BRAF
BLACK SEA BROADCASTING REGULATORY AUTHORITIES FORUM

RTÜK
RADYO VE TELEVİZYON ÜST KURULU

BRAF 10TH ANNUAL MEETING

WORKSHOP on DISINFORMATION and DIGITAL MEDIA LITERACY

18-20 September 2023 - ANTALYA

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Mr. Ebubekir ŞAHİN Foreword



The digital age allows information to circulate rapidly and reach global audiences in seconds. Consequently it flows ceaselessly, unrestricted by borders or time zones, thus, the need for discernment has never been more critical. As we embark on this collective endeavouring, we recognize that disinformation is not merely a buzzword but a pervasive force that shapes perceptions, influences decisions, and, at times, threatens the very foundations of democratic societies.

Each contributor brought a unique perspective, fostering a rich tapestry of insights that is hoped to inspire thoughtful reflection and actionable strategies.

In this pursuit, collaboration is the key. Academia, industry, policymakers, and citizens alike must come together egally to promote media literacy as a cornerstone of our digital society. It is a shared responsibility to promote education that goes beyond traditional boundaries, embracing digital literacy as an essential skill for the 21st century. The concept of media literacy emerges as a beacon of hope in this vast sea of uncertainty. Media literacy is a fundamental skill, a shield that empowers individuals to navigate the currents of information with discernment and critical thinking. It is not just consuming information but also about understanding its origins, evaluating its credibility, and moreover actively participating in designing narrative communication that define our shared reality. Together we can effectuate a future where disinformation is recognized, resisted, and replaced by a collective commitment to truth.

The Black Sea region, with its rich history, diverse cultures, and geopolitical significance, stands at a crucial crossroads where the cooperative efforts of its nations can play a pivotal role in fostering the dissemination of trustful information. The media landscape in the Black Sea region is evolving rapidly, with technological advancements providing both opportunities and challenges. Collaborative efforts in the realm of media can virtuate the positive influence of technology while mitigating its negative consequences. The Black Sea region, comprising a mosaic of nations with distinctive histories, languages, and perspectives, faces unique challenges in ensuring the veracity of information. The diversity within the region should be viewed not as an obstacle but as an opportunity for collaboration.

Black Sea countries must recognize the shared responsibility in shaping the media landscape. By embracing cooperation, these nations can collectively build a foundation of trust, resilience, and reliability in their media environments. In doing so, they not only safeguard the integrity of their societies but also contribute to the broader global effort to ensure that information remains a force for enlightenment rather than manipulation.

Ms. Deniz GÜÇER Foreword



In today's interconnected World, the recognition of factual and fake information has become undecipherable due to the rapid dissemination of information through emerging digital landscape.

The digital environment allows misinformation and disinformation to find fertile ground to propagate. The workshop was aimed to analyze the sources of disinformation and explore the tools that make individuals vulnerable to manipulation. It was also intended to let the authorities benefit from the variant approaches and experiences. The experts and professionals who participated in the workshop brought together a wealth of knowledge that can be carried into effect while combatting disinformation.

The best practices in regards to media literacy, and how it could be promoted, was also the crucial point on the exchange of ideas. The participant authorities built a consensus about the importance of media literacy to be taught starting from the early ages in which media consumers are fed with the techniques to discern actual facts from misinformation and disinformation as well as the strategies to empower themselves towards the risk of harmful contents.

The BRAF 10th Annual Meeting, which was held in the sequel of the valuable workshop, where the member authorities shared their country reports in terms of their studies and works, all in the same breath, licencing problems and their legislative regulations.

I extend my gratitude to all those who contributed to the success of this event — the organizers, presenters, participants, and sponsors who recognized the exigence of the critical issues on the information arena and media space; where the importance and the necessity of the regulatory authorities and collective effort were once again acknowledged.

Introduction



The 10th Annual Meeting of the Black Sea Broadcasting Regulatory Authorities Forum (BRAF) was held on 18-19th of September, 2023 in Antalya, Türkiye hosted by the Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTÜK), under the organization of the Secretary General of BRAF Ms. Deniz GÜÇER, whom she is the Member of Supreme Council RTÜK.

The Event commenced with a Gala Night on September 18th, where the Secretary General of BRAF Ms. Deniz GÜÇER gave her welcoming speech followed by the keynote remarks of Mr.Gökhan YAZGI, Deputy Minister of Culture and Tourism and Mr. Hulusi ŞAHİN, Governor of Antalya.

As the guest speaker, Deputy Minister of Culture and Tourism Mr. Gökhan Yazgı, stated that the media is now not only a source of news but also a tool for creating impact on and imposing transformation over societies. He pointed out that this transformation today brought about new challenges and responsibilities along with it, and explained that one of the most striking of them is disinformation that has become so far as one of the biggest threats to the media and societies all over the world.

Mentioning that BRAF's meeting is important in this field, Yazgı said: “The impact of disinformation poses a major threat not only for those who consume news and information, but also for the well-being of society, democratic processes, and cultural values. Therefore, fighting against disinformation and enforcing digital media literacy has become the responsibility of all of us. In this work-shop, important evaluations will be made as regards to the practices exerted

so far to prevent disinformation, and the necessary actions that should be taken to improve the cooperation between media organizations and regulatory authorities, and the methods to be used to create a more reliable media environment."

