**Data on the radio stations’ reach and TV stations’ share in the total viewership in 2020 Q2**

A survey was conducted for the Agency’s needs regarding the radio stations’ reach and the television stations’ share in the total viewership during the second quarter of 2020. According to the data collected throughout the survey, the average weekly reach of the radio stations was 35.8%, with Antenna 5 Radio being the most listened to radio. The average weekly reach of the television stations was 92.2%, where Sitel TV was the most watched television station according to the respondents. The news were the most frequently watched television content. The report with the data on the radio stations’ reach and television stations’ share in the total viewership of the TV stations in the second quarter of 2020 is available at [www.avmu.mk](http://www.avmu.mk) .

**2020 Early Parliamentary Elections**

In the course of July 2020, the Agency carried out a number of activities related to monitoring of the media coverage of the Early Parliamentary Elections.

On 2 July 2020, the Agency responded to a complaint by the Democratic Union for Integration (DUI), in which the latter had reacted to the organization of debate shows aired by the media outlets. The data collected through monitoring of the electoral presentation by the media were looked into immediately, after which it was pointed out that certain broadcasters should make additional efforts and invite all entities with the same number of lists in order to ensure balance in the debates until the end of the campaign. An appeal was sent out to the participants in the election campaign to take part in the special information shows because these were one of the ways to inform the citizens directly about their election platforms, so that they could compare what was being offered.

On 6 July 2020, the Agency reminded the media of the rules that apply to publishing results of the public opinion polls on the Early Parliamentary Elections, and that the poll results may be published no later than five days before the date of the elections, i.e. no later than 24:00 hrs on 9 July 2020.

The Agency informed the media on 11 July that, starting from 13 July until 15 July 2020, 21:00 hrs, the election silence rules would apply, and reminded them of all the obligations that had to be met during that period. While inspecting the manner in which the radio and television stations had been reporting during the election silence, the Agency concluded that Telma TV, Alsat-M TV and the Macedonian Radio’s First Programme – MRA1, had violated the silence by having published audiovisual materials involving a public office holder. Misdemeanor proceedings were initiated against these three broadcasters.

The Report on the monitoring of the media coverage of the early parliamentary elections was published on 23 July 2020. The monitoring had covered the five radio and TV services provided by the Public Broadcaster, and the nine commercial national television stations. Other programme services were looked into upon receipt of complaints. Subject to monitoring were their entire 24-hour programmes, where all broadcast forms of electoral media presentation they contained were analyzed and coded. The analysis of the daily news programmes was conducted on the main news editions. The monitoring showed that four programme services of the Public Broadcasting Service had ensured balance in the news in general, by meeting the dual formula for distributing the news airtime, although they needed to set aside some more time for the daily news in order to fulfill their role as a Public Service – to convey relevant information on the developments related to the Covid-19 outbreak in all parts of the country. On the other hand, the analysis showed that none of the commercial television stations had managed to fully implement the principle of reporting in proportion to the number of verified candidate lists or the intensity of the campaign. In their reporting during the election campaign, Alsat-M TV and Shenja TV were found to have failed to provide balanced coverage of the election process in their daily news releases and in their special news programmes in accordance with the principle of proportionality according to the number of verified lists of MP candidates. Misdemeanor proceedings were initiated against both broadcasters.

At its 30th session held on 30 July 2020, the Agency Council adopted the Report on Paid Political Advertising in the Broadcasters’ Programmes during the Election Campaign for the Early Parliamentary Elections. The data contained in the Report had been obtained through monitoring of the paid political advertising aired by 69 broadcasters, which had enrolled in the SEC’s Register and concluded contracts with the participants in the election campaign, of which 38 were television stations, and 31 were radio stations. Additionally, all data were checked through the procedure of verifying the reports on the realized broadcasters’ services.

All materials related to the Early Parliamentary Elections are available on the website www.avmu.mk.

