[BG] 2015 budget on financing of broadcasting, media supervision and film aid adopted

IRIS 2015-2:1/7

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On 19 December 2014, the Bulgarian Parliament adopted the 2015 State Budget Act, which regulates, among other things: state financing of public service broadcasting, the media supervisory body (Council for Electronic Media), and Bulgarian film-making. Despite strong opposition, particularly from public service broadcasters who also boycotted the meeting of the Parliamentary Committee for Culture and Media, Parliament approved the cut in budgetary funding for public service broadcasting and the Council for Electronic Media without any amendments.

The state budget is the primary source of funding for public service radio and television broadcasters. Article 70(3)(1) of the Bulgarian Broadcasting Act stipulates that the money should mainly be channelled through a fund set up especially for this purpose. However, this fund, which is supposed to be financed from licence fee revenue in order to protect the independence of public service broadcasting, has not yet been set up.

For 2015, the budget for Bulgarian National Television (BNT) will therefore remain at the reduced level of BGN 65.15 million. Last year's budget was BGN 5 million (EUR 2.5 million) lower than it has been in previous years (see IRIS 2014-2/6).

The Council for Electronic Media is funded exclusively from the state budget. For 2015, it will only receive BGN 1.2 million (EUR 600,000), which is a significant decrease from the previous budget of BGN 1.3 million. At the meeting of the Parliamentary Committee for Culture and Media, the budgetary reduction as well as the low, inadequate level of funding for BNT were criticised by the chairman of the Council for Electronic Media who, according to the minutes of the meeting, said that the reduced budgets for both the media supervisory body and BNT prevented them from properly fulfilling their respective remits.

State film aid to promote Bulgarian film-making was the only increase for 2015, rising from BGN 12.7 million to BGN 13.7 million.

Закон за държавния бюджет

http://dv.parliament.bg/DVWeb/showMaterialDV.jsp;jsessionid=2B718179ADFF51EE2B737C5070ED902C?idMat=90900

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2015 State Budget Act

Протокол от заседание на Парламентарната комисия по културата и медиите от 4 Декември 2014 г.

http://www.parliament.bg/bg/parliamentarycommittees/members/2343/steno/ID/3425

Minutes of the meeting of the Parliamentary Committee for Culture and Media of 4 December 2014

Декларация на Българската Национална Телевизия и Българското Национално Радио от 4 Декември 2014 г.

http://bnt.bg/about-bnt/presinformatsiya/deklaratsiya-na-ba-lgarskata-natsionalna-televiziya-i-ba-lgarskoto-natsionalno-radio

Joint declaration of Bulgarian National Television and Bulgarian National Radio of 4 December 2014

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