger than 9 years. Now a standard rating. First used for Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban because of very frightening elements. Also used for De Scheepsjongens van Bontekoe.
- **12** Not recommended for children younger than 12 years; broadcasting is not allowed before 20:00 (8:00 p.m.)

Restricted:

- **16** Not recommended for children younger than 16 years; hence, according to Wetboek van Strafrecht art. 240A, it is forbidden to admit such a person to a screening, or rent out, sell, or give the movie (DVD, video, computer file, etc.) to such a person; broadcasting is not allowed before 22:00 (10:00 p.m.).

Mostly, these icons are used along with other symbols, displaying if a movie contains violence, sexual content, frightening scenes, drug or alcohol abuse, discrimination, or coarse language.

32. New Zealand

Main article: Office of Film and Literature Classification (New Zealand)
33. Nigeria

The National Film and Video Censors Board classifies films, videos, DVDs, and VCDs. The categories are:

- **G** Suitable for general audiences.
- **PG** Parental guidance may be needed for younger viewers.
- **12** Suitable for children aged 12 years and older.
- **12A** Same as 12, but younger children can be admitted if accompanied.
- **15** Suitable for children aged 15 years and older.
- **18** Suitable for people aged 18 years and older.
- **RE** Restricted Exhibition: can be shown only subject to certain restrictions.

34. Norway

In Norway all movies have to be registered by the Norwegian Media Authority (Medietilsynet, formerly Filmtilsynet), a government agency, to be exhibited commercially. Though if distributors wish, they can just register the movie with the agency without any need for approval, but the distributor is then obligated not to admit anyone under the age of 18. The distributor is also responsible that the movie does not violate Norwegian law (only applies to movies with "degrading hardcore sexual content").

Movies are rated using the following classifications:

- **A** (all ages)
- **7**
- **11**
- **15**
- **18**

Films rated 7, 11 or 15 may also be seen by children accompanied by a parent or adult guardian if the child has turned 4, 8 or 11 years, respectively. In addition to the ratings, the board indicates if a movie is suitable for children, families, youths or adults. A film may be given a
rating even though it is intended for an older age group, e.g. an "A" film might be intended for adults if it does not contain material unsuitable for young children. Norway also cares less about bad language than others, so films rated PG-13 in America, often gets '7+' or the ‘Suitable for all' rating. One example is The Simpsons Movie or Step Up.

The board also indicates if a rating is "hard". A "hard" 11/15 rating is usually indicated by the text "not advised for children/youths under 11/15" ("frarådes barn/ungdom under 11/15 år"), however this does not affect if children under the given age are allowed to see the film if accompanied. In 2000 a Board of Appeal was established. Prior to this the ratings board could choose to reclassify a film.

35. Peru

The motion picture rating system for movies shown in Peruvian movie theatres are:

- **Apt** General Ages. All ages admitted.
- **14** Violence and language. No Children under 14 admitted without an adult.
- **18** Extreme graphic violence, strong language, or drug abuse, or pornography films. No Children under 18 allowed without the company of an adult.

36. Philippines

Main article: Movie and Television Review and Classification Board

In the Philippines, motion pictures are rated by the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board, a special agency of the Office of the President. Television programs are also subject to the same ratings classification system.

There are five ratings currently in use:

- **GP** - General patronage
- **PG-13** - Children under 13 not admitted once accompanied by an adult
- **R** (deprecated) - Strictly for persons over 17 (until early 2000s when the rating was split into two brackets)
  - **R-13** - Strictly for children over 13
  - **R-18** - Strictly for persons over 18
- **X** - Not for public viewing

37. Poland

Ratings in Poland are not set by any board or advisory body, but it rather depends on distribution company, cinema or television station. In case of television, the supervisory body - Krajowa Rada Radiofonii i Telewizji (KRRiT, The National Council of Radio Broadcasting and Television) can impose fines upon those responsible for improper rating of a broadcast, or lack of it.

- **Rating for movies shown in cinemas:**
  - **BO** *(Bez ograniczeń)* - Suitable for everyone
  - **6** - Suitable for children 6 years and older (this rating is not considered 'official', and it's used by some cinemas. Other variations include '7', '8', '9' or '10')
  - **12** - Suitable for children 12 years and older
  - **15** - Suitable for children 15 years and older
  - **18** - Only for adults
  - **21** - Only for adults, contains graphic and "unnecessary" violence; only a few movies have been rated 21 (namely Irreversibe, Le Dobermann, Caligula and Baise-Moi).

