



**AGENCY FOR AUDIO AND  
AUDIOVISUAL MEDIA SERVICES**

**COUNTRY REPORT, REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA  
(November 2020 – October 2021)**

**MEDIA LITERACY AND ACCESS TO MEDIA FOR PERSONS WITH SENSORY IMPAIRMENTS**

On 17 December 2020, the Agency Council adopted the Policy on Ensuring Access to Audiovisual Media Services for Persons with Sensory Impairments. The Policy's adoption was preceded by a public hearing. The document outlines and highlights the main courses of action of the regulatory body, while the specific activities will depend on the current needs of the target group, as well as the capacities of the broadcasters and the providers of on-demand audiovisual media services, and will be planned on an annual basis.

On 26 April 2021, the Agency and the Media Literacy Network launched a ten-week-long campaign via the social media networks to raise awareness about the need for media literacy and critical use of the media. The campaign ended on 2 July 2021, and marked the fourth birthday of the Media Literacy Network. From the start of the campaign, a poster presenting information related to media literacy, hate speech, rumours, etc. was posted on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook every working day. At the end of each week, a brochure containing the posters posted throughout the week was published on the website [mediumskapismenost.mk](http://mediumskapismenost.mk). The brochures were published in Macedonian, Albanian and English.

On 30 September 2021, the Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services held an online conference on "Media and Elections", in cooperation with the Council of Europe, as part of the second phase of JUFREX's project on "Freedom of Expression and Freedom of the Media in the Republic of North Macedonia". The conference was dedicated to the impact of disinformation on the election results; the efforts to report in a professional manner; media's importance for a democratic election process and the importance of professional journalism in the new media landscape, and to reporting on the election process for people with sensory impairments.

**GENDER IN THE MEDIA**

During November 2020, the Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services published an Analysis of the Gender Structure of Salaries in Broadcasting Industry in 2019, as part of its efforts to introduce the issue of gender in the key media flows. This is the first analysis of pays received by employees in the broadcasting industry focused specifically on the latter's gender structure.

In March 2021, the Agency presented the findings of the analysis of gender issues and the manner of portraying and depicting women and men in the news aired by the national television services during the election campaign for the 2020 Early Parliamentary Elections. The findings showed that the media coverage of the election campaign had tended significantly towards promoting the male MP candidates and the male perspective, as well as expertise on the developments relating to the elections. The female candidates had been overshadowed by their male counterparts, had less access to the various forms of

promotion for their platforms, and their profiles and messages remained anonymous, i.e. unheard and unseen by the public. In the media items covering the election campaign, out of a total of 134 political party representatives, 128 were men, as opposed to only 6 women. In the daily news programmes dedicated to election-related topics, 86% of those who appeared as primary subjects were men, as opposed to 14% women. The qualitative analysis of the content of the daily news programmes showed, among other things, that in 9 news items, the depiction of women was sexually objectified, while 6 news items demonstrated stereotyping based on the gender roles assumed by society.

## **ANALYSES, SURVEYS AND PUBLICATIONS**

- **Report on Media Ownership**

In June 2021, the Agency prepared a "Report on Media Ownership", so as to ensure greater transparency of media ownership. For this purpose, it used the official data on the broadcasters' ownership structure, as presented by the Central Register of RNM, and, in the case of print media publishers, also the data contained in their announcements in the daily newspapers, published as part of their legal obligation to ensure publicity of their operations. This is the third report on the ownership structure of the media and, apart from data on the current owners of the television stations, radio stations and print media publishers, it also contains data on the broadcasters' capital integration and changes in their ownership structure, which the Agency had approved in the course of 2020.

- **Analysis of the Market of Audio and Audiovisual Media Services**

In September 2021, the Agency prepared an Analysis of the Market of Audio and Audiovisual Media Services in 2020, which analyzed the data on the broadcasters' total revenues earned in 2020, the revenues' structure, the total expenditures and their structure, the financial results of their operations, the number of employees, as well as data on the TV channels' viewership and radio stations' listenership. The Analysis examines separately the data on the operation of the public broadcasting service, the commercial television outlets and the commercial radio stations. In terms of geography, data on the relevant national, regional and local markets were also analyzed separately.

- **"Political Advertising: A Comparative Study with Reflections on the Situation in the Countries in Southeast Europe"**

In December 2020, the Council of Europe and the European Union published the study titled "Political Advertising: A Comparative Study with Reflections on the Situation in the Countries of Southeast Europe," as part of the joint programme of the "Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey, 2019-2022" and the regional project titled "Freedom of Expression and Freedom of the Media in Southeast Europe (JUFREX)". The Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services took part in the preparation of this study, along with the regulatory bodies as JUFREX beneficiaries. The study dwells on political advertising during election campaigns from the perspective of media regulators and provides guidance in line with the European standards and best practices in this field. The study was a follow-up to the online Regional Roundtable on "Elections, Pandemics and Disinformation," held on 3 July 2020, at which the regional regulatory authorities had an opportunity to share their experiences.