The Deputy Minister Yazgı emphasised that the regulatory authorities would discuss the media literacy and how it could be put into usage more effectively to cope with the challenges of the digital age. He added that this workshop had a vital importance to understand the developments in the media field, solve arising problems and ensure the collaboration among the authorities.

The Governor of Antalya Mr. Hulusi Şahin stated also the importance of sharing experience on a mutual basis and added that we are going through in such a period in which digital literacy is needed more and more and disinformation challenges everyone on earth. Pointing out the importance of the topics in discussion during the workshop, Governor Şahin said; "I believe that important results will be achieved and suggestions for the solutions will be put forward, from which we will also be able to benefit."

On September 19th, the program began with the workshop on "Disinformation and Media Literacy". Besides BRAF Member Authorities, regulatory authority officials from Malaysia, TRNC, Kosovo and North Macedonia were present as guests in the workshop.

In today's World, disinformation has become a global problem affecting masses. In the course of the workshop which was moderated by the President of AMA (Albania) Ms. Armela Krasniqi, Greece NCRTV Board Member Prof. Georgios Pleios, RTÜK Public Opinion, Broadcast Research and Measurement Department Head Mr. Deniz Güler, Serbia REM International Relations Coordinator Ms. Jelena Kolo Jovanovic and RTÜK Vice President Advisor Ms. Melike Yiğit Bakır expressed their opinions and put forward their attitudes in regards to approaching disinformation.Panelists stressed the importance of digital literacy and presented their studies on fighting against disinformation. The interactive discussions followed the valuable outcomes.

BRAF 10th Annual Meeting on Licensing Problems pursued the workshop, where country reports were presented by the authority officials.

After the presentation of the member authorities country reports regarding their previous year progresses, in the wake of the voting Azerbaijan was elected by majority of votes as the chair authority of the Black Sea Broadcasting Regulatory Authorities Forum (BRAF) in the term of year 2024.

BRAF 10th Annual Meeting
&
Workshop on Disinformation and Digital Media Literacy

18-19 September 2023 – Antalya, Türkiye (Sueno Hotels Deluxe Belek)

September 18th, 2023 (Gala)

18:30 – 19:00: Arrival

19:00 – 19:30: Welcome Speeches

Ms. Deniz GÜÇER, Secretary General of BRAF

Mr. Gökhan Yazgı, Vice Minister of Culture and Tourism

Mr.Hulusi Şahin, Governor of Antalya

19:30 – 21:30: Gala Dinner

September 19th, 2023 (Workshop on Disinformation and Digital Media Literacy)

09:00 – 09:30: Registration and Coffee

09:30 – 10:15: Introduction to Disinformation and Digital Media Literacy

-Opening speech, Deniz GÜÇER, Secretary General of BRAF

-Alexei Nistrean, Executive Manager in BSEC PERMIS

10:15 – 10:30: Coffee Break

10:30 – 12:00: Workshop: **Disinformation and Digital Media Literacy**

- Prof. Georgios Pleios, Member of Council, NCRTV (Greece)

- Deniz GÜLER, Head of Department of Public Opinion, Broadcast Research and Measurement, RTÜK (Türkiye)

- Jelena Kolo Jovanović, Coordinator for International Affairs, REM (Serbia)

- Melike YİĞİT BAKIR, Vice President Advisor, RTÜK (Türkiye)

- Conclusion and moderation by Armela KRASNIQI, President of AMA (Albania)

12:00 – 12:30: Closing remarks by Armela KRASNIQI,

12:30 – 14:00: Lunch

September 19th, 2023 (BRAF 10th Annual Meeting – Licensing Challenges in the Digital Age

-Only for BRAF Members-

14:00 – 14:15: Opening of the meeting, welcome/opening speeches

Deniz GÜÇER, Secretary General of BRAF

Ambassador Assoc. Prof. Merve Safa KAVAKCI, First Deputy Secretary

General of BSEC PERMIS

14:15 – 14:20: Adoption of the agenda

14:20 – 14:30: Brief revision of previous meeting (BRAF 2018 Romania Meeting) -

Monitoring Internet Media in the Digital Age

14:30 – 15:30: **Country Reports** by all Member Authorities on one year/since last meeting progress in Member States

15:30 – 15:45: Coffee Break

15:45 – 16:45: Main Theme: **Licensing Challenges in the Digital Age**

16:45 – 17:00: Nomination for BRAF Presidency in coming years- 2023/2024

17:00 – 17:15: Closing of BRAF 10th Annual Meeting

September 20th, 2023

Departure of the delegations

Mr. Gökhan Yazgı
Vice Minister of Culture and Tourism



I would like to express my pleasure to join you on this occasion, which is a step forward to the resumption of the activities of BRAF (Black Sea Broadcasting Regulatory Authorities Forum).

The media world has undergone a major transformation since BRAF's last meeting in Romania in October 2018.

Media has now become not only a source of the news but also a tool of societal influence and transformation. This transformation has brought new challenges and responsibilities along with it.

Again, as we all have witnessed, disinformation has become one of the biggest threats that media world and society faces.

The impact of disinformation poses a major threat not only for those who consume news and information, but also for the wellbeing of society, democratic processes, and cultural values.

Therefore, fighting disinformation and strengthening digital media literacy has become the responsibility of all of us.