**July 2020 No.7**

**Two publications and one Recommendation translated into Macedonian**

At the Agency’s request within the frameworks of the JUFREX project, the Council of Europe’s publications titled "Algorithms and Human Rights" and "Disinformation and Election Campaigns" were translated into Macedonian. The publication on "Algorithms and Human Rights" aims to present some of the issues of utmost current importance for the Council of Europe from the aspect of human rights, as well as to look into the possible regulatory alternatives that the Member States may consider in order to bring the negative effects to a minimum or to support the good practices. The publication on "Disinformation and Election Campaigns" contains an overview of the situation concerning disinformation from the technical and political points of view, recommendations and measures to deal with the same.

Recommendation CM/Rec (2007)15 by the Committee of Ministers to the Member States on the measures concerning media coverage of election campaigns was translated into Macedonian within the frameworks of the JUFREX project. The purpose of the Recommendation is to ensure fair, balanced and unbiased reporting on the election campaigns, without discriminating against or supporting any particular political campaign or candidate.

Both publications and the Recommendation are available at [www.avmu.mk](http://www.avmu.mk) .

**Press Releases**

On 31 July 2020, the Agency stated its concern about the status of the freedom of information, due to the decision by the Primary Public Prosecutor's Office to file charges against the journalist and editor-in-chief of the “Leader (Lider)” portal, Ljupco Zlatev, for having published internal documents owned by the Security and Counterintelligence Administration. The agency urged the journalists to respect the professional and ethical journalistic standards, to report objectively and without bias, and appealed to the institutions to bear in mind that initiating charges against journalists for publishing information negatively affects the freedom of the media and the efforts to protect public interest.

On 24 July 2020, the attack on the journalist Ljupcho Zlatev was most strongly condemned and a reminder was sent out that attacks on journalists pose a threat to freedom of the media and the freedom of information, while any form of pressure leads to regression in the democratic processes. The Agency also condemned the threats made through the social network "Facebook" against the “Free Press (Sloboden Pecat)” journalist Miroslava Burns, and reminded that such incidents were absolutely unacceptable.

On 28 July 2020, in a press release, the Agency Council categorically rejected the allegations by the Association of Journalists of Macedonia that, at the session held on 15 July, the Agency Director had tried to influence the members of the Council to reach a decision to the detriment of Alsat-M and Telma TVs. The Council pointed out that the address of the Director of the Agency regarding Telma TV’s violation of the election silence, in which he presented the information received, could not be interpreted as an attempt at exerting influence. On the contrary, the members of the Council should be acquainted with everything that is happening in the media sphere, especially when it comes to serious issues such as putting pressure on the media.

Bearing in mind the need to present all the facts, and not only the position of Telma TV concerning the Agency's appeal against the verdict on the violation of the election silence, presented in its reaction aired on the news of this television station, on 22 July 2020 the Agency informed the public that, during election processes, its primary competence was to consistently implement the Electoral Code in the sphere of electoral presentation by the media, which means that it regularly monitors the media coverage and, if violations are found, misdemeanor proceedings are initiated. The Agency’s response to the information aired in the Telma TV news is published on www.avmu.mk.

On 17 July 2020, the Agency stated that it was unpleasantly surprised by the Facebook status of Minister of Information Society and Administration Damjan Manchevski, which claimed that the Agency was politicized because it had filed misdemeanor proceedings against Telma and Alsat-M TVs for having violated the election silence. The Agency called on the Minister to read the Electoral Code before publicly presenting or sharing opinions, as well as the previous OSCE/ODIHR reports, which had regularly positively assessed the Agency’s work, and the Statement of Preliminary Findings and Conclusions by the OSCE’s Special Election Assessment Mission, which had also noted violations of the election silence on the part of the traditional media.

