

A G R E E M E N T

Today, April 30, 2024

THE CENTRAL ELECTION COMMISSION with its seat in Sofia, 1, Knyaz Aleksander R. square, chaired by Kameliya Neykova and

THE COUNCIL FOR ELECTRONIC MEDIA with headquarters in Sofia, 69 Shipchenski Prohod Blvd. chaired by Gabriela Naplatanova, PhD – interim chairperson:

- guided by European principles and recommendations for coverage of information campaigns in the media and the European experience of election monitoring.
- emphasize the importance of responsible, objective, accurate and honest media behaviour, respect for the good morals and human dignity of candidates.
- take into account the need to create the most favourable media environment in connection with the elections for Members of the European Parliament from the Republic of Bulgaria and for Members of the National Assembly (both scheduled for 9 June 2024) and the campaign preceding them;
- bear in mind the constitutional right of every citizen to seek, receive and impart information, conclude this Agreement on the grounds of Article 57, paragraph 1, item 24 of the Election Code in conjunction with Article 32. paragraph 1, item 22 of the Radio and Television Act.

Article 1. (1) The Agreement defines the principles and parameters of the specialised monitoring that the Council for Electronic Media carries out during the electoral campaign for both types of elections - for members of the European Parliament and for members of the National Assembly.

(2) The agreement shall be based on the provisions of the Radio and Television Act. The rules for conducting the election campaign - Chapter Twelve of the Election Code, the recommendations of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) for monitoring the behaviour of electronic media in the context of elections, the European experience as well as the practices of the Council for Electronic Media applied in monitoring other election campaigns.

Article 2. (1) The monitoring aims to establish the compliance of the pre-election behaviour of the media content providers with the media and the election legislation during the conduct of both campaigns. It will also cover the observance of basic professional standards and principles, the requirements for objectivity, equality and balance in the programs when presenting the political contenders and taking into account the diversity of opinions.

(2) In case of a violation of the rules of the election campaign, the Council for Electronic Media sends a signal to the Central Election Commission indicating the type of violation and its exact time parameters (hour, minute and second of the beginning and end of the violation).

(3) The monitoring will take into account quantitative and qualitative indicators in the programs of the media service providers and the observance of the provisions of the Election Code in connection with the pre-election agitation and will make an analysis of the data.

(4) The choice of programs included in the monitoring is based on the degree of their influence on public opinion. The territorial distribution, the specialization and the profile of the programs are taken into account.

(5) The monitoring covers 13 (thirteen) programs which are created and provided for distribution by the national public media service providers the Bulgarian National Television (BNT) and the Bulgarian National Radio (BNR):

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| 1. BNT 1 | 8. RADIO VIDIN |
| 2. BNT 2 | 9. RADIO PLOVDIV |
| 3. HORIZONT | 10. RADIO SOFIA |
| 4. HRISTO BOTEV | 11. RADIO STARA ZAGORA |
| 5. RADIO BLAGOEVGRAD | 12. RADIO SHUMEN |
| 6. RADIO BURGAS | 13. BNR-RADIO KARDZHALI |
| 7. RADIO VARNA | |

(6) The monitoring shall also cover 12 (twelve) programs of commercial media service providers: 11 (eleven) television and 1 (one) radio programs.

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|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. BTB | 9. EVROKOM |
| 2. NOVA TV | 10. 7/8 TV |
| 3. NOVA NEWS (television) | 11. TV1 |
| 4. BULGARIA ON AIR | 12. DARIK RADIO BULGARIA |
| 5. TV EURONEWS BULGARIA | |
| 6. SCAT | |
| 7. BULGARIA 24 | |
| 8. ALFA TV | |

(7) The Council for Electronic Media will also monitor programmes outside those described in the Agreement in cases where this is necessary - in the event of complaints, alerts or self-referrals.

(8) The Council for Electronic Media will also monitor on-demand services and video-sharing platform services where necessary - in the event of complaints, signals, complaints, or self-referrals.

(9) Part of those specified in paragraph 4 and paragraph 5 programs, in which no pre-election activity is observed will be monitored according to the course of the pre-election campaign and the information from the contracts announced on the sites of the suppliers according to Article 180 of the Election Code.

(10) The monitoring will also include monitoring the observance of the provision under Article 198. paragraph 5 of the Election Code, obliging media service providers to announce the tariffs for coverage of the election campaign on their website no later than 40 days before the election day. The inspection will cover the media service providers registered and licensed by the Council for Electronic Media.

Article 3. (1) The Agreement regulates the hourly monitoring of each programme for each day of the election period. The start date of the monitoring shall be 10 May 2024 and shall continue up to and including 9 June 2024.

(2) The time of the daily observation period shall comply with all the media programming schemes, but also with the recommendations of the OSCE. The Council for Electronic Media will implement the monitoring in the time zones from 06:30 to 09:30 and from 16:00 to 22:30 for television programs and from 07:00 to 11:00 and from 17:00 to 19:00 for radio programs. For the programs of the Bulgarian National Television and the Bulgarian National Radio will monitor the implementation of the Agreements concluded on the basis of Article 189, paragraph 4 of the Election Code.

(3) The set program time may be changed but necessary upon ascertainment of updating of a respective program scheme of the media and possible inclusion of agitation materials in another program time as well.

Article 4. (1) The parameters of the monitoring shall be in accordance with the norms of the Radio and Television Act and the Election Code and with the recommendations of OSCE.

(2) The monitoring parameters are the same for the programs of public and commercial media service providers. For the Bulgarian National Radio and the Bulgarian National Television, additional parameters are envisaged, related to the reporting of their specific obligations.

(3) The monitoring will take into account the share of paid and free forms of agitation as well as the presence of candidates in the media. For data analysis, a methodology adopted by the Council for Electronic Media will be applied, taking into account: the influence of the media, the programming of the pre-election forms and the different genres used in covering the campaign.

(4) The monitoring will also take into account the opportunities provided by the media for the perception of the election campaign messages and access to the respective program for persons with hearing and visual impairments: the use of specialized subtitles. sign language, audio description, audio subtitles, etc.

Article 5. In the programs of the Bulgarian National Radio and the Bulgarian National Television the monitoring will monitor the implementation of the provisions of the Electoral Code regarding the two national public providers as well as the observance of the imperative obligation to reflect the different ideas and beliefs in society through pluralism of views in the publicist programs with political and economic themes according to Article 6, paragraph 3, item 6 of RTA.

Article 6. The Council for Electronic Media, after discussion with the Central Election Commission, will present a report on the results of the observation of the election campaign within four weeks after the end of the elections. The report will also be published on the website of CEM.

For the CENTRAL ELECTION COMMISSION

CHAIRPERSON: <Signature>

Kameliya Neykova

For the COUNCIL FOR ELECTRONIC MEDIA

CHAIRPERSON: <Signature>

Gabriela Naplatanova, PhD – interim chairperson