[YU] New Laws on Broadcasting and Telecommunications to Be Adopted Simultaneously?

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The preparation of new media legislation for Serbia, which has already taken almost 15 months (see IRIS 2001-6: 10), is entering its last phases in early 2002.

The draft Broadcasting Act of Serbia, which was submitted by the expert group to the Government of Serbia in August 2001, has finally reached the adoption procedure. The only remaining obstacle to a swift adoption of the Law on Broadcasting in the Parliament is the position of the Government of Serbia that the Law on Telecommunications of Serbia shall be passed simultaneously, and the text on telecommunications needs some time in order to be fine-tuned. Notwithstanding that the implementation of the new Law on Broadcasting presumes the existence of the new system in telecommunications, most of the broadcasters are eager to see the regulation pertaining to them adopted as soon as possible, since for the past 14 months no station could legally expand or get a new broadcasting license due to a moratorium imposed by the Federal Government.

Two pieces of general media legislation - the new Law on Public Information, as well as the Law on Free Access to Information - are still being drafted. The first of these, however, has been altered for four times already, and the final discussion among the expert group, the professionals and European experts is to be held in late January. The second has not yet reached the stage of the first draft.

The Draft Law on Advertising, also a vital one for the operation of the media, is being fine-tuned and polished by the expert group that drafted it, and it shall be submitted to the Government of Serbia by early February at the latest. The advertising regulation has gained the support of almost all key players in the industry and of consumer protection associations. Therefore it is reasonable to presume that the Government of Serbia shall also support the proposed text.

Based upon the current situation, it is expected that the full set of media laws shall not be enacted before this summer. However, the broadcasting and telecommunications regulations might be on the parliament's agenda by late February or early March, thus creating a new and more open environment for businesses in that area.

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Broadcasting Bill

Broadcasting Bill

Telecommunications Bill

Telecommunications Bill

Bill on Public Information

Bill on Public Information

Bill on Free Access to Information

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Advertising Bill

Advertising Bill

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