[UA] Act on international broadcasting service adopted

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On 8 December 2015, the Ukrainian Supreme Rada (Parliament) adopted the Act «On the international broadcasting system in Ukraine» (Про систему іномовлення в Україні). The document creates a legal basis for the activities of the state-run company of broadcasting abroad.

The new law is considered one of the stages of the international service broadcasting reform undertaken by the newly-established Ministry of Information Policy of Ukraine.

According to this act, the international broadcasting system of Ukraine comprises the Ukrainian National Information Agency "Ukrinform", established in 1918, and the "Multimedia International Broadcasting Platform of Ukraine" (MPIU), a state enterprise just established on the basis of the World Service of the state-run Ukrainian Radio and Television Broadcasting Company.

The act stipulates that the state-run channel "Ukraine Tomorrow" (UATV) will predominantly be broadcast in English (broadcasting in other languages shall not exceed the threshold of 50 percent). Selecting other languages for broadcasting will be based on meeting the needs of Ukrainian diasporas and foreign viewers interested in "obtaining objective and comprehensive information originating in Ukraine". The act provides for a distribution of programmes and other materials via satellite, electronic broadcast channels and online.

UATV was actually launched on 1 October 2015. Today the channel broadcasts from three satellites in 4 languages: English, Ukrainian, Russian, and Crimean Tatar. It was established to inform foreign audiences about current events in Ukraine, activities of state agencies, to protect national interests beyond Ukraine, to support positive image of Ukraine in the world, as well as to provide a platform for discussion about the Ukrainian authorities' official position on important issues in politics, economics and culture and to promote mutual understanding and exchange of ideas between different cultures and nations. The footprint of the new TV channel broadcasting is supposed to include the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine.

Monitoring the foreign broadcaster's compliance with the principles of freedom of expression and international standards of information exchange is imposed by the Law on the newly created Supervisory Board of the MPIU.

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According to the act, UATV and MPIU will be financed from the state budget as well as from the other sources including content sale, sponsorship, and advertising (except for political advertising and advertising of alcohol).

Закон України «Про систему іномовлення України»

http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/856-19

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