[BG] Telecommunications Regulator Finally Submits an Air to TV Evropa in the City of Sofia

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On 26 January 2012, the Communications Regulation Commission (CRC) issued Decision No. 143 which authorises the regulator to grant a permit to TV Evropa for analogue broadcasting in the territory of Sofia.

The news television channel shall have an opportunity to broadcast on the frequencies of channel No. 43 which had got involved in scandals. So far, the Bulgarian National Television (BNT) has used it to broadcast a regional programme emanating from the capital - BNT2.

In 2009, BNT received permission to come on air when CRC was providing temporary permits for analogue broadcasting in Sofia. At the last moment of the procedure in 2009, the Commission submitted the frequency to BNT and did not provide it to the private media. TV Evropa appealed this to the Supreme Administrative Court which ruled that the procedure had been strictly followed.

After having played out all legal options for protection at the national courts' institutions, TV Evropa referred the case to the European Commission (see IRIS 2011-7/11 and IRIS 2011-4/12).

The threat of a procedure against Bulgaria was the reason for the Parliament to vote for amendments to the Electronic Communications Act (see IRIS 2012-3/13). These provided an opportunity to TV Evropa to obtain a frequency, thus, required legislatively the Communications Regulation Commission to solve the case after nearly three years delay in favour of the private media.

The decision of CRC has been issued on the basis of a positive standpoint of the Council for Electronic Media. One more broadcaster now comes on the air without a programme license, having only a permit from the telecommunications regulator.

CRC Decision No. 143 of 26 January 2012

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