- **Ratings for programmes and movies shown on television:**
  - **Green circle** - for everyone
  - **Yellow triangle** - age intimate in triangle (7,12,16)
  - **Red circle** - for adults (18 years)

38. Portugal
Movies are rated in Portugal by the Comissão de Classificação de Espectáculos of the Ministry of Culture. This organization also rates theater, video games, other types of shows like circus, music concerts, opera and dance shows. It is also responsible for the rating of video releases.

Movies are rated using the following classifications:

- **M/4** For children of age 4 and above. Content with this rating shall be of short duration and easy to understand and it shall not provoke fear and/or collide with the sense of fantasy of this age.
- **M/6** For children of age 6 and above. This rating is for content that can contain minimal inappropriate scenes that can provoke very young viewers.
- **M/12** For children of age 12 and above. This rating is for content that due to its length and complexity, can provoke in younger viewers fatigue and psychiatric trauma. Younger viewers must be accompanied by an adult.
- **M/16** For children of age 16 and above. This rating is for content that explores in excessive terms aspects of sexuality, physical and psychic violence. Younger viewers must be accompanied by an adult.
- **M/18** For persons of age 18 and above. This rating is for content of explicit sexual nature and/or that explores pathological forms of physical and psychic violence. Younger viewers must be accompanied by an adult, although if they are too young, the person responsible for admission into movie theaters can deny entrance.

38. 1. Special classifications

These classifications can be added to the previous ones:

- **Pornographic** (M/18-P) Generic characteristics: content is considered pornographic if it contains: a) exploitation of situations to try to arouse the spectator; b) low aesthetic quality. Specific characteristics: the first level (hardcore: content that presents a very thorough demonstration of real sexual acts being perpetrated, with the exhibition of genitalia); the second level (softcore: content that presents a very insistent and thorough demonstration of simulated sexual acts).
- **Quality** (M/4-Q, M/6-Q, M/12-Q, M/16-Q, M/18-Q) Content that, due to its artistic, thematic, educational and technical aspects deserve this attribute.

39. Romania

National Audiovisual Council of Romania rating system:

- **A.P.** Acordul părinŃilor. (Parental Guidance.)
- **12** Interzis copiilor sub 12 ani. (Forbidden under the age of 12.)
- **15** Nerecomandat copiilor sub 15 ani. (Forbidden under 15 years of age.)
- **18** Interzis minorilor sub 18 ani. (Forbidden under 18 years of age-white)
- **18** Interzis minorilor sub 18 ani. (Not for children under 18 years of age-contains pornographic images-red.)

40. Singapore

See also: Censorship in Singapore and Cinema of Singapore

Singaporean film ratings were in force since 1991. The Media Development Authority revised the film ratings in Singapore on March 29, 2004:

- **G** General
- **PG** Parental Guidance
- **NC16** No children under age 16 admitted - For persons 16 years and above ONLY (Note: The NC-16 rating was issued with the release of Saving Private Ryan, which couldn’t be passed as a PG film due to the violence present in the film, but lacked an adult theme to be rated R(A))
- **M18** Mature 18, for persons 18 years and above (introduced in 2004)
- **R18** Restricted 18, for persons 18 years and above (Note: only for cabaret shows to date such as the Crazy Horse)
- **R21** Restricted 21, for persons 21 years and above (formerly known as R (A))

At the same time of the revision of the film ratings in Singapore, it also saw Consumer Advice introduced to provide information on the content of the films. This would allow parents and adults to make more informed film-viewing decisions. Consumer advice is necessary for PG, but NC16,
South African ratings are issued, certified and regulated by the Film and Publication Board. All broadcasters, cinemas and distributors of DVD/video and computer games must comply with the following:

- **G** - This is a film that does not contain any obscenity, and is suitable for family viewing.
- **PG** - Parental guidance recommended for younger children. Low impact classifiable elements. [5]
- **10M** - Children under 10 must be accompanied by an adult. [5]
- **10** - Viewers must be 10 or older. [5]
- **13** - Children under the age of 13 are prohibited from watching this film. This program contains mild language, violence and sexual innuendo.
- **16** - Children under the age of 16 are prohibited from watching this film. It contains moderate violence, language, and some sexual situations.
- **R18** - Children under the age of 18 are prohibited from watching this film. It contains extreme violence, language and/or graphic sexual content. The R18 rating does not refer to pornography, as this is banned on television and cinema by the Film and Publication Board.
- **X18** - this is reserved for films of an extreme sexual nature (pornography). X18 films may be distributed only in the form of video/DVD and in a controlled environment (eg. Adult Shops). No public viewing of this film may take place. X18 films may not be broadcast on television or in cinemas. The X18 rating does not refer to child or animal pornography, as this is illegal in South Africa.

