[HR] Croatian State TV Becomes Public

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Latest changes in the Croatian Radio-Television (HRT) Act adopted by the Croatian Parliament in November have opened the door for making Croatian state TV public.

For the first time, the body supervising Croatian Television, the Croatian Radio-Television Council (the Council), will have the majority of its members selected from the organisations and bodies that represent public interests. The Council will consist of 23 members. Only 10 will be parliamentarians and they will be appointed in proportion to the parliamentary representation of the parties. Under the old regime, the Council comprised 35 members, of whom 15 were parliamentarians, 10 represented public interests, and 10 were employees of Croatian TV and radio. The new Article 10 of the Act strengthens the position of the Council with regard to Croatian TV and radio because from now on the Council will determine the programming guidelines for radio and television programmes, oversee their implementation, and approve the way in which the guidelines are carried out.

As provided in Art. 16, the Council will also give its opinion on HRT's financial plan and annual report. On recommendation by HRT's Board of Directors, the Council will adopt HRT's annual operation plan. On suggestion from the HRT's general director, the Council will appoint the editors-in-chief of TV and radio programmes. Candidates for these positions are to be selected by open competition. Editors-in-chief of TV and radio programmes cannot be party officials at the same time.

According to Art. 19 para. 2, the HRT is obliged to publish its annual business report in a public newspaper. The HRT's Board of Directors must obtain the approval of the Council if it wants to change the amount charged for the obligatory TV licences (Art. 21).

In compliance with new obligations deriving from Article 6, the HRT's Board of Directors passed a completely new code of conduct for its employees on 15 December 1998. The code emphasises all the professional and journalistic values necessary for a modern public TV and radio service.

Zakon o Hrvatskoj radioteleviziji.

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Croatian Radio-Television Act. Latest changes adopted by Croatian parliament, published in Croatian in official gazette no. 145/98 on 14 November 1998.

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Code of conduct for the Croatian Radio-Television's employees of 15 December 1998.

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