

# Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/ukraine-presidential-aide-acquires-big-14-02-2013,44074.html>

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Europe/Ex-USSR - Ukraine

Conflict of interest

## Presidential aide acquires big stake in leading TV station

14 February 2013

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Reporters Without Borders is disturbed by the news that the head of the presidential administration, Serhiy Liovochkin, has acquired a 20 per cent stake in Inter Media Group, the company that owns *Inter TV*, one of Ukraine's most popular TV stations.

"Liovochkin's acquisition of a stake in Inter Media Group means that one of the owners of Ukraine's most watched TV stations is now one of the most senior figures in the government, and this is clearly a conflict of interest," Reporters Without Borders said.

"*Inter TV* has made significant efforts in recent months to be editorially more independent and we will be waiting to see whether this continues. We will hold the head of the presidential administration responsible for any drastic change in *Inter TV*'s editorial policies."

Founded in 1996 and now one of the leading TV stations, *Inter TV* was long regarded as a supporter of the current government but its editorial policies suddenly changed after last October's disputed parliamentary elections.

Its news coverage became more nuanced. The various political currents began receiving a fairer allocation of airtime. And the station launched "Spravedlyvist," a political talk-show with a direct and outspoken style that is hosted by the journalist **Anna Bezulyk**.

One of Inter Media Group's biggest shareholders, former first deputy prime minister Valeriy Khoroshkovsky, announced on 1 February that [he had sold his entire stake to the businessman Dmitry Firtash](#). Then, the Ukrainian media reported on 7 February that Liovochkin had acquired 20 per cent of the company.

Ukraine is ranked 126th out of 179 countries in the [2013 Reporters Without Borders press freedom index](#).

(Picture: *Inter TV*)

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