Additional symbols indicate the reasons for ratings:

- Violence
- Nudity
- Sex
- Language
- Prejudice

If a member of the public or a Film and Publication Board Official finds that a Cinema or a Film Distributor is allowing under-aged children to view prohibited material, the accused may be liable for a hefty fine and/or closure of that specific establishment. Proof of age is required of anybody who wants to buy/rent R18 material.

The Film and Publication Board has the discretion and right to ban any film it deems unworthy of public exhibition.

### 42. South Korea

The Korea Media Rating Board (영상물등급위원회) in Seoul divides licensed films into the following categories:

- **All** (전체관람가) - Suitable for all audiences
- **12+** (12세 이상 관람가) - Suitable for children 12 and older (Parental supervision recommended)
- **15+** (15세 이상 관람가) - Suitable for children 15 and older
- **18+** (청소년 관람불가) - Suitable for adults 18 and older
- **Limited** (제한상영가) - Suitable for adults over the age of 19 only. This classification was introduced in 2002 and restricts exhibition to limited theatres while prohibiting advertisements of any kind.

If the movie is classified as **18+** or **Limited**, it is restricted and no persons under age 18 and 19, respectively is allowed to watch.

### 43. Spain

Attitudes toward film censorship in Spain are unusual due to the adverse affect of dictatorship and heavy censorship until 1975 under General
Francisco Franco. Therefore, most Spanish citizens are against censorship of any kind and prefer personal responsibility and liberalism, thus very few people show serious respect for certification of films. For example, cinemas in Spain never ask for identification.

- **TODOS LOS PÚBLICOS** - Suitable for all audiences
- **Especialmente Recomendada para la Infancia** - Especially suitable for small children
- **7** - Suitable for audiences 7 and older
- **13** - Suitable for audiences 13 and older
- **18** - Suitable for audiences 18 and older

Films with the Película X rating are only allowed in eight theaters in Spain. In 2009 for the first time a film got this rating because of violence instead of pornography: the film **Saw VI**. Buena Vista, the distributor, has appealed the decision.

### 44. Sweden

Statens biografbyrå (SBB) (the Swedish National Board of Film Censors) reviews the content of all films or pre-recorded video recordings (videograms) prior to showing at a public gathering or entertainment (subject to some exceptions), in accordance with law SFS 1990:886. This means that films not intended for public viewing do not have to be screened; however, this is the practice: when a film is let through, is rated and not prohibited, it can not be considered to violate any laws regarding its content. It is a criminal offense to hire or sell videos containing unlawful depictions of violence, thus meaning that the distributor could be held responsible for the content of a film if unrated or prohibited. It is illegal also to rent or sell videos depicting realistic violence to children below the age of 14.

The censors, scientific professionals in the field of behavioural sciences, are contracted for a term of two years (so that they do not become habituated) and rate films so that they are not harmful in any psychological or behavioral sense for a certain age group - and not if the film is suitable for the age group, a common misconception. Violence is seen as far more socially disruptive than consensual sexual acts, nudity or strong language, which is generally looked at more liberally than violence. This can have the effect that some PG or PG-13 rated films in USA are being rated "15 years" in Sweden for violence, while some films getting an R in USA for containing profanity or depictions of sexuality are rated at 7 or 11 years, or even for all audiences.

The censors have the option to cut out scenes from 15 years films if they are considered brutalizing. However, this has been used only rarely in the last 15 years. The director-general has expressed that the censors have a hard time convincing friends and even themselves that anything in a non-pornographic movie would affect the values of an adult, especially in a brutalizing manner. There is a strong political opinion for dismantling the board in the future and to replace it with a solution similar to that in Denmark or Norway. Even though it is practically inactive, government censorship is seen widely as a pre-democratic anachronism, especially in a society which portrays itself as one of the banners bearer when it comes to freedom of expression. However, disagreements on the details have stalled the question.

