



NEWSLETTER

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Agency Holds Bilateral Meeting with BiH Communications Regulatory Agency



On 17 and 18 May 2018, the Agency was the host of a two-day visit by representatives of the Communications Regulatory Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The topics discussed at the meeting of the two regulatory bodies included the competences, the license- awarding procedures, the broadcasting license fees, the process of regulating the on-demand audiovisual media services, changes to the ownership structure, the detecting of illicit media concentration, etc.

On this occasion, the two agencies exchanged experiences regarding the implementation of the rules for audiovisual commercial communications – product placement and sponsorship, in particular – the activities and measures for ensuring access to programmes for persons with sensory impairments, as well as the standards regulating minors' depiction in the news and their participation in other programmes. Special attention was dedicated to the experiences regarding regulation and conducting of media contents monitoring during electoral processes.

At the end of the two-day visit, the agencies agreed on holding another meeting in the autumn, at which they would sign a memorandum of cooperation, with the aim of contributing to the expansion and enhancing of mutual relations and exchange of experiences in the sphere of media regulation.



Guidelines for Monitoring Programming Concept Implementation Adopted

In May, the Agency adopted the “Guidelines for Monitoring Implementation of the Programming Concept”. The need for the Guidelines arose from the ad hoc supervision conducted to monitor the observance of Article 67, Paragraph 6, of the Law on Audio and Audiovisual Media Services, as it showed that it was necessary to explain the way of calculating if the broadcaster has carried out 80 % of the programming concept, for which it had received its license, within one week. The public debate on this document was held in the period from 23 until 30 April 2018, and all interested parties were given an opportunity to take part and send their proposals to the Agency. The “Guidelines for Monitoring Implementation of the Programming Concept” are available at www.avmu.mk.

World Press Freedom Day Marked

Marking the Press Freedom Day, 3 May, the Agency underlined that only independent media, free from all kinds of pressure, may contribute to the development of democratic and prosperous societies. Freedom of expression is the foundation of modern democracies, and only through ensuring conditions for unhindered and independent work of the media may progress be achieved. This is precisely why journalists must not be targets of the political or economic centres of power, due to their work. On the other hand, it should be borne in mind that freedom of expression must not be abused and that media have an obligation to respect the professional journalist and ethical principles.

As regards the situation of the media in Macedonia, based on the latest reports of the international organizations, a small progress has been noted in the past year. Just as before, the Agency will continue its proactive role in the sphere of promoting professional standards and increasing the awareness of the media about their role and responsibility in society and before the citizens.

Agency Notes Failure to Report on the “Republic of Macedonia Erga Omnes” Protest against the Name Change

The Agency informed the public, by means of a Press Release, about the fact that, on 26 April 2018, most of the national television stations had not reported on the protest against the name change, titled “Republic of Macedonia Erga Omnes”. It stressed that, although media create their editorial policies autonomously and independently, bearing in mind their specific role, they are also obligated to inform the public on issues of relevance for society. This is the way to promote a broader debate as one of the basic foundations of democratic societies.

Radio Slobodna Makedonija’s Broadcasting License Withdrawn

Due to failure to ensure the minimum staffing conditions, which is a requirement laid down in the Law on Audio and Audiovisual Media Services and the Rulebook on Minimum Technical, Spatial, Financial and Staffing Requirements for obtaining a Radio or Television Broadcasting License, the Agency withdraw the national-level broadcasting license from Radio Slobodna Macedonia.



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Supervision over Broadcasters, OPECN and Print Media

Broadcasters

In May, the Agency conducted a regular programme supervision over the RFM Radio from Skopje, to verify if the broadcaster had been carrying out at least 80 % of the programming concept outlined in the license, on a weekly basis. The one-week analysis of the entire programme aired in the week from 23 until 29 April 2018, showed that the above broadcaster had not met this legal obligation.

