[BG] Amendments to Bulgarian Media Law

IRIS 2013-5:1/12

Rayna Nikolova
New Bulgarian University

Several amendments have been made during the months of March and April 2013 to different acts pertaining to the Bulgarian Media Law.

An amendment and a supplement to the Electronic Communications Act (ECA) introduced a new Art. 231 (published on 15 March 2013 in the "Official Gazette", issue 27). The purpose of this provision is the protection of the rights of media consumers, especially in the case of commercial disputes between television broadcasters and network operators. Therefore, Art. 231 envisages that the contract between the consumer and the network operator has to outline a detailed list with the titles of the television programmes being included in the contractual package. Furthermore, the network operators have to keep records of all complaints, reports and suggestions that have been received from consumers both on paper and electronically. Non-compliance with the above-mentioned obligations entitles the consumer to terminate the contract, without any compensation, within one month. Contractual agreements violating these obligations are void.

One of the changes in the Radio and Television Act (RTA) relates to the volume of audiovisual commercial communications and will come into effect as from 1 April 2013 (also published in the "Official Gazette", issue 27). The amendment creates a new paragraph 10 in Art. 75, which states that "The audiovisual commercial communications and commercial communications in radio services shall not be broadcast with a volume higher than the volume of the rest of the programme." According to Art. 126 paragraph 1, media service providers who violate the provisions are liable to a monetary penalty of BGN 3,000 to BGN 20,000 (circa EUR 1,533 to EUR 10,225). Repeated violations shall be punishable by a monetary penalty of double that amount (Art. 126 paragraph 3).

At the same time, another amendment to the RTA came into force (published on 15 February 2013 in the "Official Gazette", issue 15). It envisages that the Chairperson of the Council for Electronic Media (CEM), the General Directors of the Bulgarian National Radio (BNR) and the Bulgarian National Television (BNT) are the first (i.e., the highest) level budget administrators within their entities and thus the very top executive when it comes to matters of expenses.

As to the public media service providers BNR and BNT, their respective Management Boards have the power to adopt changes regarding the general

© European Audiovisual Observatory (Council of Europe) 2026

budget spending strategy. On the second and lower levels of budget expenses, the budget administrators are chosen by the Management Boards.

Закон за електронните съобщения

http://lex.bg/bg/laws/ldoc/2135553187

Electronic Communications Act (consolidated version)

Закон за радиото и телевизията

http://lex.bg/bg/laws/ldoc/2134447616

Radio and Television Act (consolidated version)

© European Audiovisual Observatory (Council of Europe) 2026

© European Audiovisual Observatory (Council of Europe) 2026