In tune with the efforts for transparency and accountability and abiding by the established practice to publish the expenses made by its Director Zoran Trajchevski every six months, the Agency informed the public that, in the period from 1 January to 30 June 2020, Director Trajchevski had, in the line of his duties, made expenses in the total amount of MKD 133,874.00,as follows: MKD 46,824.00 for trips abroad, of which MKD 19,155.00 for plane tickets and MKD 27,669.00 for hotel accommodation; costs for representation in the country (catering services) to the amount of MKD 70,145.00, and MKD 16,905.00 for the official mobile phone bills.

**Supervisions over Broadcasters, OPECN, providers of on-demand audiovisual media services and print media publishers**

**Broadca*s*ters**

The Agency performed regular administrative supervision over all 116 broadcasters that broadcast television and radio programme regarding their obligation to publish, for the second time this year, within their own programmes, data on their ownership structure, editors and sources of funding in the previous year no later than 30 June, in the prime time, and to send footage of the announcements to the Agency within 15 days from the day of the announcement. No violations were found during the supervision.

Regular programme and administrative supervision over the media outlets’ compliance with a number of obligations – the rules for broadcasting audiovisual commercial communications, use of value-added telephone services and telephone voting, rules for broadcasting games of chance, obligations concerning the provision of quizzes or other forms of award giving programmes, protection of minors, publication of Impressums and information that should be made available to the users as well as the broadcasters’ identification signs – were conducted over Alfa TV, Kanal 5 TV, Sitel TV, Alsat-M TV and Telma TV. The supervision found no violations. Regular programme supervision of the obligation to ensure that at least 51% of the total of programmes broadcasted during the year be European audiovisual works, and to allocate at least 10% of their own budget for European works by independent producers, half of which should be produced in the last five years, was performed over Klan Macedonia TV. No violation was detected during the supervision.

After having received a complaint from a physical person, an ad hoc programme supervision was performed on Telma TV for its observance of the obligation to ensure protection of the juvenile audience. The supervision detected that the feature film "Three Days in September" aired on July 15 was incorrectly labelled as a second-category (8+) programme and aired during an inappropriate time of the day, i.e. before 20:00 hrs, due to which a misdemeanor procedure was initiated. Control programme supervision was performed over Sitel TV, in order to determine whether the broadcaster had acted upon the Decision to issue it a Public Warning Measure due to non-compliance with the obligation to protect juvenile audience. The supervision showed that the broadcaster had acted upon the decision on imposing a public warning measure in full.

***Operators of public electronic communication networks***

As regards the obligations related to the registration of programme services with the Agency and providing subtitles for the programmes retransmitted by the operators, regular programme supervision was conducted over the operators Kabel-L-Net, Infel-KTV, Inel International, Kabel-Net, KDS-Kabel Net, Kombo 2003, Globalsat and Skupi Kable. The supervisions found no violations. Control supervision was conducted over the operators Drim Sat IPTV and Pet Net, in order to establish whether the latter had acted upon the Decisions on issuing public warnings and on discontinuing the retransmission of programme services that had not been registered with the Agency. The supervision showed that the operators had acted upon the decisions for imposing public warnings in full.

***Provider of on-demand audiovisual media services***

The Agency performed regular programme supervision over the provider of on-demand AVMS, A1 Macedonia, regarding its obligations that tackle its transmission of cinematographic works, the rules for minors’ protection and the promotion of production of and access to European audiovisual works. No violations were found in the course of the supervision.

***Print media***

An ad hoc administrative supervision was carried out over Kliker Marketing from Skopje, the publisher of the "InStore" magazine, to establish whether it had published data on the name and address of the print media outlet’s headquarters and editorial office, its responsible person, the editors, the printing house, date of printing or reprinting, and the circulation. The supervision showed that this legal obligation had been fulfilled.

**Public warning against a broadcaster**

At its 26th session held on 10 July 2020, the Agency Council adopted a decision to impose a public warning measure against Alfa TV, for having broadcasted a programme originally in the Serbian language, without having provided translation into Macedonian**.**

