[RO] Public Television Has To Cancel Short-Term Employment Contracts

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By its decision on 3 April 2000 the Tribunalul Municipiului Bucuresti (The Court of Bucharest) ruled that Romanian public service television (SRTV) must change short-term employment contracts, issued to staff in 1999, back into long-term ones.

When new managers took over Romanian public service television (SRTV) in 1999, this had the effect of bringing about not only a far-reaching reform and restructuring of the channel, but also a shake-up in the editorial team. A series of tests and competitions was carried out in order to select the best journalists for the channel's strategies for the next few years. As a consequence, new short-term employment contracts were drawn up. All other journalists had to settle for financial compensation. During the course of the previous year, shortterm contracts were accordingly issued to 65% of the original staff. However, of the 1,400 former employees who had been made redundant at the outset, 1,000 were re-recruited as "free-lance" staff. The Federation of United Television Trade-Union Associations protested against this initiative of the Governing Council and instituted legal proceedings. On 7 October 1999 the Court decided for the first time in favour of the trade-unions and required that the short-tem employment contracts be reissued as long-term ones. Due to an appeal made by the Governing Council against the decision, execution was deferred until a final ruling. The judgement handed down at the beginning of April 2000 now requires the Council to cancel the "short-term" employment contracts and change them back into long-term ones.

Decision of the Court of Bucharest of 3 April 2000.

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