

COUNTRY REPORT for the 12th Meeting of BRAF

Nicoleta LUPU

Head of Communication and Foreign Relations Department
(Audiovisual Council, Moldova)



TABLE OF CONTENTS

- I. Regulation
- II. Monitoring of contents
- III. Licensing and ownership transparency
- IV. Control of distributors
- V. Foreign relations and cooperation
- VI. Media and information literacy

I. Regulation

On 10th of July, Parliament adopted in second/final reading the amendments to the Audiovisual Media Services Code (AVMSC) no. 174/2018, partially transposing the **Audiovisual Media Services Directive 2010/13/EU, including 2018/1808 amendments, and partially aligning with the **European Media Freedom Act (EMFA)**.**

Main amendments:

- ▶ No more submission of the annual activity reports for approval to the MPs from the AC and Teleradio-Moldova national public media service (TRM PMS).
- ▶ Increased number of the members of the Oversight Board of TRM PMS from seven to nine, and change of institution that will appoint the members of the Oversight Board - the AC will replace the Parliament in this regard.
- ▶ A set of notions have been added: *illegal content*, *editorial decision*, *audience measurement* etc. or changed, like *commercial audiovisual communication*, *disinformation*, *hate speech*, *audiovisual programme*, *product placement* etc.
- ▶ As for protection of minors, the law provides for the introduction of restrictions on advertising for unhealthy food and introduces age verification measures on digital platforms.
- ▶ Providers of video-sharing platforms located under the jurisdiction of the Republic of Moldova will have to take appropriate measures to protect minors from user-generated video programmes/materials/audiovisual commercial communications that may affect their physical, mental or moral development.
- ▶ The protection of journalistic sources and confidential communications have been enforced and safeguarded by adding new detailed provisions in this sense.

II. Monitoring of contents

Fines and sanctions for:

- ✓ exceeding advertising volumes (max. 12 min/hour);
- ✓ airing advertising to spirits (banned from 06:00 AM to 10:00 PM);
- ✓ violating provisions on local programmes;
- ✓ violation of the norms on commercial communication, editorial imbalance, lack of impartiality;
- ✓ discriminatory discourse, lack of journalistic balance;
- ✓ failure to comply with the requirements on commercial communications of a non-linear media service.

First-ever studies on internal and external pluralism

- ▶ **10 TV stations** - two public media services and eight most watched private channels - were monitored for a month on following **requirements**: a) to ensure the impartiality and balance of the positions expressed in audiovisual programmes; b) to favour the free formation of opinions; c) to present the main points of view in opposition, during the period when the issues are under public debate; d) to ensure the balanced representation of the exponents of power and of the opposition.
- ▶ The Electronic Press Association, at the request of the AC, published the study ***"External Audiovisual Pluralism in the Republic of Moldova"***, aimed at providing, with the help of the monitoring and evaluation methodology approved by the NRA in 2024, a detailed analysis of the risks and deficiencies affecting pluralism in the audiovisual sector. The overall result revealed a low level of risk for external audiovisual pluralism, meaning that the protection of fundamental rights, as well as policies and legislation in the field, are adequate, although not always properly implemented.

III. Licensing and ownership transparency

- ▶ With the support of the Council of Europe, a **new digital reporting module has been developed and integrated into the existing website of the AC**. The module streamlines the submission, validation and management of mandatory annual activity reports, simplifying compliance for audiovisual service providers and distributors. This modernization effort comes to support the measures outlined in the De-oligarchization Plan of the Republic of Moldova.
- ▶ An analysis of the **annual activity reports** submitted to the NRA by **37 private media service providers** revealed a generally satisfactory level of formal compliance with the legal requirements regarding the presentation of data, including those relating to the ownership structure, share capital, sources of financing and the implementation of the editorial concept. Total revenues declared by media service providers reached approximately **281.86 mln lei (106 850 EUR)**, less with 8.4% compared to the previous year. At the same time, the sector's total expenses decreased by over 20%, reaching **279.27 mln lei (106 715 EUR)**, which indicates a clear trend of budgetary optimization.

V. Control of distributors

- On 2th of April, two companies from the Gagauzian region were sanctioned with **130 000 MDL (6 648 EUR)** for **illegal rebroadcasting of programmes from Russian Federation**, infringing provisions of art. 17 from the AVMSC-*Protection of the national audiovisual space*.

VI. Foreign relations and cooperation

- ✓ The Republic of Moldova was mentioned in the **3rd European External Action Service Report on FIMI**, issued in March, both as a target of this hybrid war instrument and as an example of good practices in countering the phenomenon.
- ✓ At the end of March, Moldova`s governmental team has completed the **bilateral screening process** with representatives of the European Commission on Chapter 10 - Information Society and Mass Media.
- ✓ Between the 2nd and 3rd of June, the representatives of the AC made a **study visit to Ofcom**, the British NRA, as a continuation of the peer support collaboration between the two media regulators.
- ✓ Between 14th - 16th of May, the AC hosted, for the first time, the **61st EPRA Meeting (European Platform of Regulatory Authorities)**.
- ✓ On 15th of July, the **Executive Vice-president of the European Commission for Technological Sovereignty, Security and Democracy**, Henna Virkkunen, **visited the headquarters of the AC**.

VI. Media and information literacy

- With the support of the Council of Europe Office in Chişinău, the AC launched the first nation-wide **Media Literacy Barometer baseline analysis in Moldova**. The study was designed to identify media consumption patterns among information beneficiaries; to assess the public's level of critical thinking and resilience to disinformation; to evaluate to what extent different types of media are susceptible to influence people's opinions, choices and decisions.
- In cooperation with the Information Center of the European Union in Moldova, Europe Café, the AC launched, starting with this May, a **media and information literacy campaign**, designed to educate media professionals, relevant stakeholders and the general public on Moldova's legal alignment with EU standards in the audiovisual and mass-media sectors. The campaign is carried out on the official social media accounts of the regulatory authority, and aims at informing a broad range of beneficiaries about media regulation and the transposition of the EU Audiovisual Media Services Directive as well as key provisions of EMFA into Moldovan legislation.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!



14th of May 2025,

Welcome discourse of President Maia Sandu, ahead of the 61st EPRA Meeting, Moldova