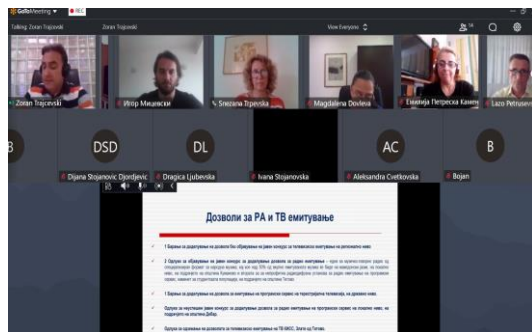


Gender in Children's Programmes in the Spotlight of AAVMS' Public Meeting



The Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services held a public meeting on 30 June 2020, using a video-conferencing link due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. At the meeting, Agency Director Zoran Trajchevski presented an overview of the numerous activities carried out in accordance with the Annual Work Programme for the past six months.

Those attending had the opportunity to hear about the activities related to the monitoring of the election process of the Early Parliamentary Elections, the supervisions conducted over the broadcasters, the operators of public electronic communication networks and the print media publishers, the imposed public warning measures, the analyzes and studies conducted and the activities in the sphere of international cooperation.

During the presentation of the key findings of the 2019 Gender Analysis of the Media, which, for the first time in the country, made both quantitative and qualitative analysis of the treatment of gender in children's shows, the author pointed out that the Public Broadcasting Service pursued a planned and well-thought-through programme policy regarding children's population, but that this statement applied to a much greater extent to MRT1 than to MRT2 – Albanian-Language Programme, because the latter offered the needed variety of children's programmes only partially. As regards the programmes of the privately-owned national terrestrial television stations, the findings showed that there was no well-thought-through or thorough editorial approach to the selection of shows intended for different age segments of the juvenile audience, and they aired far fewer shows for children than the Public Broadcasting Service. Most children's shows were broadcasted by Sitel TV, followed by Kanal 5 TV. Telma TV aired only a few editions of one show, which to a certain extent applied to Alsat M TV as well, whereas Alfa TV did not broadcast any shows for children at all during the month analyzed.

The analysis, prepared for the Agency's needs by a research agency, also offers recommendations for the Public Broadcasting Service and the private television stations. The analysis has already been published on the website www.avmu.mk, under the special banner titled "Gender and the Media," and will also be printed as a publication in Macedonian, Albanian and English in the forthcoming period.

Press Releases

On two occasions – 25 and 30 June 2020, respectively – the Agency informed that certain television stations broadcasted paid political advertising (PPA) involving minors, which is contrary to Article 76, Paragraph 3, of the Electoral Code. Considering that the broadcasters are responsible for the lawfulness of the content they broadcast, the Agency warned on 30 June that, as of the following day, any broadcast of PPA involving minors would be subject to misdemeanor proceedings. In order to avoid such cases, it appealed that the broadcasters carefully review all content, and refuse to air the ones that did not comply with the Electoral Code or the Law on AAVMS.

On 21 June 2020, the Agency most fervently refuted the accusations made in the statement of the SDSM spokesperson, that it had been putting the VMRO-DPMNE party in a privileged position, inflicting damages upon the BESA Movement. According to the candidate lists confirmed by the SEC, the Besa movement was part of the "We Can" Coalition and could, therefore, be allowed PPA air time only within the number of minutes allocated to this coalition. At the same time, the Agency appealed that, in the future, instead of incorporating their own solutions, the political parties leave the formulation of electoral legislation up to the professionals, because it was one of the most important preconditions for conducting democratic elections.

As regards the announcement of Besa Movement by means of a Facebook status that criminal charges had been filed against the Agency and the President of the Agency Council for "exceeding the authority and abuse of office, wanting to harm the BESA Movement," on 18 June 2020, the Agency informed the public – and pointed out to Besa – that the Electoral Code clearly stipulated that only the participants in the election campaign had the right to campaigning, and these were the MP candidate lists which had been verified by the SEC. The press release underlined that statements about filed criminal charges could not be seen as anything else but an attempt to put pressure on the Agency.

On 8 June 2020, due to the appearance of unverified and incomplete information related to the number of COVID-19 patients in the country, the Agency reminded that, under the existing conditions, providing the citizens with accurate and timely information was top priority and essential to public interest, and that practice of favouring certain media had been spotted on the part of the competent healthcare institutions, as these media were the first to receive information related to the Coronavirus pandemic, before the other media outlets. The Agency again appealed to the competent authorities to distribute complete information to all media at the same time and to provide equal access for all, while, in their work, media should be guided by the professional journalistic standards and principles, and not by the principle of exclusivity.