The following categories are used by the SBB:

- **Btl Barntillåten** (Children allowed) Suitable for all ages.
- **7 years** 7 År is deemed non-harming for children of at least 7 years of age. Younger children are not admitted unless accompanied by an adult 18 or older, may include drug use.
- **11 years** 11 År is deemed non-harming for children of at least 11 years of age. Children of at least 7 years of age are admitted if accompanied by an adult 18 or older, may include mild drug use, obscured depictions of consensual sexual activity.
- **15 years** 15 År states that no one under 15 years of age is admitted, may include strong drug use, explicit depictions of sexual activity. This also includes pornography; however, it is not shown at ordinary cinemas. There are common unofficial ratings used by television channels, rental shops and adult cinemas to hinder persons below the age of 18 years to be exposed to pornography, such as **Barnförbud** ("prohibited for minors"). 18 År ("18 years") and **Vuxenfilm** ("movies for adults").

**Prohibited Förbjuden** If considered to be brutalizing, films can be banned from public display, these films include scenes of prolonged or intrusive graphic violence, or sexual violence and constraint. There is a possible gap between what the boards puts its prohibited stamp on and what’s considered illegal due to its content, making some prohibited films possible to obtain for private use or to be seen by members of closed societies at cinemas. No (non-pornographic) motion picture has been banned since 1996.

### 45. Switzerland

Switzerland is composed of 26 cantons, each having their own rating system. The entries below are examples for the cantons of Vaud and Geneva.

- **0** - Universal. Suitable for all
- **7** - No one under the age of 7 admitted
- **10** - No one under the age of 10 admitted
- **12** - No one under the age of 12 admitted
- **14** - No one under the age of 14 admitted
- **16** - No one under the age of 16 admitted
- **18** - No one under the age of 18 admitted

### 46. Republic of China (Taiwan)

Taiwan did not have motion picture rating system until April 1994. The Government Information Office in Taiwan divides licensed films into one of the following four categories pursuant to its issued Regulations Governing the Classification of Motion Pictures of the Republic of China:  

- **禁止級** (Prohibited): Illegal also to rent or sell videos depicting realistic violence to children below the age of 14.
- **輔導級** (Guidance): Illegal also to rent or sell videos depicting realistic violence to children below the age of 14.
- **保護級** (Protection): Illegal also to rent or sell videos depicting realistic violence to children below the age of 14.
- **一般級** (General): Illegal also to rent or sell videos depicting realistic violence to children below the age of 14.

Taiwan did not have motion picture rating system until April 1994. The Government Information Office in Taiwan divides licensed films into one of the following four categories pursuant to its issued Regulations Governing the Classification of Motion Pictures of the Republic of China:
- **General audiences category** (普通級(普通)) - General audiences may all view. (green sign)
- **Protected category** (限制級(限制)) - Children under 6 years old must not view. Children aged at least 6 but less than 12 require guidance of accompanying parents, teachers, or adult relatives to view. (blue sign)
- **Parental guidance category** (輔導級(輔導)) - Children under 12 years old must not view. People aged at least 12 but less than 18 require attentive guidance of parents or teachers to view. (yellow sign)
- **Restricted category** (限制級(限制)) - People under 18 years old must not view. (red sign)

Film advertisements use a single Chinese character surrounded by a square to show the film's category. Television stations must clearly show a film's rating before the start, and after each commercial break.

### 47. Thailand

As of 2007, Thailand had no ratings system. Instead, films are subject to the 1930 Film Act, under which films must be viewed by the Board of Censors, which can then impose cuts on the films prior to release. The board is composed of members of the Royal Thai Police and the Ministry of Culture, with advisory roles from the Buddhist religion, educators and the medical community. Most cuts are made for sexual content, while acts of violence are typically left untouched.

A motion picture rating system was proposed in the Film and Video Act of 2007, and was passed on December 20, 2007 by the Thai military-appointed National Legislative Assembly. Under the law, the ratings, in effect since August 2009, are:

- **P** - Promotional, film is educational and viewing is encouraged for all Thai people.
- **G** - Suitable for general audiences.
- **13+** - Films not suitable for viewers under 13 years old.
- **15+** - Films not suitable for viewers under 15 years old.
- **18+** - Films not suitable for viewers under 18 years old.
- **20+** - Restricted for viewers over 20 years old.
- **Banned** - Films that not allowed to screen publicly in the Kingdom.

The draft law had been met with resistance from the film industry and independent filmmakers under the Free Thai Cinema Movement. Activists had hoped for a less-restrictive approach than the 1930 Film Act, but under the Film and Video Act, films are still be subject to censorship, or can be banned from release altogether if the film is deemed to "undermine or disrupt social order and moral decency, or might impact national security or the pride of the nation".

