

[ES] New Bill on National Public Radio and Television

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The Government has recently presented a new Bill on public service Radio and TV to Parliament. This Bill has been inspired by the report prepared by the Council for the Reform of State-owned Media, created by the Government in April 2004, and which delivered its final report in February 2005.

The Bill defines public broadcasting service at a national level. This service would be provided by the 'Corporación de Radio y Televisión Española' (Spanish radio and television corporation - Corporación RTVE), a public entity which would manage two companies, 'Sociedad Mercantil Estatal Televisión Española' (Spanish Television Trading State Company - TVE) and 'Sociedad Mercantil Estatal Radio Nacional de España' (Spanish National Radio Trading State Company - RNE).

The main governing body of the Corporación RTVE would be the Board of Management, which would have ten members: six appointed by Congress and four by the Senate, for a term of six years. These members could only be dismissed for specific reasons. All of them would be dismissed if the Corporación RTVE incurred an excessive debt. The Board of Management would appoint the Director of the Corporación RTVE. There would also be an Advisory Committee, formed by thirteen members appointed by several public organizations and associations, and a News Council, formed by RTVE journalists.

As regards the programming of the Corporación RTVE, Parliament would approve framework programmes, valid for nine years, which would be implemented by means of (renewable) three-year programme contracts signed by the Government and the Corporación RTVE.

These texts would define the goals of the Corporación RTVE, and would determine how its service would be financed, taking into account that the public subsidies should only cover the cost of public service radio and TV programmes, and that the Corporación RTVE would not be allowed in future to incur an excessive debt, as has been the case in the past. The Corporación RTVE would be under the external control of Parliament, of a new independent audiovisual regulatory authority (to be created) and of the Court of Auditors.

The Bill aims to ensure the independence of RTVE from political parties, to guarantee that it is really fulfilling a public service and not merely competing for

audience numbers and advertising, and to put an end to the difficult economic situation of RTVE (EUR 7.500 million of accumulated debt, and expected losses for 2005 of EUR 800 million).

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http://www.congreso.es/public_oficiales/L8/CONG/BOCG/A/A_052-01.PDF