In this workshop, important evaluations will be made regarding the practices to prevent disinformation, and required actions to strengthen the cooperation between media organizations and regulatory authorities, and methods to create a more reliable media environment.

The regulatory authorities will discuss about the media literacy and how it can be put to use more effectively to cope with the challenges of the digital age.

I see this challenge as a valuable effort to raise the awareness of the communities, while consuming media and providing media services.

In addition, BRAF's 10th Annual Meeting will provide an opportunity to exchange ideas on how media regulations can keep up with the new dynamics that the digital age has introduced.

As a result, this event brings the BRAF family together, and it will be an important platform to understand developments in the media field, to solve problems and to collaborate.

I wish that this meeting will be prospering, and I believe that it will be the beginning of concrete steps to be taken for a more reliable media environment, and I would like to thank all participants for their contributions.

Mr. Hulusi Şahin
Governor of Antalya



To begin with; I would like to express my appretiation and honor to host you in Antalya.

I was born in 1971, and there was no television in Türkiye in those times. My first memory of my childhood related to television is gathering in frontof a tv screen early in the morning to watch Muhammad Ali matches. Fifty years have passed since then, but it feels like 500 years. Now we live in a new World, it is no longer the World we know, it is a digital World which has new rules.

Achieving a new lifestyle also involves serious problems. New crime types arose which never existed. And this new world is transforming itself every day. We, the authorities, are responding to the new requirements of this new World with great difficulty.

Therefore, we need to bunch together the knowledge of the authorities along the line, whom they have similar experiences, to combat these new challenges. I believe that these meetings will meet our needs concerning this issue.

Therefore, I think that these environments are inestimable, where mutual experiences and solutions can be shared. We are going through an era where in particular digital literacy and disinformation are challenging us . And I believe that tomorrow's workshop will yield susbtantial results and solution proposals.

I would like express my profound thanks to distinguished Radio and Television Supreme Council Members and Executives, and esteemed General Secretary of BRAF for organizing this event in Antalya.

Ms. Deniz Güçer
Secretary General of BRAF



As member countries of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization (BSEC), we established the Black Sea Broadcasting Regulatory Authorities Platform (BRAF) in 2008. BRAF, has been holding annual meetings since 2009. Turkey's audiovisual media regulatory authority RTÜK, is pleased and honoured to organize "BRAF 10th Annual Meeting" and priorly "Disinformation and Digital Media Literacy Workshop" this year.

After the meeting in Romania in 2018, our initiatives had been disrupted due to the pandemic. We make much of this year's meeting in order to concentrate our attention on our works at a fast pace. Here, we will not only hold our 10th Annual Meeting, but also hold a very important workshop, where, we will discuss the issue of disinformation, which has become a common problem of the world, and talk over the issue of digital literacy, which we believe that everyone, especially the children, should be taught. The word disinformation is defined in the dictionary as 'dissemination of false information'. Unfortunately, media has become the epicentre of disinformation. As RTÜK,we approach to the issue of disinformation in audiovisual media, intently and meticulously.

As a result of diversification and digitalization of media channels, we see that false statements, fabricated news, disinformation and misinformation are spreading rapidly. It is also a fact that the speed of the dissemination of false or fake news is much higher than the circulation of true information. Disinformation has now become a matter of national security for some countries. It has even gone beyond and turned into a matter of global security. Our mutual mission must be eliminating all kinds of fake news and disinformation. Hardly, this can not be accomplished alone neither by an institution or an individual. Fighting against disinformation can only be possible with a common sense. Authorized institutions, technology companies, non-governmental organizations, scientists, media institutions and journalists should liaise to succeed in this mission.

As I conclude my words, I would like to express my gratitude to everyone who has contributed and will proceed their contribution to the studies.

Mr. Alexei Nistrean

Executive Manager in BSEC PERMIS



I would like to thank Ms. Deniz Güçer, Secretary General of BRAF for inviting us to participate in today's Workshop. Together with Ambassador Kavakcı, First Deputy Secretary General, we are representing the Permanent International Secretariat (PERMIS) of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) Organization located in İstanbul.

PERMIS has a close cooperation with BFAF, a valuable Sectoral Dialogue Partner of BSEC. During the last couple of years, we have established even closer working relationship. Contacts have been maintained at the level of Secretary General of BSEC PERMIS and Secretary General of BRAF, including the visits to each other headquarters, the last one in Ankara in

January 2020. The representatives of BRAF actively participated in the meetings of our Working Group on Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), contributing to the discussions with concrete proposals for cooperation.

Disinformation and media literacy. This is a an interesting and at the same time a controversial subject that we are addressing today. According to Wikipedia, disinformation is false information deliberately spread to deceive people. Other dictionaries have similar meaning or interpretation.

United Nations, Council of Europe, other inter-governmental organizations discuss the challenges posed by disinformation and the responses to it from States, private entities and non-governmental organizations. For instance, the UN General Assembly has expressed concern over the proliferation of disinformation. According to the UN, disinformation spreads when people feel the political disappointment, economic disparity or social inequality. It is aggravated when the rights to freedom of expression and access to information are limited or marginalized. Disinformation can differentiate entire societies, particularly if it is promoted by Governments and public representatives. In this case it may have significant negative consequences, including spreading hate, and even inciting violence.

In today's rapidly evolving digitalized world the speed and volume of information is circulating and spreading at an instant and covers an huge number of people throughout countries and continents. If misinformation is placed in this current or flow it has an unprecedented effect on people, their behaviour and deeds.

