



## NEWSLETTER

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### Publications on “Media Literacy Policy” and on “Media Regulatory Authorities and the Protection of Minors” Launched



On 17 June 2019, the Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services held its Second Public Meeting in 2019. On this occasion, Director Zoran Trajchevski presented the activities carried out in the past quarter in line with the Annual Work Programme: monitoring of the media coverage of the election campaigns for the presidential and early local elections, supervisions over the broadcasters, the print media publishers, the operators of public electronic communication networks, the providers of on-demand audiovisual media services, the pronounced public warning measures and the activities in the international sphere.

At the meeting, the Agency launched two publications – the “Media Literacy Policy” and the “Media Regulatory Authorities and the Protection of Minors” – prepared within the frameworks of the joint project of the European Union and the Council of Europe on “Enhancing Judicial Expertise for Freedom of Expression and the Media in Southeast Europe” (JUFREX). The publication “Media Literacy Policy” was prepared by the Secretary General of EAVI, Paolo Celot, for the needs of the Agency, and the same constitutes a roadmap for the further development of media literacy in Macedonian society, taking into account the citizens as its end users. It is printed in Macedonian, Albanian and in English.

The publication titled “Media Regulatory Authorities and the Protection of Minors” is to contribute, among other things, to a more comprehensive understanding of the concept of protecting juvenile audience from harmful content in the audiovisual media services, the role of the national regulatory bodies in this sphere, and the need to involve various stakeholders in order to ensure safe environment both on the Internet and outside of it, as well as to offer a starting point for making recommendations and creating mechanisms for the protection of minors, and to facilitate further efforts and initiatives. This edition is a useful and important tool in the further activities not only of the regulator, but also as part of the discourse of all stakeholders in society.

### Press Releases

On 5 June 2019, the public was notified, as a result of some investigative journalism, about the simultaneous engagement of two journalists as advisers to Prime Minister Zoran Zaev, although they had been actively employed in two different television stations. Taking these information into account, the Agency pointed out that the role of the media was to be critics of the government and its correctors, and that, in this context, it was necessary that the government, when hiring staff, bore in mind that they should ensure editors, journalists and other authors' independence, autonomy and responsibility in their creating of the programmes and the editorial policies. This is an important premise for ensuring objective and unbiased reporting that provides equal treatment of diverse viewpoints, so that the public could freely build their opinion about the developments and events in our society. At a time when our country is making efforts to increase media professionalism and freedom of information, this kind of dual engagement may pose an obstacle to setting professional detachment when informing the public and may jeopardize the freedom of expression. The Agency also brought this to the attention of both Prime Minister Zoran Zaev and the two television stations concerned.

On 21 June 2019, the Agency reacted, by issuing a press release, against the threats addressed to journalist Branko Geroski. On this occasion, the Agency stressed once again that any attempts at preventing the freedom of expression was unacceptable. Journalists and media must be left to do their job professionally, while all entities, institutions and the public in general should accept the fact that freedom of expression implies diverse viewpoints regardless of whether one likes them or not.

### Report on the Implementation of the 2016-2018 Programme for Ensuring Access to Media for Persons with Disabilities Adopted

At its 25<sup>th</sup> session held on 17 June 2019, the Agency Council adopted the [Report on the 2018-2018 Programme for Ensuring Access to Media for Persons with Sensory Impairments](#).

The report covers all activities that the regulatory authority had conducted in line with the two-year Programme, as well as activities that are to contribute to improving programmes' accessibility for persons with disabilities in the foreseeable future.



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### Report on Media Ownership in 2018 Prepared

With the aim of increasing the transparency of media ownership structure, the Agency prepared a Report on the Media Ownership.

The Report contains data about the owners of the broadcasters and the print media, information about the changes to the broadcasters' ownership structure and the integration of capital among the broadcasters in 2018, as well as the activities that the Agency had carried out in 2018 towards preventing illicit media concentration.

### Supervisions over Broadcasters, Print Media and Operators of PECN

#### Broadcasters

Regular administrative supervision was conducted over Sonce TV concerning the requirement to submit a written report on its observance of the obligations specified in the radio/television broadcasting license by 31 March 2019 at the latest – the implementation of the programming concept in particular. The supervision showed no violations.

In the line of its duty, the Agency conducted ad hoc administrative supervision over TV Iris, TV Kanal 21 Veles, Radio B-97, Radio Hit FM, Radio Modea, Skaj Radio Plus, Radio BI-KI-AL, Radio Arachina, Radio Albana Plus, Radio 5 Choki and Radio Balkan FM, concerning their observance of the obligations specified in the Rulebook on Minimum Technical, Spatial, Financial and Staffing Conditions Required to Obtain a Radio or Television Broadcasting License. The supervision showed that the broadcasters had acted in line with the Rulebook. An ad hoc programme supervision was conducted over Televizija Kochani LD, concerning the rules that apply to transmission of cinematic works. The supervision found that Televizija Kochani LD had aired the movies The Mule, Silent Venom and Maximum Conviction beyond the period specified in the contracts concluded with the rights' holders, which is contrary to Article 49 of the LAAVMS.

Ad hoc administrative supervision was conducted over all broadcasters that air radio and TV programmes, in order to establish if any of them had changed their ownership structure without having notified the Agency before that. The supervision showed that none of broadcasters had made changes to the ownership structure without having notified the Agency previously and without it having been approved by the Agency.

