

[LT] Self-Regulatory Institution Founded

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In March 2005, a self-regulatory institution, named *Lietuvos Reklamos biuras* (Lithuanian Advertising Bureau) was founded in Lithuania on the initiative of advertising agencies, media and advertisers. It started its activities in April 2006. The Lithuanian Advertising Bureau is responsible for the administration of the self-regulatory system and the application of the National Code of Advertising Practice, which is based on the Code of Advertising Practice of the International Chamber of Commerce.

The establishment of such a self-regulatory institution is foreseen in Article 39.13 of the Law on the Provision of Information to the Public. The main aim of this self-regulatory institution is to ensure a relevant and effective system of self-regulation, enabling the advertising industry (advertisers who pay for advertising, advertising agencies responsible for the form and content of advertisements and media which disseminate them) to regulate its social responsibilities by itself. The self-regulation system shall also employ respective fair trade principles, promote actively the highest ethical standards in commercial communications and safeguard consumers' interests. Self-regulation in advertising has to be understood as the response of the advertising industry to the challenge of dealing with issues affecting commercial communications by co-operation rather than by detailed legislation.

The self-regulatory institution of advertisers is planning to operate in the following fields: taking care of advertising ethics, analysing advertising ethics, drafting legislative documents which are related to the communication marketing business, preparing proposals for the improvement of the communications business environment, arranging seminars, conferences and other forms of training in the field of the communication marketing business, publishing documentations on information, advertising, researches and methodology.

The Advertising Bureau is composed of the General Assembly of Members, Board and Arbitration Commission.

The Statutes of the Lithuanian Advertising Bureau indicate that members of the advertising self-regulation institution may be persons who run a business in any branch of media, advertising or marketing. Furthermore, any advertising supplier ranking high in the advertising market or an organization, whose main aim is to

protect consumer rights may become member of the institution.

The General Assembly of Members deals with questions relating to the admission of new members, their elimination from the Association, the amount of the entrance fee for candidates to the Association, the annual payments for the members of the Association and other issues.

The Board is composed of 5 members. It forms the general policy of the advertising self-regulatory institution and coordinates its implementation. Its task is also to discuss issues on property, accumulation of funds and spending.

The Arbitration Commission is the only management body of the Association which can take decisions on various advertising complaints received by the Advertising Bureau Association. Those decisions are mandatory for the members of the Association.

The General Assembly of Members designates the Arbitration Commission from the members of the Association or other persons. It comprises 9 members (one representative each from advertising providers, TV, press, the consumer rights protection board, the Competition Council, the Child's Rights Protection Office as well as the Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman and a psychologist).

The Arbitration Commission enacts written and reasoned decisions, which determine if a former or present form of advertising activity is not in conflict with the Ethics Code of Advertising, adopted and published by the Association. The Arbitration Commission adopts the decisions either after receiving written complaints or sometimes at its own discretion. Any legal or natural person (with the exception of the members of the Arbitration Commission) as well as Governmental or administrative institutions may submit such applications to the Arbitration Commission.

