



AGENCY FOR AUDIO AND AUDIOVISUAL MEDIA SERVICES OF THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA

**COUNTRY REPORT, REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA  
50<sup>th</sup> EPRA Meeting, Athens, 23-25 October 2019**

**Protection of Minors**

In June 2019, the Agency launched the publication “Media Regulatory Authorities and the Protection of Minors”, which had been 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 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 for conducting the future activities of not only the regulator, but also as part of the discourse of all stakeholders in society.

**Media Literacy**

In July 2019, the Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services and the OSCE Mission to Skopje signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the basis of which joint activities will be taken up towards raising the awareness about media literacy in the country.

This cooperation involves conducting of a research into the level of media literacy among the adult population in the Republic of North Macedonia and a media campaign, which will be carried out with the support from the OSCE Mission to Skopje.

This will be the second research of this kind and, as such, it should show if the situation has changed, compared to that of 2016, and, if so, to what extent. The findings will serve as the basis for conducting a media campaign to raise awareness about the importance of media literacy as the tool that helps people recognize bias, spins, misinformation and fake media contents.

The activities will be carried out as part of the OSCE Mission to Skopje’s project for “Support to Freedom of the Media and the Safety of Journalists”.

**AAVMS Publishes a Report on Broadcasters’ Ownership Structure and Merger of Capital In 2018**

In order to increase the transparency of ownership structure of the media, the Agency prepared a Media Ownership Report. The report contains a summary of the legal framework; data on the broadcasters and print media owners; data on changes in the ownership structure of broadcasters and the merger of capital between broadcasters in 2018, as well as the activities undertaken by the Agency in 2018, aimed at preventing illegal media concentration.

The data were obtained using official sources – documents on the current status issued by the Central Register, as well as the website of the Central Depository of Securities (data on persons who own more than 5% of shares in the shareholders' companies owning broadcasters).

According to the data collected, most of the Macedonian television, radio and print media outlets are owned by individuals. Out of 49 television stations, only 14 are owned by legal entities, most of which are television stations that broadcast programme at the state level. More precisely, nine out of a total of 12 state-level television stations, four out of eighteen regional television stations, and only one of the nineteen local television stations, are owned by legal entities.

Almost all commercial radio stations that broadcast programmes are owned by one or more individuals. Legal entities are the owners of only six radio stations - one at the state level, two regional, and three local radio stations. Out of 22 print media publishers, 19 are owned by one or more natural persons, while only three publishers are owned by legal entities.

Foreign individuals or legal persons own shares in ten media publishers, i.e. in four television stations (TV Alfa - from Serbia and Hungary, TV Company 21 - from Kosovo, TV Klan - from Albania and TV 24 News - from Austria); one radio station (RA Urban FM - from Finland and China), and five print media publishers (Repro Print and Capital Media Group - from the Virgin Islands, Free Press and Color Media - from Serbia and Independent Balkan News Agency - from Greece).

Full report available at: <https://avmu.mk/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/REPORT-ON-MEDIA-OWNERSHIP.pdf>

### **Agency Publishes Analysis of the Market of Audio and Audiovisual Media Services in 2018**

With the aim of obtaining extensive information about the developments in the television and radio industry during the previous year, in July 2019, the Agency prepared an Analysis of the Market of Audio and Audiovisual Media Services in 2018. The analysis covers data about the economic operations of the Public Broadcasting Service and the commercial television and radio stations, along with data collected through measuring the viewership and listenership of the TV and radio stations, respectively.

In 2018, the decline in the total revenues of this industry continued. Compared to the previous year, the revenues of the Macedonian Radio and Television dropped by 8.44%, those of the commercial television stations – by 4.52 %, and those of the commercial radio stations – by 3.60%.

Advertising revenues, earned by all broadcasters together, amounted to MKD 1,346.06 million and, compared to the year before, marked a fall of 2.71%. Of these, MKD 34.33 million were revenues of the Macedonian Radio and Television, MKD 1,203.95 million – of the commercial television stations, and MKD 107.78 million – of the commercial radio stations.

The expenditures that all broadcasters made together in 2018, amounted to MKD 2.537,52 million, of which MKD 971.03 million were expenditures made by the Macedonian Radio and Television, MKD 1.419,56 million – by the commercial television stations, and MKD 146.93 million – by the commercial radio stations.

At the year's end, the financial results of the operations of all three segments of the industry – the public broadcasting service, the commercial TV and radio stations – were negative, i.e. they marked losses amounting to MKD 96.91 million. The Macedonian Radio and Television marked losses in their work for the first time in five years.