

[RS] Broadcasting Act Amended

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The National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia adopted amendments to the 2002 Broadcasting Act at a session held on 29 May 2009. The amendments were published in the Official Gazette No. 41/2009-218 dated 2 June 2009 and came into force on 10 June 2009.

The adoption of the amendments followed the dispute regarding the election procedure for the new Serbian Broadcasting Authority (SBA) Council members that took place in February 2009, where the competent parliamentary Committee decided to repeat the procedure for electing new members and thus delayed the procedure.

The Broadcasting Act has now been changed so that all but one of the authorised nominators may nominate only two, and not at least two, candidates (the parliamentary Committee still nominates six, of whom three are to be elected). In case the authorised nominators cannot agree on a list with two names, the amendments contain a provision empowering the parliamentary Committee for Culture and Information to decide on the two candidates itself. This replaced the provision stating that in case there are several candidate lists issued by NGOs and citizens' alliances, the one signed by most organisations, i.e., alliances that had previously conducted more actions, initiatives and publications in the area they primarily deal with, should be put to vote.

Most associations and NGOs involved with media freedoms have warned that these amendments allow more State influence in the election process of SBA Council members.

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Amendments to the 2002 Broadcasting Act, published in the Official Gazette No. 41/2009-218 dated 2 June 2009

