[SI] Media Bill Tabled

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On 1 April 2005, the Slovenian Ministry for Culture published a Bill on Slovenian public service broadcasting (RTV Slovenija). The original intention was to table the Bill before Parliament as part of an accelerated legislative procedure. However, following protests from various parties, the Ministry decided not to take this route and tabled the Bill in the normal way. On 22 April 2005, the Parliament held an extraordinary sitting to give the Bill its first reading.

The current law on public service broadcasting dates back to 1994 and was last amended in 2001.

The most controversial aspects of the current law are its provisions on the remit and appeals procedure of the RTV organs. The Bill makes provision for a new Programme Council to be created, the majority (21) of whose 29 members would be appointed by the Parliament. Five members would be appointed in accordance with the political representation of the parliamentary parties. The Council would be responsible for electing the Director General. A Supervisory Board would also be created, with nine of its 11 members appointed by the Parliament (5) and Government (4). According to the grounds set out in the Bill, the new rules are mainly designed to guarantee these organs' political independence. It has been suggested that the current Public Service Broadcasting Council is not fully protected from political exploitation. For example, it has been possible to repeatedly elect a political party chairman to this body and appoint him as its president.

On 12 May 2005, a debate was held as part of a round table meeting on the Bill organised by the Peace Institute of Slovenia. Participants included representatives of public service broadcasting, the academic world and groups of experts, as well as a representative from Poland who holds an important position in the expert bodies of the Council of Europe, and the Director of Legal and Public Affairs of the European Broadcasting Union.

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Bill on Slovenian public service broadcasting (RTV Slovenija) of 1 April 2005

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