NEWSLETTER

On June 8, the Agency announced that it had received a reaction from 21-M TV to the accusations uttered by the leader of the Alliance of Albanians political party, that this television had been using EU funds, through the show titled "EU Click", to promote DUI's campaign. In its reaction, 21-M TV stated that the show was not being used for election campaigns and that the guests in the show, whose composition was diverse, were being invited depending on the topics that were being covered. The Agency pointed out that the monitoring it was performing on the manner of broadcasters' reporting and the their representation of political pluralism had not detected any irregularities in relation to 21-M TV. The press release said that media coverage could be assessed only on the basis of monitoring, conducted according to a scientifically established methodology, and not on the basis of anyone's personal impressions or interests.

Agency Publishes Report on Broadcasters and Print Media Publishers' Ownership

On 30 June 2020, the Agency published a report with data on the owners of the broadcasters and print media publishers. In order to ensure full transparency of media ownership, the Agency also provided data on the owners of legal entities that own shares of the broadcasters or print media publishers' ownership.

The report consists of two parts. The first part refers to the broadcasters, and contains, in separate chapters, data on the television and radio station owners, as well as on the integration of the broadcasters' capital in June 2020. This section also provides an overview of the changes in the broadcasters' ownership in 2019, and includes the activities that the Agency undertook back in 2019 so as to perceive any illegal media concentration and monitor the ownership structure of the broadcasters in terms of their compliance with the legal restrictions on the acquisition of property. The second part of the Report presents data on the print media publishers' ownership.

The Report on broadcasters and print media publishers' ownership is available on the website www.avmu.mk

Two Guidelines and One Rulebook on Amending the Rulebook on OPECNs' Operations Adopted

Following a previously held public hearing, at its 21st session, held on June 4, the Agency Council adopted three bylaws, which refer to the work of the operators of public electronic communication networks, as follows:

- Guidelines on the manner of registering a legal representative of a broadcaster from another state with, or deleting them from, the Register of legal representatives of broadcasters from other countries that retransmit programme on the territory of RN Macedonia, along with the required form;
- Guidelines on the procedure for establishing responsibility for any violation or offence committed during retransmission of programme services of broadcasters from another country; and
- Rulebook on amending and supplementing the Rulebook on the content and form of the application for registering with the Register of operators that retransmit programme packages, and the programme package/services registration certificate, no. 01-5775/1 dated 21.11.2014, along with four attachments to the Rulebook.

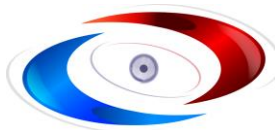
The bylaws have been published on the website www.avmu.mk

Methodology on Monitoring Media Coverage of the Elections and Two Guidelines Related to PPA Adopted

At its 22nd session of the Agency Council held on June 15, three bylaws were adopted regarding the media coverage of the elections, as follows: Methodology for monitoring the media coverage of the elections by the radio and television programme services during the election process; Guidelines for the paid political advertising limits for the 2020 elections; and Guidelines on verifying the reports on paid political advertising.

Before the bylaws were adopted, a public hearing was opened to which all interested parties were invited to submit their comments, opinions and suggestions.

Due to the two decrees with legal force of the Government, one of June 15, and the other one from June 22, respectively, which amended the provision of the Electoral Code regarding the limits for paid political advertising aired by the broadcasters and the airtime distribution among the participants in the election process, the Agency was forced twice to change the Guidelines on the Limits on Paid Political Advertising. The last change was on June 24, the first day of the election campaign.



NEWSLETTER

Supervisions over Broadcasters, Operators of PECNs, Providers of On-Demand Audiovisual Media Services and Print Media

Broadcasters

Regular programme supervision over the obligation of the state-level television programme services to allocate at least 10% of their budgets for European audiovisual works by independent producers, half of which should have been produced in the past five years, and over the obligation to provide that at least 51% - and MRT1 at least 60% - of the total of broadcast programmes throughout the year are European audiovisual works, was performed over 11 programme services (TV 24 Vesti, Alfa TV, TV Alsat-M, TV COMPANY 21-M, MRT 1, Nasha TV, Telma TV, Shenja TV, Kanal 5 TV, Sonce TV and Sitel TV). No violations were found during the supervision.

As regards the obligation of the national broadcasters to broadcast at least 12 hours of programme daily, the rules for the use of language in the programme and to broadcast at least 30% of originally created programme, of which at least half in the period from 07:00 hrs until 19:00 hrs, regular programme supervision was performed on Alfa TV, Alsat-M TV, Kanal 5 TV, Sitel TV, 24 Vesti TV, Nasha TV and Telma TV. The supervision showed that the programme aired by Alfa TV on June 10, 2020, during the second part of the show "Good day, every day" in which various personalities from Serbia are guests via video call, no translation into Macedonian had been provided. No violations were found with the other television stations.

