**AAAVMS and MLSP Join Efforts to Promote Gender Issues**

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AAAMS Director Zoran Trajchevski, PhD, presented the new specialized website dedicated to gender and the media. The website is envisaged as a resource center for the media, a place where they can find resources, information, links on various aspects of the gender issues, including gender-based violence, but also a place where citizens can find useful links and information, including the institutions and the organizations which they can seek help from in case they are exposed to gender-based violence.

The site is administered by the Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services and is available in Macedonian, Albanian and English. It is also adapted for use by persons with visual impairments.On this website, all institutions and civil society organizations can share the materials and activities they work on in the field of gender issues, and thus contribute to turning it into a quality resource centre for all journalists, researchers working on this topic, as well as for the general public. Link to the website: [www.rodotimediumite.mk](http://www.rodotimediumite.mk/)

Minister of Labor and Social Policy Jovanka Trenchevska, and Director of the Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services Zoran Trajchevski held a joint press conference on 7 February 2023, dedicated to the issues of gender, gender-based violence and the media’s methods of reporting in this regard.

“The power of the media and their ability to professionally inform the public, raise awareness and shape the opinion of the entire public is enormous. That is why it is of particular importance to disseminate accurate information on their part, and our task as institutions is to provide these information,” Trenchevska underlined in her address.

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A delegation of the Committee for Political System, Judiciary and Administration of Montenegro paid a working visit to the Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services on 17 February 2023. The purpose of the visit was to share experiences and opinions with regard to several segments of the media sphere, including compliance with the revised Audiovisual Media Services Directive, the measures for temporarily restriction of the transmission and reception of audio and audiovisual media services from other states, the rules relating to the media’s ownership structure, the monitoring of media content during electoral processes and the financing of paid political advertising.

**AAAVMS Supports the Protest Rally in Defence of Journalists’ Dignity**

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Only media professionals who are free from any pressure and whose labour and human rights are not threatened can contribute to the development of democracy and to preserving and promoting the freedom of expression and freedom of information.

**A Delegation of the Montenegrin Committee for Political System, Judiciary and Administration Pays Working Visit to AAAVMS**

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The participants in the meeting also discussed the possibilities of regulating online media, self-regulation and cooperation with the civil society sector. At the end of the meeting, it was concluded that the fostering and continuous promotion of bilateral relations between the two states was of particular importance, taking into account that we both face the same challenges.

On 17 February 2023, the Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services gave support to the Independent Union of Journalists and Media Workers and the Association of Journalists by joining in their protest rally organized to express journalists’ dissatisfaction from the attacks against them and the social and socio-economic conditions in which they operate. The attacks, labeling and disparagement of media workers, which have become quite frequent in the past period, are absolutely unacceptable, particularly when coming from public office holders. They jeopardize journalists’ professional work and safety and incite hate and violence. Therefore, this kind of behaviour must not become practice under any circumstances.

# **World Radio Day Celebrated**

World Radio Day was celebrated for the twelfth time, under the UNESCO auspices, on 13 February 2023. This year, its motto was “Radio and Peace”. The radio as a universal medium that reaches out diverse communities and its role in building peace and stability allow it to be the perfect platform for encouraging public discourse and the fight against violence and conflicts.

When reporting and informing the general public, radio stations shape public opinion and frame a narrative that can contribute to mitigating various conflicts or tensions in society and, through conversations and public debates, prevent their escalation.

**AAAVMS Donates One Million Denars to the Republic of Turkiye and the Syrian Arab Republic**

At its 4th session held on 8 February, the Council of the Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services adopted a Decision to grant financial aid – a donation of one million Denars – to remedy the consequences of the earthquake that had hit the Republic of Turkiye and the Syrian Arab Republic.

These financial resources were paid to a special account of the Red Cross of the Republic of North Macedonia - Solidarity Fund.

**PRESS RELEASES**

With regard to MP Dimitar Apasiev’s inappropriate words addressed against the journalist Ljupco Zlatev on “Facebook,” the Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services issued a press release on 14 February 2023, pointing out that public office holders should manifest the highest level of respect for the journalistic profession. and the dignity of media workers. Everyone, politicians and public office holders in particular, should refrain from disparaging, insulting and from inappropriate communication. They should show mutual respect and use arguments and a language that promotes democratic values.

