

(Unofficial translation, legal authenticity remains with original Norwegian version)

Act relating to financial support for the media (The Media Support Act)

LOV-2020-12-18-153

Entry into force: 1 January 2021

Chapter 1. General provisions

Section 1 Purpose

The purpose of this Act is to promote a diversity of editor-controlled journalistic media throughout Norway by contributing to predictable financial frameworks for media activity and increased independence in managing the media support.

Section 2 Geographical scope

The Act also applies in Svalbard. The King may issue regulations that lay down special rules out of regard for local conditions.

Section 3 Four-year governing signals for the media support

The Government will propose fixed, long-term financial frameworks for NRK (Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation) and direct grant schemes for media support through four-year governing signals. Proposed governing signals will be submitted to the Storting in a budget proposal in the year following elections to the Storting.

Chapter 2. Direct media support schemes

Section 4 Regulations relating to the grant schemes for direct media support

The Ministry may issue regulations relating to the grant schemes for direct media support within the frameworks pursuant to this chapter.

Section 5 Production grant for news and current affairs media

The production grant for news and current affairs media is to encourage a diversity of text-based news and current affairs media throughout Norway, with a broad journalistic content aimed at the general public. The scheme is also to promote independent journalism of a high quality, particularly in news and current affairs media in markets that are too small to be viable, or in news and current affairs media that function as alternatives to the leading news media in the different media markets.

The production grant is given as an operating grant. The conditions for receiving a grant must be as objective as possible and contribute to predictability for those receiving the grant.

Section 6 Production grant to Sami news and current affairs media

The production grant for Sami news and current affairs media is to facilitate democratic debate and opinion formation in the Sami community and encourage production of a broad journalistic content aimed at the Sami population. The scheme should also promote further development of the Sami languages. Grants may be given to news media that have the Sami population as their main target group, or that regularly publish news and current affairs content in a Sami language.

The grant is given as an operating grant. The conditions for receiving a grant must be as objective as possible and contribute to predictability for those receiving the grant.

Section 7 Innovation and development grants

Innovation and development grants are to promote media diversity and an enlightened public discussion by encouraging editorial, content-focused innovation and development in news and current affairs media, particularly in small, local media.

Section 8 Grants for local audio and visual media

The grant scheme is to promote media diversity and freedom of speech and strengthen the local audio and visual media's democratic function in society, by encouraging a wide range of high-quality contents, digitalisation, innovation, competence development, cooperation between different local media and an economically viable operations basis for local audio and visual media.

Section 9 Distribution grants for newspapers in Finnmark

The distribution grant scheme for newspapers in Finnmark is to facilitate a diversity of newspapers by reducing the distribution costs for paper-based news and current affairs media in this region.

Chapter 3. The Norwegian Media Authority and the Media Appeals Board

Section 10 The Norwegian Media Authority's duties in managing media support

The Norwegian Media Authority processes applications, makes decisions on allocation of grants, disburses grants and audits the use of granted funds in accordance with the grant schemes for direct media support, cf. chapter 2.

The Norwegian Media Authority disburses grants to NRK in accordance with the Storting's budgetary decisions.

The Norwegian Media Authority manages the funds for commercial public service broadcasting in accordance with the Storting's budgetary decisions and the agreement on commercial public service broadcasting in effect at the time.

Section 11 Authority to issue instructions and re-examine decisions

The King cannot instruct the Norwegian Media Authority or the Media Appeals Board regarding decisions in individual cases, nor may the King change the Norwegian Media Authority's or the Media Appeals Board's decisions or make decisions in a case that comes under their authority according to regulations pursuant to this Act.

The Media Appeals Board is the correct appeals board for individual decisions made by the Norwegian Media Authority with regard to grants according to regulations pursuant to this Act.

Section 12 Legal action

Legal action regarding a decision by the Norwegian Media Authority pursuant to this Act, must be directed against the State, represented by the Norwegian Media Authority.

Legal action regarding a decision by the Media Appeals Board pursuant to this Act, must be directed against the State, represented by the Media Appeals Board.

Chapter 4. Entry into force

Section 13 Entry into force

This Act enters into force from a date¹ determined by the King.

¹ 1 January 2021