With TV 24 Vesti and Nasha TV, regular programme and administrative supervisions were performed regarding the obligations to publish Impressums, information that should be made available to the users, identification of the broadcaster, the obligations to protect juvenile audience, the rules for broadcasting commercial communications, use of value-added telephone services and telephone voting, the rules for broadcasting games of chance and the use of language in the programmes, as well as the obligations for providing quizzes or other forms of prize winning participation. No violations were found during the supervision.

In order to determine whether the public warning measures issued had been observed, imposed due to failure to submit data on the ownership structure, editorial office, sources of funding in 2019, total revenues and expenditures from providing the business activity, data on average the viewership and listenership during the previous year, as well as due to failure to publish data on one's ownership structure, editorial office, sources of financing within their own programme, and failure to submit recording of the announcement within 15 days from the day of the announcement, control administrative supervision was performed on TV IRIS from Stip. The supervision showed that the provisions of the Law on Media were acted upon. Control programme supervision was performed on Telma TV and Sitel TV, in order to determine whether the public warning measures due to non-compliance with the obligations for protection of the juvenile audience had been acted upon. The supervision showed that the provisions of the Law on Media were acted upon.

Operators of public electronic communication networks

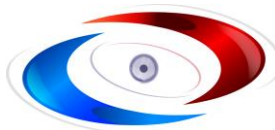
For the obligations related to the registration of programme services with the Agency and providing subtitling of the programmes that are retransmitted by the operators, regular programme supervision was performed on the operators TELENET KOM, MULTIMEDIJA NETWORK L, OVER THE TOP, TOTAL TV, A1 MAKEDONIJA, SIGNAL NET, SPAJDER NET, VIVA NET, VINSAT CABLE, CABLE, CABLECALL, SCRAMBLE, DRIM SAT IPTV, KDS-VT, NAFI and BEKO, NEOTEL and PET NET. During the supervision, it was concluded that the cable operator PET NET from Gevgelija was retransmitting the programme service of Alfa TV for its users, while Drim Sat IPTV was retransmitting the programme service of Kanal 5, which were both not covered by the registration certificates of the programme services issued by the Agency. A public warning was imposed for the detected non-compliances.

Provider of on-demand audiovisual media services

Regular programme supervision over compliance with the obligations for cinematographic works, the protection of minors and promotion of production and access to European works arising from LAAVMS, was performed on the provider of on-demand audiovisual media services, Makedonski Telekom. No violations were found during the supervision.

Print media

The Agency conducted regular administrative supervision over 17 print media publishers, in order to determine whether they had published data on the name and address of the headquarters and the editorial office of the print media outlet, data on the responsible person, editors, the printing house, date of printing or reprinting and the circulation, in accordance with the obligation under the Law on Media. The supervision concluded that the print media outlets covered by the supervision had met this obligation.



AGENCY FOR AUDIO AND
AUDIOVISUAL MEDIA SERVICES



NEWSLETTER

Public warnings against Broadcasters, OPECNs and a Print Media Publisher

At its 23rd session held on June 19, 2020, the Council of the Agency adopted a Decision to impose a public warning measure against the Trade News and Publishing, Commerce, Manufacturing and Services Company "Capital Media Group" from Skopje, the publisher of the Capital magazine. The measure of public warning was issued due to failure to publish, in any of the daily newspapers, data on the ownership structure, and failure to submit a clipping of the announcement to the Agency. The publisher Capital Media Group was given a period of 45 days to harmonize its operations with the Law on Media.

At the same session, the Council of the Agency, adopted Decisions on imposing public warning measures and terminating the retransmission of certain programme services against the operators Pet Net from Gevgelija and Drim Sat IPTV from the village of Cegrane, Gostivar. A public warning was issued to PET NET from Gevgelija for retransmitting the programme service of Alfa TV, while to the cable operator Drim Sat from Gostivar for rebroadcasting the programme service of Kanal 5 TV, which had not been included in the programme service registration certificates issued by the Agency. Both operators were instructed to terminate the retransmission of the disputed TV channels.

At the 21st session held on June 4, the Council of the Agency adopted three decisions on imposing public warning measures, two of which against Iris TV and one against Sitel TV. One of the measures against Iris TV was issued due to failure to submit data on its ownership structure, editor-in-chief, sources of funding in 2019, total revenues and expenditures from providing the activity, as well as the average viewership and listenership in the previous year. The second measure was imposed due to non-publication of data on its ownership structure, editorial office, sources of funding in the previous year within its own programme no later than March 31, 2020, and failure to submit the recording of the announcement within 15 days from the date of publication. The public warning measure against Sitel TV was issued due to non-compliance with the rules for protection of juvenile audience.



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