[BG] Reduction of Public Television State Funding in 2014

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The State budget subsidy for the national public service media provider, Bulgarian National Television ('BNT'), has been reduced by nearly BGN 5 million (EUR 2.5 million) for 2014 as compared to 2013 figures. In 2014, BNT shall receive BGN 65.15 million from the State as compared to the sum of BGN 70.13 million in 2013. Under point 3 of Article 70 (3) of the Radio and Television Act ('RTA') the budget of the public television is funded by means of a State budget subsidy.

The Members of the Bulgarian Parliament have passed in plenary session the reduced amount of the BNT State funding notwithstanding the protest of the public media representatives during the sitting of the Culture and Media Committee, which is one of the Standing Committees of the 42nd National Assembly. The BNT representatives did not convince the Assembly with their argument of urgently needing at least the funding level of 2013 in view of the high costs of the forthcoming digitisation process and the production of own television content.

The immediate effect of that reduction was that BNT has suspended its participation in the Eurovision Song Contest in order to save the required participation fee, the amount of which has been increased by 100% as compared to 2005 (the year in which Bulgaria took part for the first time in the contest). In the light of the expenses involved in this project and the forthcoming reduction in the 2014 budget, the suspension of participation in Eurovision is said to be the initial step in a series of savings that will have to be made.

The 2014 State Budget Act of the Republic of Bulgaria was adopted by the National Assembly on 9 December 2013 and was promulgated in the State Gazette No. 109 of 20 December 2013.

Закон за държавния бюджет на република България

http://dv.parliament.bg/DVWeb/showMaterialDV.jsp?idMat=81175

2014 State Budget Act

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