[LT] Lithuania Bans Advertising in LRT Programmes

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On 1 January 2015, the Act amending the Act on the Lithuanian National Radio and Television (public service broadcaster LRT) came into force. This amendment was adopted by the LR Seimas (the Lithuanian Parliament) on 23 December 2013.

The amended act stipulates that advertising is prohibited on all the LRT programmes, except in cases when LRT is obliged to broadcast commercial communication as a part of a contractual obligation concerning the acquisition or marketing of rights for broadcasting international events. In addition, under the amendments to be soon enforced, LRT radio and television programmes shall also not be sponsored. However, it should be noted that the prohibition is not absolute, as the amended law foresees exceptions where sponsorship is allowed. The exceptions are permitted for cultural and sports events and/or broadcasts intended to promote cultural, sporting, social or educational activities and initiatives.

It is determined that LRT shall be funded from an allocation of the State Budget, income obtained for the marketing of radio and television broadcasts, sponsorship announcements, publishing, as well as support and income derived from commercial and economic activities.

The amendment determines that the yearly amount of the LRT funding from the State Budget shall be comprised of 1.5 percent of the preceding year’s actual revenues from the income tax and 1.3 percent from the excise revenues, as later specified in the Act of 8 May 2014 amending the Act on the Lithuanian National Radio and Television.

The amount of the LRT funding to be allocated from the State Budget for 2015, which is estimated to reach EUR 29,964,666, shall be based on the State Budget revenues from the income tax and the excise revenues received in 2012.

Each subsequent year, the LRT funding allocations shall be no less than the amount calculated in accordance with all of the 2012 State Budget revenues from the personal income tax and the excise revenues.

It is expected that the amended act will ensure a long-term, stable and adequate funding of the public service broadcaster, which for a long time was one of the lowest funded broadcasters among the European public service broadcasters.

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http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter3/dokpaieska.showdoc_l?p_id=463447&p_tr2=2

Act from 23 December 2013 amending the Law on the Lithuanian National Radio and Television

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Act from 8 May 2014 amending the Law on the Lithuanian National Radio and Television

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