[SK] TV Markiza under CME Control

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A significant change has taken place in the Slovakian commercial television market. Central European Media Enterprises (CME), which is run by the heir to the Estee Lauder empire, Roland Lauder, is taking control of the current market leader, the private broadcaster TV Markiza. CME previously owned a 49% minority share in the company. It also has an interest in other related activities in the Czech Republic (see IRIS 2005-3: 8) and usually uses a Dutch-based subsidiary to look after its European media undertakings. In addition to the aforementioned countries, CME is active in Bulgaria, Slovenia, Romania and Ukraine. The cartels authority, known as the Unfair Competition Council, has yet to approve the takeover.

Markiza TV's current licence expires in 2007, when a new application will need to be made. Some reporters saw the new owner's announcement that it intended to bring news reporting into line with completely new, objective standards as a reaction to numerous complaints about a lack of objectivity in political reporting and news programmes. Some of these complaints have been backed up by reprimands from the Broadcasting Council. This was considered an obstacle to the renewal of the company's licence and a problem which CME's new strategy aims to resolve.

CME press release of 31 October 2005

http://www.cetv-net.com/press.asp?article=617

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