[BG] Radio and Television Fund Postponed

IRIS 2008-2:1/10

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The establishment of the Bulgarian Radio and Television Fund has been postponed until 1 January 2009.

According to the Radio and Television Act (see IRIS 2002-2: 3) the financing of the public operators (the Bulgarian National Television and the Bulgarian National Radio) and of the media regulator (the Council for Electronic Media) shall be provided by a specially designated fund: the Radio and Television Fund, established in cooperation with the Council for Electronic Media. The Fund shall be directed by a management board whose composition shall be determined by the Council for Electronic Media.

In 2001, following a recommendation from the International Monetary Fund, the establishment of the Fund was postponed.

Pursuant to paragraph 2, item 1 and item 4 of the Transitional and Final Provisions of the Radio and Television Act (published in the State Gazette, issue No. 113 of 28 December 2007) the establishment of the Fund has now been further postponed for one year, i.e. until 1 January 2009. According to the amendments, the Council for Electronic Media shall be subsidised by the state budget until the end of 2008. Starting from 1 January 2009 the subsidy from the state budget for the Bulgarian National Television, the Bulgarian National Radio and the Council for Electronic Media shall be replaced in full by the financing from the Fund.

The Council for Electronic Media shall adopt rules of procedure and organisation of the Fund and of the management board of the Fund. The management board of the Fund shall elect a chairperson from amongst its members. The Council for Electronic Media shall appoint an executive director of the Fund, who shall be responsible for the day-to-day management of the Fund. The executive director may not be a member of the management board of the Fund.

The management board of the Fund must include a representative of the Ministry of Finance, a representative of the State Agency for Information Technology and Communications, a representative of the public service operators and a representative of the commercial radio and television operators.

The resources of the Fund shall be raised from:

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1. the monthly fees collected for reception of radio and television programme services;

2. the initial and annual licence fees or registration fees, respectively collected by the Council for Electronic Media;

3. interest on the resources of the Fund;

4. donations and legacies;

5. other resources as specified in the law.

The resources of the Fund shall be allocated for:

1. financing of the Bulgarian National Television and the Bulgarian National Radio;

2. financing of the Council for Electronic Media;

3. financing of projects of national importance involving implementation and use of new technologies in radio and television broadcasting activities;

4. financing of significant cultural and educational projects;

5. financing of projects and activities designed to extend the audience and/or territorial reach of radio and television programme services;

6. the management of the Fund; and

7. the National Electricity Company in connection with the collection of the monthly fees for reception of radio and television programme services.

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Transitional and Final Provisions of the Radio and Television Act, State Gazette, issue No. 113 of 28 December 2007

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Radio and Television Act

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