# [BG] The New Association of Cable Communication Operators (BACCO)

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On 9 February 2011 an open meeting of the Council for the Protection of Intellectual Property under the presidency of the Ministry of Culture with representatives of the collective management societies and some associations of users of protected works took place. The topic of the meeting was the actual problem of cable re-transmission in Bulgaria.

It is a well known fact that for many years cable operators in Bulgaria have not been paying any remuneration to the collecting societies for the re-transmission of phonograms and audio-visual works/films included in television programmes and are even re-transmitting some programmes without the permission of the respective broadcasting organisations. The termination of that illegal practice was beyond the capacity of many ministers, experts, public prosecutors and judges. Now, this problem is extending over the other new and not so new technological means of re-transmission such as satellite, Internet and IPTV.

The motto of the meeting was that the Council shall take the initiative to prepare a new strategy to combat illegal re-transmission of protected works. All interested organisations were invited to submit their proposals for specific measures and legislative amendments.

The new movement at that meeting was the position of the new association of cable operators - BACCO, which was established in December 2010. It consolidates almost 40 cable operators, among which is the biggest one, named Blizoo.

The BACCO's representative declared that all members of BACCO are ready to sign contracts with the collecting societies and to start negotiations on the tariffs for a due remuneration for cable re-transmission. They also upheld the desire of the Council for more effective measures against those who infringe copyrights, but insisted on equal treatment of all operators re-transmitting programmes without any consideration of the technical means of re-transmission. Their reasoning was that all these enterprises are working on the same market and are offering the same service. They are competitors among each other and a stricter treatment of cable operators would create the conditions for an unfair advantage for the other operators.

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Recerntly BACCO officially started negotiations with the two societies that administer copyrights and related rights of music works. The parties informed the Council for Electronic Media about this with the purpose of avoiding any sanctions under the provision of Art. 125v of the Radio and TV Act until the end of the negotiations. Meanwhile, the Parliament started the second reading of the amendments to the Copyright and Related Rights Act, which provide numerous changes to the rules about cable and satellite re-transmission and the status of the collective management organisations (see IRIS 2010-10/15).

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