

[AM] Audiovisual Statute introduced

IRIS 2021-1:1/2

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On 5 August 2020, the President of the Republic of Armenia signed into law the statute “On Audiovisual media”, adopted on 16 July 2020 by the National Assembly (the parliament). The new statute invalidates the Law on Television and Radio of 9 October 2000 (IRIS 2001-2:1/9). It takes as a model the AVMSD of the European Union.

The new statute regulates the governance, financing and remit of the national public broadcaster; the formation and powers of the independent audiovisual media regulator (Commission on Television and Radio); the notification procedures for the “authorisation” of broadcasters; the procedures for tenders and the licensing of slots in the existing public digital multiplex, as well as for licensing network operators (such as cable companies); and the notification procedures for the distribution of audiovisual programmes by the relevant distributors.

Article 4 of the statute bans the censorship of audiovisual information. The statute defines the public multiplex as “the digital broadcasting network being the property of the company, with 100 percent property of the Republic of Armenia” (Article 3), and defines its pivotal role in the country's audiovisual sector. Private multiplexes shall be licensed and established when relevant frequencies are available.

Article 7 of the statute provides for measures that broadcasters must adopt to ensure the reliability of the information in their audiovisual programmes. They shall ensure the right of reply, as well as appropriate notices when news and other information originates from anonymous sources or when the authenticity has not been sufficiently verified from other sources. Broadcasters are mandated to use the notices "Live", "Repetition", and "Archive" in relevant cases.

The new statute entered into force on 7 August 2020.

A number of national media NGOs criticised the new statute in its draft form, as it does not solve the problem of 10 local TV stations that were left out of the digital switchover, and it does not establish grounds for a reform of the public broadcaster.

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<https://www.arlis.am/documentview.aspx?docid=145079>

On Audiovisual Media. Statute of the Republic of Armenia, N ZR-395

ԱՅՏԱՐԱՐՈՒԹՅՈՒՆ: **Առաջին ընթերցմամբ ընդունված «Տեսալսողական մեդիայի մասին» օրենքի նախագծի շուրջ մտահոգությունների կապակցությամբ**

<https://ypc.am/hy/statements/hnլիսի-8-2020/>

Statement: Concerns over the first reading of the Law on Audiovisual Media

