

Ensuring transparency of media ownership

On 3 September 2015, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine adopted the Law on changes in relation to ensuring transparency of media ownership and realization of principles of state policy in the areas of television and radio. The Law becomes effective on 1 October 2015.

Pursuant to the changes, the Law obliges information activity subjects (television and radio broadcasters and programme service providers):

- to disclose information on the actual ownership structure and provide information on the ultimate beneficiary owner (controller) of the company;
- to announce information on the actual owners of television and radio broadcasters and programme service providers on their websites.

In addition, the Law prohibits establishment and activity of television and radio broadcasters whose shareholders are legal entities registered in the offshore zones specified by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine.

Television and radio broadcasters, which are not in breach of requirements in relation to disclosure of the actual owners, have preferences on tenders for licenses from the National Council of Television and Radio Broadcasting of Ukraine.

The adopted Law will contribute to the matter of transparency of ownership of television and radio broadcasters and programme service providers. The Law also introduces more exact and transparent procedures in relation to licensing by the National Council of Television and Radio Broadcasting of Ukraine.