[GB] British TV broadcasters take precautions against Brexit

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In a referendum on 23 June 2016, 51.89% of UK voters decided that their country should leave the European Union. The precise conditions of the United Kingdom's departure are still being negotiated. Only recently - on 15 January 2019 - did the British Parliament reject the Brexit agreement that Prime Minister Theresa May had negotiated with the European Union by 432 votes to 202. Fears of a 'no deal' or 'hard' Brexit without an agreement to govern the future relationship between the European Union and the United Kingdom are therefore growing.

A 'hard Brexit' would have a significant impact on the audiovisual media industry in Europe, since 29% of all European television channels are based in Great Britain. As well as numerous other related issues such as the portability or licensing of audiovisual content, if the provisions of the Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD), on which the regulation of the European television market is based, are ditched and not replaced, there will be serious consequences for the European television market. Of particular note is the 'country of origin' principle, enshrined in the AVMSD, which enables a service provider established in an EU member state to provide its services in other EU member states without having to meet requirements other than those applicable in its country of origin.

For these reasons in particular, many British broadcasters are currently looking to lay down roots and acquire licences in other EU countries.

On 20 December 2018, for example, the British-licensed streaming service DAZN applied to the Medienanstalt Berlin-Brandenburg (Berlin-Brandenburg Media Authority) for a licence for its channels DAZN 1 Bar HD and DAZN 2 Bar HD, which would be valid in Germany, Austria, Italy and Spain. Turner Broadcasting System and NBC Universal Global Networks also want to move to Germany - to Bavaria, to be precise. They recently applied to the Bayerische Landeszentrale für neue Medien (Bavarian New Media Authority - BLM) for licences to broadcast special-interest TV channels TCM (Ireland/Malta), TCM (Greece), TCM (France), WBTV (France), TNT (Poland) and TNT (Romania), as well as Syfy, E! Entertainment (French feed), 13 Ulica, SCIFI, DIVA and E! Entertainment (EURA feed). All the licences were granted subject to the approval of the Kommission für Zulassung und Aufsicht (Commission on Licensing and Supervision - ZAK) of the regional media authorities, whose decision is still pending.

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According to media reports, the BBC, on the other hand, intends to look for a suitable base in Belgium, Ireland or the Netherlands from where it will apply for EU licences for channels including BBC World, BBC Entertainment, BBC First and BBC Earth.

Discovery Communications will open its European headquarters in the Netherlands for its pay-TV channels and will therefore apply for EU licences in the Netherlands for its pay-TV services across Europe.

Pressemitteilung der BLM vom 14. Dezember 2018

https://www.blm.de/infothek/pressemitteilungen/2018-12-14-erste-brexit-lizenzen-fuer-tv-spartenprogramme-von-turner-und-nbc-blm-praesident-schneider-weitere-staerkung-des-medienstandorts-bayern-11018

BLM press release of 14 December 2018

KEK - DAZN-Verfahrensstatus

https://www.kek-online.de/medienkonzentration/verfahren/kek-996/

KEK - DAZN Procedural status

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