[BA] Controversies over Broadcasting Fees

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In March 2003, Radio-Television of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (RTV FBA) has filed 180 000 lawsuits against citizens who have failed to fulfil their legal obligation to pay subscription fees. The asserted claims cover a period of 18 months, i.e. the period during which RTV FBA that succeeded the former RTV Bosnia and Herzegovina, had been established. According to the law of obligations, the limitation period expires two years after the claim is made.

By these means, the management of RTV FBA expects to collect 10 to 12 million Bosnian convertible marks (BAM, approximately EUR 5-6 million). The RTV subscription fee includes radio and TV, amounts to BAM 6 per month (circa EUR 3) and it is collected via the electricity bills. At the moment, many citizens - in order to avoid this obligation - pay their electricity consumption charges via bank money orders, by which the electricity charges can be paid separately. These orders are only given in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and not in the other entity, the Republika Srpska, or in Brcko District.

According to Article 17 of the Law on the Basis of the Public Broadcasting System and Service of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the broadcasting fees are to be distributed guaranteeing 58 percent to the respective public broadcasters of each entity and 42 percent to the public-service broadcasters on the state and on the District Brcko level.

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