So, the natural question which comes to our minds is how to counter disinformation, how to stop it spread and influence the behavioural activities of individuals and societies? One solution in this respect would be to ensure in a proper way the rights of access to information and freedom of expression. It is the international obligation of our States to promote and protect these rights and to maintain a vibrant and pluralistic info-space which is crucial for individuals, but also for journalists, academics and human rights activists to initiate and maintain an intense debates on the issues of common concern. Debates contribute to exposing misinformation and tend to increase clarity on uncertainties and doubts. Improved education systems that foster critical thinking can also help in this regard. At the same time, it is important that the Governments ensure wide and free access to information so that it reaches all communities and

constituencies. BRAF may take the lead and bring the debate into BSEC helping us to further consider it.

In conclusion, I wish the Workshop a further fruitful discussion and debate on the issue of misinformation and express my thanks for your attention

Madam Ambassador Assoc. Prof. Merve Safa Kavakcı

First Deputy Secretary General of BSEC PERMIS



Since the first high level meeting of the Black Sea Broadcasting Regulatory Authorities Forum held in Istanbul at the PERMIS Headquarters in June 2008, BRAF has been regarded as a reliable, active and valuable Sectoral Dialogue Partner of the BSEC Organization. The Forum plays a crucial role in promoting the objectives of our organization. This is particularly valid when it comes to fostering the exchange of information and experience in the broadcasting sector of the Black Sea region. In addition to promoting the cooperation among the national regulatory authorities, BRAF continues to "coordinate the work towards enhancing the right to communication, universal access to and the freedom of information regarding governance and matters of public interest in the BSEC region" as stipulated in its founding documents.

In addition to its activities in the field, BRAF maintained intense communications with PERMIS and extended its interaction with the BSEC Organization, including at the level of Secretary General of BSEC PERMIS and Secretary General of BRAF. PERMIS is looking forward to continue this interaction and cooperation in the period ahead.

Launched as a regional initiative with the vision of promoting peace, stability, dialogue, and prosperity by means of economic cooperation, BSEC continues to be the most comprehensive international platform around the Black Sea. During the last three decades, our Organization has matured into a dynamic institution and asserted itself as an anchor of cooperation in the wider Black Sea region. It is also right to mention that the continuing tensions in our region adversely affect the state of cooperation within the BSEC. However, we are confident that with its proven resilience, BSEC will resume its role in promoting stability and prosperity among the Member States as well as in encouraging and inspiring interaction and cooperation in the wider Black Sea region.

Under the Turkish Chairmanship-in-Office which started on 1 July 2023 and will last till 31 December 2023, the BSEC and its International Secretariat will ensure the full resumption of collaboration among the Member States despite the present challenges. The Turkish Chairmanship intends to build on the progress achieved during the past two Chairmanships-in-Office and will focus on less-explored avenues of cooperation that will serve the interests of the peoples of the wider Black Sea region.

PERMIS in close coordination with the Turkish Chairmanship have planned many meetings of the Working Group, Groups of experts, steering committees, task-forces, conferences and workshops. The Turkish Chairmanship will end with the convening in the middle of December this year of the meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the BSEC Member States, the highest decision-making body, with the participation of BSEC Related Bodies, BSEC Observers and Sectoral Dialogue Partners. BRAF, of course, will be invited to participate and to contribute to the discussions.

Let me wish every success to your meeting and to reiterate that the incoming Presidency in BRAF (2023/2024) may count on our full support, cooperation and assistance during the next presidency period.

Workshop: Disinformation and Digital Media Literacy



In the course of the workshop which was moderated by the President of AMA (Albania) Ms. Armela Krasniqi, Greece NCRTV Board Member Prof. Georgios Pleios, RTÜK Public Opinion, Broadcast Research and Measurement Department Head Mr. Deniz Güler, Serbia REM International Relations Coordinator Ms. Jelena Kolo Jovanovic and RTÜK Vice President Advisor Ms. Melike Yiğit Bakır, expressed their opinions and put forward their attitudes in regards to approaching disinformation. Panelists stressed the importance of digital literacy and presented their studies on fighting against disinformation. The interactive discussions followed the valuable outcomes.

Prof. Giorgios Pleios
Member of Council, National Center for Radio Television (Greece)



From disinformation to fake news. Who, why and how to deal with?

Disinformation can be spread by channels mainly by the most popular ones depending on the most popular and influential ones in a given era, depending on the audience whether they are young, women or elites and etc.

Disinformation can also be spread by discoursive factors such as, oral histories which older generations share with the youngest via songs, fairy tales etc. Nowadays the main discursive feature of disinformation is news media/broadcast because, the news give information about real facts and and it tends to reach vast majority by the internet, which the social, economic and cultural factors boost its dominance.

Fake news disinformation is powerful because it is not an obvious fiction but a factual information (supposedly something happened in the real world). Although it contains various forms and degrees of fiction, it is not visible by naked eye. Fake news is a blend of lies and trustful information. It is a complicated social and tightly structured social process. Fake news matters because it reinforces prejudices, boosts hate speech, undermines tolerance, weakens trust, harms human rights, destabilizes social institutions, challenges democracy, boosts authoritarianism.

