[LT] Regulation of the Activities of the Inspector of Journalists' Ethics Revised

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In October 2008 a working group consisting of members of the Lithuanian Parliament (*Seimas*) prepared amendments to the Law on the Provision of Information to the Public. The amendments are mainly linked to the regulation of the activities of the Inspector of Journalists' Ethics. The aim of the draft law is to specify the functions of the Inspector of Journalists' Ethics, the procedure for the examination of complaints and the rules for the adoption and publication of the Inspector's decisions more precisely.

According to the provisions of the current Law on the Provision of Information to the Public, the Inspector, in compliance with the conclusions of experts, categorises press publications, audiovisual works, radio and television programmes or broadcasts as well as the Information Society media and other media and/or their content, as being of erotic, pornographic and/or violent character. It should be noted that the draft law envisages a new provision according to which any content consisting of no less than 1/3 of erotic, pornographic and/or violent information could be ascribed to the relevant category.

The amendments establish that the Inspector has the right to begin an investigation on his own initiative, once he obtains information about violations of the legal acts governing the provision of information to the public, despite the fact that no complaints have been received. The amendments guarantee the Inspector's right to film, photograph, make sound or video recordings, use any other technical means for the purpose of his investigation as well as to receive the information necessary for discharging the functions of his office from both the State and municipal institutions and agencies and the producers of public information. Moreover, the draft provisions provide a clear procedure for the examination of the complaints and indicate the grounds for possible rejection. The draft law also defines the types of the Inspector's decisions.

According to the current Law on the Provision of Information to the Public, each decision of the Inspector has to be published in the supplement *Informaciniai Pranešimai* (Information Bulletin) to the official gazette *Valstybės žinios* as well as on the website of the Inspector's office. The draft amendments establish a new order, which stipulates that the Inspector's decisions should not be published if

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the publication could violate human rights and/or legitimate interests. The current Law does not provide for such an exception.

Furthermore, in order to ensure the implementation of the Inspector's decisions, the *Seimas* working group proposed to amend the Code of Administrative Infringements also. This draft amendment is closely related to the amendments mentioned above, whereas the amended provision of the Code of Administrative Infringements addresses the issues of liability for the failure to provide the Inspector with the information necessary to discharge his functions, the violation of his decisions as well as other interference in the implementation of the legal rights of the Inspector. The draft provision envisages fines from EUR 145 to EUR 580 for these violations.

Visuomenės informavimo įstatymo 49 ir 50 straipsnių pakeitimo ir papildymo įstatymo projektas

http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter3/dokpaieska.showdoc_l?p_id=328690&p_query=&p_tr2=

Draft Law on Amendments to the Law on the Provision of Information to the Public

Administracinių teisės pažeidimų kodekso papildymo 187 straipsniu, 224, 259 ir 262 straipsnių papildymo įstatymo projektas

http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter3/dokpaieska.showdoc_l?p_id=328693&p_query=&p_tr2=

Draft Law on Amendments to the Code of Administrative Infringements

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