[BA] Regulatory Agency Proposes Limitation of Advertising in Public Service Broadcasting

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The Regulatorna agencija za komunikacije (Communications Regulatory Agency) published a draft Codex Amending the Codex on Commercial Communications (Official Gazette of BiH, No. 98/11 and 94/12) in the summer of 2013.

According to Article 1 of the draft, Article 21 of the Codex should be changed and should read as follows:

- “Advertising spots and teleshopping for public radio and television services will last maximally four minutes per one hour in television programmes and maximally six minutes per hour in radio programmes.”

According to Article 2 of the draft, the amended Codex shall enter into force eight days after its publication in the Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina and shall be applied as of 1 January 2014.

The draft was harshly criticised by national public service broadcasters. Namely, if implemented, some 2,000 employees currently working in BHRT, a country-wide public broadcaster, plus two entity public broadcasters RTFBiH and RTRS, would lose their jobs due to the expected decrease of revenue from advertising. The yearly income derived from advertising amounts to BAM 8 to 10 million (~ EUR 4 to 5 million).

The reform has been supported by the commercial broadcasters who claim it will improve the dual system of broadcasting in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which complies with European media standards. International representatives criticised the draft and suggested that a new study on the effects of this reform should be conducted before the Codex should enter into force.

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