As of 2007, a supplementary law or ministerial regulation to implement the rating system was yet to be drafted, and the 1930 Film Act remained in place.

### 48. Turks and Caicos Islands

The British colony of Turks and Caicos Islands has its own motion picture rating system. Since its installation in 1934, its rules have not changed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Definition/Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Universal" /></td>
<td>Universal</td>
<td>Available to anyone who wishes to view the film</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Universal with caution" /></td>
<td>Universal with caution</td>
<td>Similar to the “PG” rating, may contain some scenes that will upset children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Seven or over" /></td>
<td>Seven or over</td>
<td>The person must be seven or over to view the film</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Eleven or over" /></td>
<td>Eleven or over</td>
<td>The person must be eleven or over to view the film</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Thirteen or over" /></td>
<td>Thirteen or over</td>
<td>The person must be thirteen or over to view the film</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Sixteen or over" /></td>
<td>Sixteen or over</td>
<td>The person must be sixteen or over to view the film</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Sixteen with privilege" /></td>
<td>Sixteen with privilege</td>
<td>The person must be over sixteen to view the film alone, but under 16’s can watch if accompanied by a person over the age of 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Eighteen" /></td>
<td>Eighteen</td>
<td>The person must be over eighteen to view the film</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
49. United Arab Emirates

The Ministry of Information and Culture of the United Arab Emirates rates all movies according to a set standard.

- **G** (General Audience) - Suitable for all ages.
- **PG-15** - Under 15 not admitted unless accompanied by an individual over 15. Some material may not be suitable for children.
- **15+** - No persons under 15 admitted.
- **18+** - No persons under 18 admitted.
- **Rarely used:**
  - **PG** - Some material may not be suitable for children.
  - **PG-18** - Under 18 not admitted unless accompanied by an individual over 18. Some material may not be suitable for children.

Notes:

- These ratings only apply to theatrical releases. For DVDs and video games, the Ministry of Information and Culture uses a rating system incorporating elements from the systems of Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States.
- All pornographic movies are banned by law in the United Arab Emirates, and movies with pornographic scenes are edited to fit within the rating guidelines.
- In October 2008, the Ministry of Information and Culture began requiring ID for films rated 15+ and 18+.

Despite being a teen comedy, *Angus, Thongs and Perfect Snogging* was rated 18+ in the UAE due to sexual references and language.

50. United Kingdom

The British Board of Film Classification (BBFC) rates both motion pictures and videos (and an increasing number of video games). County authorities are ultimately responsible for film ratings for cinema showings in their area but for most of the time all County Councils generally accept the BBFC rating, although, films can technically bypass the BBFC as the BBFC has no legal power (technically, films do not even have to be submitted for classification) to be classified by the Counties the film is shown, in but due to practicality this is rarely done. County Councils often ignore the BBFC advised rating and rate films with another BBFC certificate in their county only, eg: the BBFC rates a film as 15 but the County council gives the film a 12A rating in their county. Rating certificates from the BBFC are not legally binding whereas those for videos are.

The current BBFC system is:

- **Uc (Universal Children)** Suitable for all, but especially suitable for very young children to watch on their own. (formerly used for video and DVD only - classification not currently used)
- **U (Universal)** Suitable for all. (The board states that while they cannot predict what might upset a particular child, a 'U' film should be suitable for audiences aged 4 and older)
- **PG (Parental Guidance)** General viewing but some scenes may be unsuitable for young children. (It is the board's policy that movies rated 'PG' should not disturb a child of about 8 years of age or older; however, parents are advised to consider whether the content may upset young or more sensitive children.)
- **12A (12 Accompanied/Advisory)** Suitable for 12 years and older. No one younger than 12 may see a '12A' film in a cinema unless accompanied by an *The Bourne Identity* and, contrary to popular belief, not on *Spider-Man*, which was first released months before, under the previously fully restrictive 12 certificate, and then immediately re-released to take advantage of the new guidelines).
- **12** Suitable for 12 years and older. No one younger than 12 may rent or buy a ‘12’ rated video. (Until 31 August 2002, this mandatory certificate used to apply to cinema exhibitions as well)
- **15** Suitable only for 15 years and older. No one younger than 15 may see a ‘15’ film in a cinema. No one younger than 15 may rent or buy a ‘15’ rated video.
- **18** Suitable only for adults. No one younger than 18 may see an ‘18’ film in a cinema. No one younger than 18 may rent or buy an ‘18’ rated video.
- **R18 (Restricted 18)** To be shown only in specially licensed cinemas, or supplied only in licensed sex shops, and to adults of not less than 18 years. (These films contain sexually explicit, pornographic content.) adult. (Exclusively for cinema, ‘12A’ was first implemented on

Films may receive a different rating when released on DVD/video to that at the cinema. It is not unusual for certain films to be refused classification, effectively banning them from sale or
exhibition in the UK. Any media which has been banned receives an ‘R’ certificate (Rejected).