Rearrangements in socio-cultural and ideological approaches is one of the alternatives in fighting disinformation. Such as returning to an integrated secular narratives about the real world, enabling social and political participation of the individuals, reducing social inequalities of all kinds, eliminating hostility in the society, standing against prejudices, embedding solid education in educational institutions. Notedly, bring in media education (media literacy) starting from in early ages. In addition, adequate technical organizational means are needed. Regulators should be among the main actors not among the spectators.

Mr. Deniz Güler
Head of Department of Public Opinion, Broadcast Research and Measurement, RTÜK (Türkiye)



Perception of Disinformation

In today's information-driven world, it's becoming increasingly difficult to separate fact from fiction.

RTÜK Communication Center is a set of systems established in order to instantly receive the acclaims, suggestions, expectations and complaints of the citizens about the broadcast programs offered through TV, radio and VOD platforms to analyze these notifications and prepare reports on the subject.

Notifications received by RTÜK Communication Center are examined and classified by Data Analysis System (DAS) within the criteria determined within the scope of the legislation. In

order to measure attitudes and opinions regarding radio and television broadcasts, and to reveal the changes in viewers and listeners regarding technological developments and researches which targeting different groups of the society are carried out regularly.

According to the researched carried on 21 provinces with 6527 people aged 15 and over, TV is the most watched news source upfollowed by social media and websites. The internet and digital media have transformed the way people access and share information, which leads to opportunities and also challenges. Social media platforms and online news outlets have become dominant sources of information for many consumers, shaping the public opinion and discourse.

When participants of the research were asked about their level of trust in media, they stated that they trusted TV the most. This has increased the need to explore the dynamics of trust in the media and its profound impact on our perceptions and beliefs about our society. Disinformation can have a profound impact on individuals and society as a whole.

Research has shown that people are more likely to believe information that confirms their existing beliefs, even if it is false. This phenomenon is known as confirmation bias. People also tend to trust information that comes from sources they perceive as credible, such as experts or authority figures. This can lead to the spread of disinformation if false information is presented by someone who is perceived as trustworthy. Disinformation campaigns often employ psychological tactics to manipulate our emotions and perceptions.

It's not just about being better informed; it's about understanding the psychological and societal forces at play and actively working to combat them. Combating disinformation requires a collective effort from all of us.

Jelena Kolo Jovanović
Coordinator for International Affairs, REM (Serbia)



Regulatory Authorities and Digital Media Literacy

The media literacy is the combination of traditional literacy and development/education of new media and technological skills, containing mass communication new codes and languages, digital media training. These trainings include developing the ability of citizens to access, analize, and produce information. The Media Literacy Manual is available in pre-university education for teachers and Professional associates.

The aim of the study is to be the best practice in Europe in order to promote media literacy while concentrating on the role of the regulatory bodies. It is particularly important to adopt a national policy or strategy, to include media literacy intensely in the education system starting from the early years, to constitute an institutional body regarding media literacy. Mutual work both with the children and the parents will derive progress.

Melike Yiğit Bakır
Vice Advisor to the President, RTÜK (Türkiye)



Media Literacy Matters

Media literacy is an essential tool when engaging with news, adversiting or any information we encounter in print, on the radio, on television, or online. It is a ciritical thinking skill that helps us question the intentions of those sharing information. Media literacy can help us to; analyze media messages, assess the influence of those media messages, contribute to the media landscape thoughtfully and responsibly, determine if a story is credible and a news source is trustworthy, understand the standards of good journalism and choose new sources accordingly, exercise healthy skepticism and develop good judgment on which stories should be shared.

A Protocol, which was signed between the Ministry of Education and RTÜK in 2006 and has been updated in 2022, on the education of Media Literacy aims to improve media literacy awareness in all grade levels. RTÜK regularly provides media literacy training within and outside the institution to ensure that students interpret media messages correctly and are protected from possible negative effects of the media.

Cyberbullying is also one of the major digital dangers for social media users especially for minors. Face-to-face bullying and cyberbullying can often happen alongside each other. Cyberbullying leaves a digital footprint –a record that can prove useful and provide evidence to help stop the abuse.

In order to promote self-regulation mechanism, on-demand media service providers have decided to strengthen the parental controls. Users now have the opportunity to protect minors from harmful contents using a PIN code. Parental control is highly required for the protection of minors against media.

Ms. Armela Krasniqi
President of AMA (Albania)



Important changes have been made on the audiovisual media law in the Republic of Albenia. The audio visual media law was aligned with the 2018 Directive to be compatible with the European countries.

As a regulatory authority AMA's role has been strengthened, and is enforced by the law to involve in media literacy education. In order to access the information, use the information, critically assess and create media content responsibly and safely Albanian citizens have been encouraged to have advanced media literacy skills.

AMA implemented media literacy in the curricula of more than 100 schools, which were chosen as pilot projects. The students have been taught critical thinking in elementary schools and in the first 2 classes of Gymnasium.

AMA conducted number of activities to support media literacy in 2022-2023, such as campaigns in social media and public debates to counter with disinformation and conspiracy theories, especially during pandemic and the phenomenon going on today.

AMA has provided great deal of training programs for young journalists, and journalism students to teach them the skills and tools which are essential to understand and counter disinformation.That is because sometimes the journalists are copy pasting and spreading

disinformation and malinformation unawarely, as they do not know how to differentiate the information. Therefore it is very important to know how to dig more in the issue.

