[BE] Flemish Parliament Opens the Door for Commercial Radio and Deregulates Regional Television

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Dirk Voorhoof
Human Rights Centre, Ghent University and Legal Human Academy

On 14 November 2000, the Flemish Parliament agreed on some new provisions in the decreten betreffende de radio-omroep en de televisie (Flemish Broadcasting ActArt. 38sexies - 38terdecies). The new provisions create the possibility for private organisations to obtain a licence and to be allowed frequencies for the commercial broadcasting of radio programmes targeting (nearly) the entire Flemish Community. Until now, radio frequencies were only available for local and metropolitan private radio stations, while regional or national private radio was only allowed by means of cable distribution. All national and regional radio frequencies were exclusively at the disposal of the public broadcasting organisation VRT (see IRIS 2000-3: 6). The Flemish Ministry now has to work out the technical framework for the allocation of the frequencies that will be made available for commercial radio stations. It seems, however, that only one or two licences will be made available for commercial radio due to the lack of useable radio frequencies.

A decree of 1 December 2000 has modified some provisions on regional television in the Flemish Community. It emphasizes the mission on "regional information", abrogates the maximum of 300 hours of production time a year, while at the same time making more flexible the provisions on the maximum percentage of advertising time (Arts. 51, 52 § 4 and 82 § 7 of the Flemish Broadcasting Act). The Media Minister declared in Parliament that the new provisions should help regional television stations to improve their financial situation.

Decreet houdende wijzigingen van sommige bepalingen inzake de regionale omroepen in de decreten betreffende de radio-omroep en de televisie gecoördineerd op 25 januari 1995

http://www.vlaamsparlement.be

Flemish Parliament, 2000-2001, nr. 413 and Decree of 1 December 2000 modifying some provisions with regard to regional TV in the Broadcasting Act, Moniteur 20 December 2000

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