The Agency conducted control administrative supervision over the Kompani 21-M TV, in order to verify if the latter had acted upon the Agency's Decision to impose a Public Warning Measure due to a failure to publish an Impressum. The supervision found that the broadcaster had acted in line with the legal provision of the Media Law. After the imposed public warning measures, the Agency conducted control supervision over Telma TV and Kompani 21-M TV. The supervision over Telma TV referred to the obligation to publish Impressum and protect minors from content that may harm their development. Control supervision concerning minors' protection was also conducted over Kompani 21-M TV. Both TV stations had acted in full upon the public warning measures. Control supervision was conducted over TV Due from Gostivar as well, in order to establish if it had acted upon the public warning issued to it due to failure to ensure transparency of its operations. The supervision showed that it had met in full the obligation arising from the Media Law. After the imposed public warning measure against the BI-KI-AL Radio from Bitola, control supervision was conducted concerning the obligation to submit data about the ownership structure, the editorship and the financing sources in 2018, as well as the total of revenues and expenditures realized in the previous year. The supervision showed that this legal obligation had been met as well.

#### Public Warning Measures Imposed against Broadcasters

In June 2019, the Agency Council adopted a total of 23 Decisions on imposing public warning measures against the following broadcasters: Nasha TV, TV Due, TV Iris, TV Gurra, TV Topestrada, TV Kanal Vizija, TV Kanal 21, TV Klan Makedonija, TV Kanal Vis, Radio B-97, RFM Radio, Radio Pela, Lajf Radio, Radio Holidej, Radio Albana Plus, Eko Radio, Radio Kochani, Radio Lav, Hit Radio, Radio Bi-Ki-Al, Radio 106, Radio Kapitol FM and Radio La Kosta. These broadcasters were handed public warnings due to their failure to submit written reports in accordance with the requirements of the radio and TV broadcasting licenses, and information about the technical means they use to transmit or retransmit their programming services in the state or beyond, thus failing to meet the obligations stipulated by the Media Law. The broadcasters have a 45-day deadline to harmonize their work with the law, after which the Agency will conduct control supervision.



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### Print Media

The Agency also conducted regular administrative supervision with regard to the Impressum-related obligations over MEDIA PRES VM DOOEL uvoz-izvoz Bitola, publisher of "Bitolski vesnik" (Bitola Newspaper); GLOBAL MEDIA DOOEL uvoz-izvoz Skopje, publisher of the "Unique" and "Auto Focus" magazines; AMPTEAM DOOEL export-import Skopje, publisher of the "M Magazin/ Avto Plus"; EURO-MAK KOMPANI DOO uvoz-izvoz Shtip, publisher of the "Ekonomija i biznis" (Economy and Business) magazine; ANTIC MEDIA DOOEL Skopje, publisher of the "Portret" (Portrait) magazine; MEDIUM BOJA 43 DOOEL uvoz-izvoz Shtip, publisher of the "Shtipski glas" (Shtip's voice) newspaper; KOLOR MEDIA PLUS DOO Skopje, publisher of the "Ruski doktor" (Russian Doctor), "Ubavina i zdravje" (Beauty and Health) and "Dobra Hrana" (Good Food) magazines; BIRO PRES DOO Skopje, publisher of the "Porta 3" magazine, and VIZIONI M Skopje, publisher of the "Shenja" magazine. The supervision showed that the publishers had met this obligation, specified in the Media Law, in full.

Regular administrative supervision regarding the obligation to publish data about the headquarters, editorial office, print date, date of printing and circulation, as stipulated by the Media Law, was conducted over the following print media publishers: REPRO PRINT DOOEL – the "Nova Makedonija" (New Macedonia) daily; SLOBODEN PECHAT DOO – "Sloboden pechat" (Free press) daily; VECHER PRES DOOEL – "Večer" (Evening) daily; KOHA PRODUCTION DOO – "Koha" daily; KAPITAL MEDIA GROUP DOO – "Kapital" weekly; MEDIA PLUS FOKUS DOOEL Skopje – "Fokus" weekly; JENI BALKAN DOOEL – "Jeni Balkan Haftal'k Bilten" newspaper; ATV MEDIA KOMPANI – "Lajm" daily, and INDEPENDENT BALKAN NJUS AGENSI DOO – "Nezavisen vesnik" (Independent Paper) daily. The supervision showed that the publishers had met the obligation arising from the Media Law in full.

### Operators of Public Electronic Communication Networks

Regular programme supervision was conducted over the following cable operators: Kabel AS KTV from Makedonski Brod, Biv Piramida from Delchevo, Signal-Net from Kumanovo, Vinsat Kabel from Vinica, Total TV from Skopje and Mobi Servis from Prilep, to verify their observance of the obligation to register the programme services and to provide subtitles for the programme services they retransmit. The supervision found no violations against the LAAVMS.

In order to determine whether they had acted upon the public warning measures imposed, control programme supervision was conducted over the operators Viva Net from Berovo and Neotel from Skopje, concerning the obligation to register the programme services they retransmit. The Neotel operator had acted upon the warning, whereas Viva Net had been retransmitting the programme services of RTS Svet and RTS 2 on the territory of Berovo municipality and the municipality of Pehcevo, as part of its programme package, although they had not been registered with the Agency.