Media organizations are supported by AMA. Number of books on disinformation, malinformation, propaganda, misinformation, info disorder, fake news have been published. Also the best sources about the topics have been translated and published in order to fill the gap in this field. In cooperation with Council of Europe AMA has implemented inception phase of mentoring the studio projects.

Additionally between September-December 2023 AMA has financially supported the project of media literacy of Albenian Media Istitute, a well-known institution among journalists. The purpose of the project was to carry out media literacy education activities for a period of time in Albenia, which will be available as from October for every country in Europe, aiming to raise awareness in the society about media literacy. Also, national conferences, seminars, discussions will be held in every region of Albenia. In December a media literacy report will be published with regard to the developments in Albenia and other countries. Even this conference has been very fruitful. The outcomes will enlighten the institutions to reinforce the laws while protecting the freedom of expression.

It is all agreed that today's media is more than radio, television and newspaper. The landscape is more general and more spread. The duty of the regulators is to provide good environment for media; not only in traditional media but in all what is called media (video blogs, portals, blogs). It is realized that this is a battle that the authorities should fight together. In this context, cooperation is very important. Internet is global, platforms are global, so the authorities should come together in global regulatory framework.

Subsequent to her speech Ms. Krasniqi invited the participants for a moment of silence to tribute the lost ones in the earthquake happened in Morocco.

BRAF 10th Annual Meeting

Country Reports, Main Theme: Licencing Problems

First Deputy Secretary General of BSEC Ambassador Dr. Merve Safa Kavakcı was the keynote speaker at the closed session which was held in the afternoon only with the participation of BRAF Members.

First of all, I wish to sincerely thank the President of RTÜK for taking the initiative to organize the annual meeting of BRAF in Türkiye in this splendid place called Belek which is known to many holidaymakers around the world.

Second, I would like to express my gratitude to the organizers for their kind invitation extended to the BSEC Secretariat to attend both the annual meeting of BRAF and the Workshop on Disinformation.

Since the first high level meeting of the Black Sea Broadcasting Regulatory Authorities Forum held in Istanbul at the PERMIS Headquarters in June 2008, BRAF has been regarded as a reliable, active and valuable Sectoral Dialogue Partner of the BSEC Organization. The Forum plays a crucial role in promoting the objectives of our organization. This is particularly valid when it comes to fostering the exchange of information and experience in the broadcasting sector of the Black Sea region. In addition to promoting the cooperation among the national regulatory authorities, BRAF continues to "coordinate the work towards enhancing the right to communication, universal access to and the freedom of information regarding governance and matters of public interest in the BSEC region" as stipulated in its founding documents.

In addition to its activities in the field, BRAF maintained intense communications with PERMIS and extended its interaction with the BSEC Organization, including at the level of Secretary General of BSEC PERMIS and Secretary General of BRAF. PERMIS is looking forward to continue this interaction and cooperation in the period ahead.

A vivid confirmation and recognition of the role of BRAF and its activities in the BSEC region is the recent decision of the 46th meeting of the BSEC Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs held online on 13 June 2023 which agreed to renew the Sectoral Dialogue Partnership status

of the Black Sea Broadcasting Regulatory Authorities Forum (BRAF) in the BSEC for another period of two years as of 1 July 2023.

Distinguished Participants,

Allow me to inform you briefly on the activities of the BSEC Organization. Launched as a The BSEC Organization. Launched as a regional initiative with the vision of promoting peace, stability, dialogue, and prosperity by means of economic cooperation, BSEC continues to be the most comprehensive international platform around the Black Sea. During the last three decades, our Organization has matured into a dynamic institution and asserted itself as an anchor of cooperation in the wider Black Sea region. It is also right to mention that the continuing tensions in our region adversely affect the state of cooperation within the BSEC. However, we are confident that with its proven resilience, BSEC will resume its role in promoting stability and prosperity among the Member States as well as in encouraging and inspiring interaction and cooperation in the wider Black Sea region.

Under the Turkish Chairmanship-in-Office which started on 1 July 2023 and will last till 31 December 2023, the BSEC and its International Secretariat will ensure the full resumption of collaboration among the Member States despite the present challenges. The Turkish Chairmanship intends to build on the progress achieved during the past two Chairmanships-in-Office and will focus on less-explored avenues of cooperation that will serve the interests of the peoples of the wider Black Sea region.

Among the priorities of the Republic of Türkiye in the BSEC in the current period I would like to mention the following:

- UPDATING BSEC ECONOMIC AGENDA & APPROVING MAIN COOPERATION DOCUMENTS

The BSEC Economic Agenda, which serves as a medium-term guideline and strategy paper for BSEC's work, needs to be updated to reflect the changing economic circumstances at the regional and global levels. The work on updating the Agenda has already begun in the Serbian Chairmanship-in-Office particularly through the establishment of the "Informal Ad hoc Group of Experts on Updating the BSEC Economic Agenda". Two meetings of the Group have already

taken place under the Turkish Chairmanship-in-Office and we are confident that work will continue so as to finalise and adopt the Agenda before the end of 2023.