On 14 February, the Agency also condemned the Government’s selective approach to accrediting some of the media to cover the event marking the 151st anniversary of the birth of the Macedonian revolutionary Gotse Delchev. It emphasized in its press release that the role of media workers was to document and convey information from events that were of major public interest, even in conditions where special security measures were in place, and that any obstruction to their work constituted a threat to the freedom of and right to information. The Agency appealed to find an appropriate and non-selective way to provide all media workers with equal and free access to all events that are of major importance for society.

Regarding the inappropriate conduct of Minister of Economy Kreshnik Bekteshi towards a journalist of Telma TV during the press conference on 2 February, the Agency emphasized, once again, that uttering insults and disparagement against journalists are absolutely inadmissible. Media are one of the key pillars of democracy and play an important role in creating critical thinking on matters of special public interest. It is extremely important to enable journalists to carry out their professional tasks without any hindrances so as to inform the public in a timely and accurate manner. Instead of disparagement and insults, one should show respect for the journalistic profession and the dignity of media workers.

The Agency also deemed as absolutely unacceptable the improper conduct of Minister of Economy Kreshnik Bekteshi towards the journalist of Kanal 5 TV, Katerina Kapkovska. Holders of public offices should refrain from expressing personal views, comments and labelling that jeopardize freedom of the media and may lead to self-censorship.The Agency appealed again to invest maximum efforts to ensure favorable environment for the smooth functioning of media workers, taking into account their role in raising issues of public interest and ensuring transparency and accountability of the public authorities.

**Supervisions over Broadcasters, Operators of Public Electronic Communication Networks and Print Media Outlets**

**Broadcasters**

With regard to the obligations concerning language use in the programmes, the broadcasting of at least 18 hours of radio programme daily and broadcasting of the legally specified percentage of originally created music, regular programme supervision was carried out over the radio programme services of MAKEDONSKA RADIOTELEVIZIJA Public Broadcasting Company – MRA1, MRA2 and MRA3. The supervision found no violations of the obligations arising from the LAAVMS.

In order to establish whether action had been taken upon the public warning measures imposed for various legal irregularities, the Agency conducted control programme and administrative supervision over Kaltrina TV, Spektra TV Televizija Plus TV, Student FM 92.9 University Radio and UGD FM University Radio. The supervision showed that these broadcasters had fully complied with the decisions imposing public warning measures.

**Operators of Public Electronic Communication Networks**

As regards the obligation of the operators of PECNs to provide obligatorily and free of charge the programme services of the public broadcaster as part of their program packages they retransmit, as well as the obligations to the register their programme services with the Agency and provide subtitling for the programs they retransmit, regular programme supervision was carried out over the following operators: Kablekall, Transped Trejd, Kabel, Signal-Net, Mtel, Multimedia-Net, Kabel-L-Net and KDS-Kabel Net. The conducted programme supervision did not find any violations.

As for the obligation of the operators of PECN to register their programme services with the Agency and provide subtitling for the programmes they retransmit, regular programme supervision was conducted over the operators Signal-Net, Mtel, Multimedia-Net, Kabel-L-Net and KDS-Kabel Net. The supervision established that the operator Signal-Net had been retransmitting the programme services of "Scan TV", "Cufo" and "Super Sport News" although the latter had not been covered by the programme service registration certificates issued by the Agency.

**Print Media Outlets**

The Agency conducted regular administrative supervision over 21 print media publishers with the aim of verifying if they had published data such as the name and address of the registered headquarters and of the editorial office of the print media outlets, data about the responsible person, editors, printing plant, date of printing or reprinting and the circulation, in accordance with the relevant obligation arising from the Law on Media. The supervision established that the print media supervised had fulfilled this legal obligation.

**Public Warning Measures Imposed**

At its 7th session held on 23 February, the Agency Council imposed public warning measures against Kanal Festa TV and the operator of PECN Signal-Net, on the grounds of previous supervision findings. A public warning measure was imposed against Kanal Festa TV due to failure to provide the information that should be made available to the users, while the Signal-Net operator was issued a public warning measure due to retransmitting programme services that had not been covered by the programme service registration certificate issued by Agency.

At its 5th session held on 15 February, the Agency Council adopted a decision to issue public warning measures against Dibra TV and the Makedonska Radio Televizija Skopje – Makedonska Televizija – Second Programme Service (MRT2) Public Broadcasting Company, based on the findings of a conducted supervision. A public warning measure was issued against Dibra TV due to failure to broadcast at least 30% of programme that is originally created as Macedonian audiovisual works, while a public warning measure was issued against the MRT 2 for placing products in the programme without clearly indicating that the programme at issue contained product placement.

