[LT] New Requirements for Alcohol Advertising

IRIS 2008-7:1/27

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On 26 April 2008 new amendments to the Law on Alcohol Control came into force. The amended Law abolishes the unconditional prohibition to advertise alcoholic beverages in TV programmes.

According to the former amendments of the Law on Alcohol Control (see IRIS 2007-8:15), which came into force on 1 January 2008, alcohol advertising was prohibited from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m. in broadcast programmes of broadcasters under Lithuania's jurisdiction.

When the prohibition to broadcast alcohol advertising came into force, the broadcasters of Lithuania suspended the live broadcast of all sports and began to broadcast them from 11 p.m. using the recordings.

The above decisions of the broadcasters were due to the fines imposed by the State Consumer Rights Protection Authority, which is responsible for the control of alcohol advertising in the media. The State Consumer Rights Protection Authority imposed the fines on the broadcasters because during the live broadcast of the basketball competition, the logos of alcoholic beverages were visible on the screen. The logos of alcoholic products were visible on screen only in the background of the game, therefore the broadcaster could not technically avoid them (see IRIS 2008-4: 17).

It is natural that broadcasting of sport programmes such as basketball, which is tremendously popular in Lithuania in particular, from the recordings after 11 p.m. led to a wave of resentment from the side of fans and viewers.

It should be noted that these circumstances necessitated a new amendment of the Law on Alcohol Control regarding advertising of alcohol.

According to the newly amended Law, which came into force on 26 April 2008, alcohol advertising is prohibited on broadcast and re-broadcast programmes from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m., except for live and uninterrupted international broadcasts or re-broadcasts of art, culture or sports events.

Furthermore, the Law expanded the list of information which is not treated as being advertisement of alcoholic beverages, i.e. the registered names or trademarks of undertakings producing or selling alcoholic beverages, when such

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names or trademarks appear during broadcasts and re-broadcasts on an irregular or unexpected basis and when such names or trademark images are ancillary with regard to the main programmes broadcast or re-broadcast.

It is important to note, that the newly amended Law foresees the complete prohibition of alcohol advertising in all media in Lithuania as of 1 January 2012. The aim of such a prohibition is to reduce the spread of alcohol use in society, particularly among young people.

Alkoholio kontrolės įstatymas

http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter3/dokpaieska.showdoc_l?p_id=318843

Law on Alcohol Control

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