*Work will also continue for the adoption of the "**Regional Trade Facilitation Strategy for the BSEC Region**" and the "**Framework for BSEC Single Window Cooperation**"; both the **Strategy** and the **Framework** will positively contribute to the facilitation of trade among the BSEC Member States.*

- ACTIVATING THE PROJECT DEVELOPMENT FUND (PDF)

While PDF stands as an established funding mechanism to realize joint projects in BSEC, it remains inactive due to a lack of sufficient contributions from Member States. The PERMIS and the Turkish Chairmanship will strongly encourage contributions form Member States to reactivate the PDF and introduce joint projects to give our Organization a new impetus in regional collaboration.

- REACTIVATING BSEC BUSINESS COUNCIL (BSEC BC)

As an economic cooperation organization without a strong private sector pillar is unthinkable, therefore the Chairmanship in close cooperation with the Secretariat will work to reactivate BSEC BC to intensify commercial relations among the Member States.

- STRENGTHENING THE EXTERNAL RELATIONS OF BSEC

As the most comprehensive organization of the wider Black Sea region, BSEC attracts the attention of many States and regional/international organizations, which wish to become part of the synergy and cooperation created by BSEC by obtaining Observer or Sectoral Dialogue Partner status. Observers and Sectoral Dialogue Partners contribute to the achievement of the goals of BSEC in a number of different ways and create a mutually beneficial relationship.
Acting in a spirit of friendship and good neighbourliness, the Turkish Chairmanship-in-Office will strongly support the improving of BSEC's relations with Observers and Sectoral Dialogue Partners and other regional/international organizations.

PERMIS in close coordination with the Turkish Chairmanship have planned many meetings of the Working Group, Groups of experts, steering committees, task-forces, conferences and workshops. The Turkish Chairmanship will end with the convening in the middle of December this year of the meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the BSEC Member States, the highest decision-making body, with the participation of BSEC Related Bodies, BSEC Observers and Sectoral Dialogue Partners. BRAF, of course, will be invited to participate and to contribute to the discussions.

In conclusion let me wish every success to your meeting and to reiterate that the incoming Presidency in BRAF (2023/2024) may count on our full support, cooperation and assistance during the next presidency period.

Thank you for your attention

Preliminarily Mr. Muhammet Gök who is an Expert from Türkiye Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTÜK), shared some notes from the BRAF 9th Annual Meeting which was assembled in Romania in 2018. The potential difficulties and problems that could be encountered during the implementation of the 'Golden Fleece Project', in regards to establishing a common television channel for BRAF members, was mentioned at the previous meeting. He also touched on the experienced difficulties concerning the inspection of media contents in the digital age, such as;

- unboarded online media,
- lack of technical tools and legal basis related to online media,
- inadequacy of media literacy.

The book about BRAF's activities in the last 10 years named "10 Years of Regional Cooperation in the Black Sea Basin: The BRAF Example", was distributed to the participants whom they were requested to provide feedback.

Armela Krasniqi, the President of the Albania Audiovisual Media Regulatory Board (AMA), reported that thereafter the recent adjustments in audiovisual media law, AMA was designated as a regulatory board, nevertheless, printed media and online media were left out of its' scope. Ms.Krasniqi provided information about the structure of the board and refered to the Board for Complaints; whom the union officiates to collect complaints independently of AMA. She also made a mention of the amended laws which were put into final form in May 2023. In Albania, where 16 televisions and 11 radio chanels offer service, 310 complaints were

submitted in 2022. Ms.Krasniqi emphasized that during the election time AMA went through a peak period, however not any complaints were received; that was an indication of public trust to the institution. She stated that digitalization efforts continue on frequencies, their current frequencies have been reduced from 700 Hertz to 600 Hertz, they have targeted 500 Hertz.

In the name of Azerbaijan, Mr. Hashim A. Alimammadzada, Advisor to the Chairman of the Board, noted in his presentation that:

- 95% of Azerbaijan population follow natioal and international channels, 3% follow international channels and 2% do not even watch tv.

- Total number of viewers was determined as 6 million and average screen time was determined as 4 hours.

- 44 platform operator, 39 territoral broadcaster, 26 platform broadcaster, 2 multiplex operator and 1 on demand broadcaster licence is owned in Azerbaijan.

- 72% of social media users consume YouTube.

He stated that the Azerbaijan Strategic Media Plan was implemented on February 1,2021, and he new media law was approved by Azerbaijan President Ilham Aliyev in November 2022. He also noted that the Global Media Forum on new media was held in Shisha on July 23, 2023, with participants from 34 countries.

Georgia was represented by Tamari Karbaia from ComCom Media Literacy Department, whom she shared the adendum made on Geogia's media law. The highlights of her presentation are as follows;

- In the second quarter of 2022, gambling-related bans were imposed in regards to advertising in Georgia and illegal contents were removed from websites.

- The amendment on a provision regarding the internet contents targeting teenagers was brought out to the Broadcasting Law with respect to Georgian Children's Rights on September 1, 2020.

- ComCom, has taken action against the broadcasts consisting violence and obscenity.
- A special department, a laboratory for media and a media school were established in Georgia to enhance media literacy.

- Innovations were brought to the educational programs in media schools and digital innovations were brought to the laboratories.

- An application called "Happy Onlife" was launched for cyber security and "True or Invented" against disinformation was developed as an application.

NCRT Expert Thedora Papadakİ, who made a presentatİon on behalf of Greece, announced that there has been a change in the law in 2020 and the rules regarding on-demand platforms were enhanced. She stated that they have been making every endeavour to ensure that human dignity is taken heed of in online broadcasts. She explained that some institutions collaborate on combatting disinformation, therewithal a national fact-checking platform was established. She noted that additional rules were set in regards to monitor the content of the influencers.