The Agency also conducted an ad hoc administrative supervision over 34 broadcasters (TV Nova Gevgelija, TV Kochani-LD, TV Plus, TV Alfa, TV Tera, TV Zdravkin, TV Sitel 2, TV Skopje, TV Kanal 5, TV Svet, TV M, TV Spektra, TV Anisa, TV Dibra, Plej Radio, Radio Akord, Radio Kiss, Radio Red FM, Radio Ekspres, Super Radio, Radio Medison, Radio Plus, Radio Fama, Radio Pela, Radio Goldi, Radio Merak, Radio Valandovo, Radio Kochani, Radio La Kosta, Radio Modea, Skaj Radio, Radio Zora, Kapitol FM and Radio Balkan FM), concerning their observance of the obligations arising from the Rulebook on Minimum Technical, Spatial, Financial and Staffing Conditions required for obtaining a radio or television broadcasting license. The supervision found that the above broadcasters had met the minimum staffing conditions stipulated by the above-mentioned Rulebook.

With the aim of verifying if Skaj Radio Plus had acted upon the previously issued warning measure due to disregard for the obligation to submit a duly filled-in form on its ownership structure, editors and financing sources in 2017, the Agency conducted a control administrative supervision over the above broadcaster. The supervision showed that Skaj Radio Plus had met the obligation in full.

Due to the detected disregard for the obligation to submit written reports regarding the fulfillment of the requirements set forth in their radio broadcasting licenses until 31 March 2018, the Agency imposed warning measures against 31 broadcasters (RA 106, Radio Antena 5, Radio B-97, Radio Balkan FM, Radio Endjels, Radio Lajf, Radio La Kosta, Radio Pela, Radio Meff, Skaj Radio Plus, Radio Slobodna Makedonija, Super Radio, Univerzitetsko Radio UGD FM, TV Drini, TV G-TV, TV Kanal 21, TV Kanal Vis, Nasha TV, TV Orbis, TV Plus, TV Shutel, TV Sitel 2, TV Alsat-M, TV Uskana Eden, TV Art Channel, TV Gurra, TV Moris, TV Topestrada, TV Kaltrina, TV Kobra i na TV Uskana Media).

Warning measures were also issued against TV Gurra, TV Orbis and Skaj Radio Plus for having disregarded the obligation to publish data about their ownership structure, responsible editor/s and financing sources in 2017, the 2017 revenues and expenditures, and against Makedonska Radiotelevizija – Makedonsko Radio, due to failure to publish an Impressum.

Operators of Public Electronic Communication Networks

The Agency conducted regular programme supervision over the VIVA NET, KABEL-L-NE, KDS-VT, KOMBO 2003, SIGNAL-NET, MULTIMEDIJA NETWORK and TELENET KOM concerning their observance of the legal provisions requiring registration of the programming services with the Agency and subtitling in Macedonian or the language of the community that does not constitute a majority in the Republic of Macedonia. The supervision found that KOMBO 2003, SIGNAL-NET and TELENET KOM had been retransmitting programming services that had not been covered by the programming service registration certificates issued by the Agency. Due to this they were ordered to terminate the retransmission of the disputed programming services. The remaining cable operators had been acting in tune with the provisions laid down in the LAAVMS.

The Agency conducted regular programme supervision over the work of ONE.VIP cable operator regarding its observance of the legal provisions concerning cinematographic works, minors' protection and promoting production and access to European Works. The supervision found that this cable operator had acted in line with the LAAVMS provisions.

Print Media

In May, the Agency conducted control administrative supervision over the "Hrana i Vino" Magazine, in order to verify if the publisher of this print media outlet had acted upon the warning measure issued due to its failure to publish data about its headquarters, editors, printing plant and print or reprint date. The supervision found that the above-mentioned print media publisher had removed its violation of the relevant Media Law provisions.

Control administrative supervision was also conducted over the VIZIONI M Cultural Association, the publisher of "Shenja" Magazine, to verify if the latter had acted upon the Agency's decision to issue it a warning measure due to failure to publish an Impressum. The supervision found that the print media publisher had acted upon the Decision on Issuing a Warning Measure in full.

