[BE] End of Political Broadcasting on Public Radio and Television

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By an Act of 6 July 2001, the Flemish Parliament has abrogated the provisions in the Flemish Broadcasting Act guaranteeing the direct access of political parties to public broadcasting. According to Article 27ter and 27quater of the Broadcasting Act 1995 (as amended) and a Decree of the Flemish Government of 15 October 1999, every political party represented in the Flemish Parliament was guaranteed access to public radio and television (VRT) to broadcast their political messages on a regular basis. The VRT was obliged to broadcast programmes produced by the political parties for two ten-minute periods per week. It has been argued for many years that the public is no longer interested in watching or listening to programmes of this kind and that they interfere with the public broadcasting organisation's autonomy in programming. The new Act of 6 July 2001 brings this system of political broadcasting to an end: from 1 January 2002, the VRT will no longer be obliged to guarantee access to political broadcasting. During pre-election periods (i.e. two months before elections), it is the VRT that decides on the modalities of organising political programmes and to give access to political parties in respect of Article 27ter § 9 and Article 27quater § 6 of the Broadcasting Act; guaranteeing 50% equal and 50% proportional access.

Decreet houdende wijzigingen van sommige bepalingen van de decreten betreffende de radio-omroep en de televisie gecoördineerd op 25 januari 1995, 6 July 2001, Moniteur belge (Official Journal) of 28 July 2001 (2nd edition)

http://www.moniteur.be

Act of the Flemish Parliament Modifying Some Provisions of the Broadcasting Act, 6 July 2001, Moniteur belge (Official Journal) of 28 July 2001 (2nd edition)

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