Moldovan Audiovisual Coordination Council Expert Veronica Ciochină shared some information about the Works done by their Council in 2022-2023:

- In 2022, 477 sanctions, 235 fines and 242 warnings were given to the broarcasters, in total, for their non-compliance with the legislation.

- In the first half of 2023, totally 128 sanctions, 98 fines, 29 warnings, 1 temporary license suspension were given to the broadcasters.

Moldova has met some alterations in certain fields due to Russia-Ukraine War, hence, it is aimed to combat disinformation in legislative level and the meaning of "disinformation" has been redefined by the Council. Moldovan Council investigated the course of the media and service providers in conveying accurate information to the public.

In the name of Serbia, REM International Relations Coordinator Jelena Kolo Jovanović, expressed that they have received 85 complaints in 2022 and 36 in the first half of 2023, which were mostly from the citizens. Since 2007, REM has been preparing reports about the elections; giving a particular attention on pluralism on media, the pre-election broadcasts have being monitored by them.

REM is working in relation with the EU in regards to media literacy and hate speech issues. Ms. Jovanovic also shared the information about the agreement between RTÜK and REM relevant to the Expert Exchange Program between two countries.

In behalf of Türkiye, RTÜK International Relations Department Vice Head of Department Mr. Yusuf Demirtaş presented the country report. In order to classify and analise the complaints, RTÜK makes use of information technologies. Concerning the media usage habits, surveys and researchs are carried out constantly, such as studies entitled "Research on Violence in Television Broadcasting", "Youth's Media Use and Digital Literacy" and "MedyaMetre-Media Usage Habits".

There has been juridicial developments in Türkiye along with the issuance of "Code of Streaming Radio, Television and On-Demand Broadcasts" and "Code of Procedures and Principles to Improve Access to Media Services for Deaf, Hearing Impaired and Visually Impaired People" since 2018. He stated that, media literacy themed cartoons were also produced in behalf of RTÜK Media and Children's Magazine. He also shared that there have been 884 private TV channels and 1650 radio channels, 45 public television and 68 public radio channels operating with license. He mentioned about 45 licensed on-demand service providers, including Netflix, Amazon, Disney Plus and Spotiify.

In the next part of the session, each authority presented information about licensing and the difficulties encountered during licensing processes. The legislation in Albania, does not apply to print media and online media supervision. AMA carries out the licensing process prioritizing the principle of impartiality and equality. The process in regards to the acquisition and the renewal of license, varies between 40 and 60 days depending on the license type.

In Azerbaijan, the licensing process is followed as in the form of a competition and results within two months. Their main problem is that; there is a large number of unlicensed on-demand service operators.

In her presentation, on behalf of Georgia, Head of ComCom Media Services Regulatory Department Tinatini Tchatchukashvil stated that they have had difficulties in controlling videosharing platforms and on-demand broadcasters. She explained that; recently enacted law allows the broadcasters offering on-demand services to obtain license, under the condition that, they comply with the terms such as opening an office in the capital, providing major employment in Georgia and being subject to Georgian laws. It was indicated that COMCOM have been confronting problems concerning the definition of video sharing platforms within the legal framework.

The Serbian authority mentioned that the licensing procedure for terrestrial broadcasts,on-demand cable, sattelite and IPTV broadcasts has been conducted via public tender; on the other hand public broadcasts and websites do not require license. Deputy Head of the Permits and Allocations Department, Mr. Ali Kaptan, provided information about licensing procedures in Türkiye; enouncing that more than 1000 internet

broadcasters such as Amazon Prime and Netflix have been regulated since 2019 and these have been stipulated to incorporate a company in Türkiye. He underlined that unlicensed broadcasts are proclaimed on RTÜK's website, and in order to obtain license, an application to RTÜK by the broadcaster is required. The applications for a license are detained within 72 hours. Considering the overuse of VPN in Türkiye and worldwide, blocking the website does not restrain the access to the content in question, which occures to be a serious problem.

Conclusion

BRAF 10th Annual Meeting was a display of diverse perspectives converging in the pursuit of a common goal. The discussions delved into the heart of ever-evolving media landscape. Regulatory authorities, engaged in open dialogues and presented the developments in their countries. The exchange of ideas, practices, facts and developments fostered a deeper understanding of the media ecosystem. As we bridge these perspectives, we can work collectively to shape the future of media governance which will effectively serve the needs and aspirations of a global audience.

This booklet will serve as a reminder and the evidence of a remarkable endeavor.

In the spirit of unity, progress, and shared responsibility, we look forward to the opportunities that await us on this exciting journey.



As for the year 2024, Azerbaijan proudly holds the position of the chair authority of BRAF. Azerbaijan is poised to play a pivotal role as a unifying force and create a platform for meaningful dialogue and cooperation through BRAF 11th Annual Meeting which will be held in Azarbaijan, Baku. Under the leadership of Mr. Ismat Sattarov, Audiovisual Council of the Republic of Azerbaijan (ACRA) is committed to fostering an atmosphere that encourages collaboration, enabling the participating authorities to address global challenges in media and stimulate concensus.

Our heartfelt gratitude goes out to each participant, speaker, and organizer who contributed to the success of this event.