[SI] Need for a New Media Law?

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The present Mass Media Law has been in the process of changing since 1996, that is since only two years after its adoption, because of its many deficiencies: the law is being circumvented, market players do not comply with those restrictions regulating media ownership shares, the law does not prevent the "selling" of broadcasting channels and it does not provide for the necessary sanctions for all sorts of legal offences.

In order to harmonise Slovenian with European legislation and to solve the existing legal problems, the Ministry of Culture has already prepared a new law. The draft contains 180 articles (plus, additionally, more than a hundred amendments) that should regulate print media, audio-visual media, and, partly, also the Internet.

Right up to the present, the draft version has undergone constant changes, inter alia because it did not comply with the binding principles regarding the proposals for the second parliamentary discussion that had been drawn up by the relevant parliamentary committee.

It might be stated that players throughout the entire sector concerned continue to criticize the current draft mainly for regulating some areas in disproportionate detail while addressing others by only very few provisions. In particular, the addressees of the regulation object to it for the following reasons: journalists fear that they will be faced with the erosion of some of the rights they enjoy under the current law (e.g., prior to the appointment or dismissal of the editor in chief the editorial board must be heard); the public Radio and Television (RTV) is viewed as opposed to the new law, especially as regards the articles concerning the transfer of establishment rights from Parliament to the Government, its advertising market share and its share of own production. Commercial broadcasters also criticise the law for continuing to discriminate in favour of the public RTV institution. Finally, the Broadcasting Council opposes the law because the law anticipates the establishment of a new regulatory body, namely the Broadcasting Agency, whose management will be appointed by the Government. The Council alleges that the relevant provision links the supervision of the broadcasting media operation to the executive branch of government and daily politics.

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http://www.sigov.si/mk/slo/kdojekdo/mediji/zmedi2.doc

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