Videos deemed by their distributors to be exempt under the Video Recordings Act 1984 (typically non-fiction content such as music videos, sporting highlights, fitness videos, nature films, etc.) may bear the mark E (for exempt), though this is not a rating and the BBFC does not maintain a symbol. The BBFC also provides ratings for video games in the UK. The BBFC rating system appears to be voluntary, and not a legal requirement.

Prior to 1968, some large cities and states had public rating boards which determined whether films were suitable for display to the public in theaters. The United States Supreme Court in the case of Freedman v. Maryland 380 U.S. 51 (1965) effectively ended government operated rating boards when it decided that a rating board could only approve a film; it had no power to ban a film. A rating board member could either approve a film within a reasonable time, or it would have to go to court to stop a film from being shown in theaters. Other court cases decided that since television stations are federally licensed, local rating boards have no jurisdiction over films shown on television. When the movie industry set up its own rating system, most state and local boards ceased operating.

51. United States

In the United States, the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA), through the Classification and Rating Administration (CARA) issues ratings for movies. The system was instituted in November 1968 and is voluntary; however, most movie theater chains will not show unrated domestic films and most major studios have agreed to submit all titles for rating prior to theatrical release. Most films will have the MPAA insignia at the end of the closing credits. Earlier films that had full opening credits such as The Poseidon Adventure would bear the insignia in the opening.

The ratings as they exist in 2009 are:

51. 1. Ratings

In the United States, the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA), through the Classification and Rating Administration (CARA) issues ratings for movies. The system was instituted in November 1968 and is voluntary; however, most movie theater chains will not show unrated domestic films and most major studios have agreed to submit all titles for rating prior to theatrical release. Most films will have the MPAA insignia at the end of the closing credits. Earlier films that had full opening credits such as The Poseidon Adventure would bear the insignia in the opening.

The ratings as they exist in 2009 are:

51. 1. 1. Unrestricted

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>General Audiences - All ages admitted. There is no content that would be objectionable to most parents. This is one of only two ratings dating back to 1968 that still exists today (e.g. most of Pixar Studios' movies, including the Toy Story trilogy and WALL-E).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PG</td>
<td>Parental Guidance Suggested - Some material may not be suitable for children under 10. These films may contain some mild language, brief smoking, crude/suggestive humor, scary moments and/or violence. No drug content is present. There are a few exceptions to this rule. A few racial insults may also be heard. Before the creation of PG-13, many &quot;PG&quot; films (e.g. Airplane!, Terms of Endearment and Nine to Five) included elements such as swearing and drug use. Content such as this helped lead to the creation of the &quot;PG-13&quot; rating.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PG-13</td>
<td>Parents Strongly Cautioned - Some material may be inappropriate for children under 13. Films given this rating may contain sexual content, brief or partial nudity, some strong language and innuendo, humor, mature themes, political themes, terror and/or intense action violence. However, bloodstream is rarely present. This is the minimum rating at which drug content is present; with the exception of Austin Powers and Click. Marijuana smoking is the only illegal drug use that can be depicted in a PG-13 movie, with the exception of Forrest Gump, in which a brief scene depicts an actress snorting cocaine. While PG-13 films usually have more profanity than PG films, this is not necessarily the case. A film that is given a PG-13 rating due to profane language and/or racial insults is given this rating because it contains more of these elements than a PG rating would permit, or the film contains uses of stronger profanities than a PG would permit. A film rated PG-13 for &quot;intense violence&quot; is given this rating if blood is present in a violent way. In recent years, this rating has been used for the majority of American films released.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

