

## [SE] More Commercials during Prime Time in Television

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The Swedish Parliament has accepted the Government's proposal to increase the advertising limit on private commercial television, as laid down in the Radio and TV Act, during prime time. The amendment to the Act is the result of negotiations between the Government and TV4 on the status of the 16 local TV stations which broadcast under the licence and the editorial responsibility of TV4.

On the basis of the Radio and TV Act, TV4 has been licensed by the Government as Sweden's sole terrestrial private commercial TV channel. Until 1 January 1997 it was under the obligation to maintain editorial offices and staff on different locations in the country (an obligation which TV4 fulfilled by establishing 16 private local TV stations (see IRIS 1997-2: 12). Many of the 16 local stations have been loss making, and since the previous obligation no longer exists in the new licence, TV4 has planned to shut down some of the stations.

In spite of the wording in the new licence, the Government believes that TV4 has a responsibility to decentralise its programming. Therefore, in order to compensate TV4 for the economic losses, the Government and TV4 came to a compromise in which the Government undertakes to amend the Radio and TV Act in order to allow TV4 to broadcast more advertisements during prime time, which will open up a somewhat bigger source of revenue for TV4. Thus, the increase of the total amount of advertising time will benefit all Swedish private commercial TV channels.

