[HR] Amendments to Media Laws

IRIS 2005-4:1/18

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The Government of the Republic of Croatia, has on its 12th session introduced a proposal of the plan of an adjustment of the national legislature with the legal framework of the European Union for the year 2005. Item 3.20 of the said proposal is entitled "Culture and audio-visual politics in the year 2005". It provides amendments to the Law 122/03 on electronic media (see IRIS 2003-9: 9) and to the Law 25/03 on Croatian Radio and Television (see IRIS 2003-2: 10). The alterations were announced for the third quarter of 2005.

In regard to media law, the existing manner of electing members of the HRT Program Council had been criticized especially. In Article 54, paragraph 3 of the Law on Electronic Media it is stipulated that members of the Council are appointed by the Croatian Parliament pursuant to the proposal of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, for the period of 5 years. The said members may be reappointed. One objection can be made that there is room for political influence over the HRT. By its alterations and amendments to the Law on Electronic Media, the Government of the Republic of Croatia shall set up provisions that refer to the Council for Electronic Media as an independent regulatory body in the area of electronic media (as stipulated in the Directive on Television without Frontiers 89/552/EEC, altered and amended by the Directive 97/36/EC, and the Council of Europe´s Recommendation No. (2000) 23 on independence and functions of regulatory bodies in the sector of broadcasting).

But it is also worth mentioning that modifications to the law on HRT should not destabilize this public institution, since the said amendments should enter into force before the mandate of the present Program Council members expires. The final decision on alterations to the Law on HRT shall be reached after controlling if it is in line with European laws.

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Proposal of the plan for the adjustment of the Republic of Croatia legislature to harmonise with the European union for the year 2005 - Amendment A to the national program of the Republic of Croatia for joining to the European Union, Narodne novine - the Offical Gazette of the Republic of Croatia, 14/02, February 2003

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Law on Croatian Radio and Television, Narodne novine - the Official Gazette of the Republic of Croatia, 25/03, February 2003

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Law on Electronic Media, Narodne novine - the Official Gazette of the Republic of Croatia, 122/03 dated 30 July 2003

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