51. 1. 2. Restricted

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>Restricted - Under 17 requires accompanying parent or adult guardian 21 or older. The parent/guardian is required to stay with the child under 17 through the entire movie, even if the parent gives the child/teenager permission to see the film alone. These films may contain some strong profanity, graphic sexuality, nudity, strong violence, horror, gore, and strong drug use. A movie rated R for profanity often has more severe or frequent language than the PG-13 rating would permit. An R-rated movie may have more blood, gore, drug use, nudity, or graphic sexuality than a PG-13 movie would admit. Some R-rated films have an &quot;unrated&quot; DVD release with scenes of violence, sexual material, or profanity that have been edited from the original cut. At its inception, the R certificate permitted patrons aged 16 and older to attend unaccompanied, but this was raised to 17 in the 1970s. Local authorities have the power to set a higher age (usually 18, but rare cases as high as 21). On the other hand, in some places, the age requirement is not universally enforced, or not enforced at all. This is the other rating that dates back to 1968 and still exists. Movies that carry this rating include South Park: Bigger, Longer &amp; Uncut (itself a satire on censorship), Watchmen, and Brüno.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NC-17</td>
<td>No One 17 And Under Admitted - These films contain excessive graphic violence, intense or explicit sex, depraved, abhorrent behavior, explicit drug abuse, strong language, explicit nudity, or any other elements which, at present, most parents would consider too strong and therefore off-limits for viewing by their children and teens. NC-17 does not necessarily mean obscene or pornographic in the oft-accepted or legal meaning of those words. The Board does not and cannot mark films with those words. These terms are legally ambiguous, and their interpretation varies from case to case. The NC-17 designation implies that the Ratings Board has determined that due to the content of the film, it should be intended for adults only. NC-17 replaced the X rating in 1996. Many films which received X ratings prior to the 1990 change received a re-rating of NC-17. Many theater companies and local operators will not play NC-17 titles and some newspapers and magazines will not run ads for these films. Most NC-17 titles have limited theatrical release, usually in smaller theaters, or are released directly to video or DVD. Most NC-17 titles also have an edited versions released on video and/or DVD that are either unrated or R-rated. Originally, NC-17 stood for No children under 17 admitted, but this was almost immediately changed to its current wording, which restricted films certified as such to patrons 18 years and older.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

51. 1. 3. Others

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NR or Not Rated</td>
<td>NR is not an official MPAA rating. It is used for independent or foreign films that are in limited release and have not been submitted to the MPAA for a rating classification, or have surrendered their MPAA rating (e.g. This film is not yet Rated). It is also used by a film that is soon to be released and has trailers out for promotional purposes, but has not yet received a final rating. Advertisements for films with a pending rating contain the notice &quot;This film is not yet rated&quot;. Most films released before 1968 carry this policy. Some vendors attach &quot;youth-restricted product&quot; labels to certain unrated films.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>For mature audiences (used 1968-70). This rating is now defunct. Most films given this rating were re-rated PG, PG-13, or R. It is not considered equivalent to any other rating, unlike GP, another defunct rating that is considered identical to PG.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GP or General audiences—parental guidance suggested - In 1970–71, the MPAA found that the “M” rating was viewed by audiences as seeder and more adult than its intended meaning (to signify films containing material that may not be appropriate for some children). In response, the designation was changed to “GP”. Shortly afterward the MPAA changed it to PG- (Parental Guidance Suggested), after some people thought that it meant "General Patronage".

SMA - "Suggested for mature audiences”. Not an official rating, but an advisory used for a number of years prior to the MPAA ratings in 1968. This advisory appeared on certain films with mature themes or violence.

X - The precursor to the current NC-17 rating that unlike the other ratings was not trademarked. Because it was not trademarked it became so widely used by the U.S. pornography industry that the MPAA replaced it with the NC-17 rating in 1990. This has led to the misconception that NC-17 means pornographic in content.

51.1.4 Film Advisory Board

The Film Advisory Board (FAB) has instituted a rating system based on the level of maturity of the material's intended audience, rather than the film's content. While the FAB ratings system is not as recognized or well-known as the MPAA's rating system, it is in use by a number of commercial video distributors for direct-to-video releases that would have been impractical to submit to the MPAA. The Film Advisory Board has six ratings categories. Each includes a brief description as to the rating’s explanation, such as “Violence in Battle Scenes”, “Substance Abuse” or “Brief Nudity”. The ratings as of 2008 are:

- C - Children. Suitable for children ages 9 and younger.
- F - Family. Suitable for all ages (Equal to MPAA's G rating).
- PD - Parental Discretion. Parental discretion is advised (Equal to MPAA’s PG rating).
- PD-M - Parental Discretion-Mature. Suitable for years 13 and older (Equal to MPAA's PG-13 rating).
- EM - Extremely Mature. Ages 17 and older only (Equal to MPAA’s R and NC-17 ratings, depending on description).
- AO - Adults Only. Ages 18 and older only (Equal to MPAA's old X rating. Previously equal to MPAA's NC-17 rating until 2003).

51.2.1 Language

- L: Strong language

Content labeled "L" may contain some expletives and profanity; however such words should be infrequent and not used in a sexual context. Content with expletives and profanity that have been bleeped should be labeled L as well. An L may also indicate suggestive dialog, sexual innuendo, or other discussion of adult themes. Other L-labeled speech may include the expression of strong views and opinions that viewers are likely to find offensive, disrespectful, or otherwise controversial.

- L+: Explicit language

Content labeled "L+" may contain persistent use of expletives and profanity. It may also include coarse and vulgar dialog that is strongly sexually explicit.

- No strong language

Content not labeled L or L+ should not contain any strong, coarse, or other potentially offensive language. Even mild cursing such as "hell" and "damn" or words that are bleeped would not be appropriate.

51.2.2 Nudity

- N: Brief or partial nudity

Content labeled "N" may contain brief or partial nudity. This includes prolonged focus on individuals who are minimally clothed (e.g., underwear or revealing bathing suits). This also includes fleeting displays of nude buttocks or breasts with the areola not visible. Content labeled 'N' should not contain exposed genitalia or areola.

- N+: Graphic nudity

Content labeled "N+" may contain full nudity. N+ may also indicate content featuring exposed buttocks or partially nude breasts where the exposure is prolonged and/or the primary focal point of the content.

- Note

Some films and television shows may contain N+ content; however, videos originating from the YouTube user community must abide by the YouTube Community Guidelines and are not permitted to include such content.

- No nudity

Content not labeled N or N+ should not contain nudity or partial nudity of any kind.

51.2.3 Sexual Situations

- S: Mild sexual situations

Content labeled S may contain mild sexual activity or themes. This includes implied sex acts, light or comedic fetish references or behavior, prolonged and/or passionate kissing and fondling of another's breasts or buttocks. 'S' may also indicate the presence of sexual situations or discussion.

- S+: Explicit sexual situations

Content labeled S+ may contain explicit sexual activity. This includes engaging in sex acts, touching of genitals and individuals engaging in
fetishes for purposes of sexual gratification (e.g. bondage, domination and sadomasochism).

- **Note**

Some films and television shows may contain S+ content; however videos originating from the YouTube user community must abide by the YouTube Community Guidelines and are not permitted to include such content.

- **No sexual situations**

Content not labeled S or S+ should not contain any sexual conduct or themes. Brief displays of affection, such as a kiss or hug are excepted.

### 51.2.4. Violence

- **V**: Mildly violent or disturbing

Content labeled "V" may contain mild, comedic violence, fantasy violence, or isolated incidents of realistic violence. However, any violence depicted should not be gory, pervasive, or sexual in nature. Similarly, V-labeled content may contain a small amount of other imagery or situations that are disturbing or repulsive to sensitive viewers (such as real or dramatized medical footage, or depictions of disgusting or scary content in a horror or fantasy context).

- **V+**: Strongly violent or disturbing

Content labeled "V+" may contain violence that is persistent, intense, and graphic. V+-labeled content may also include pervasive imagery or situations that are disturbing or repulsive to the average viewer. This may also include animated content, if it features realistic depictions of extreme violence or other extremely disturbing or repulsive imagery.

- **No violence or disturbing content**

Content not labeled V or V+ should be free of violence, injury, or other imagery that may be considered gory, disturbing, or repulsive to sensitive viewers.

### 51.2.5. Drug Abuse

- **D**: Mild drug abuse

Content labeled "D" may contain mild drug use, including excessive or persistent consumption of alcohol or tobacco. It also includes occasional or comedic use of drugs such as marijuana, sativa, hallucinogens or prescription pharmaceuticals. Implied, non-graphic use of other drugs, such as heroin may be labeled 'D' as well, along with the display of drug paraphernalia.

- **D+**: Drug abuse

Content labeled "D+" may contain pervasive drug abuse, including depictions of drugs being abused through extreme or unconventional means, such as injection, snorting, free-basing, and inhalation. This also may include graphic use of "hard drugs" such as heroin, methamphetamines, cocaine, and crack cocaine.

- **No drug abuse**

Content labeled D- should not contain drug abuse. However, fleeting and moderate consumption of alcohol or tobacco by adults as well as responsible use of medications may appear.