

MEDIA CAPTURE MONITORING REPORT: **Romania**

MEASURING EMFA
COMPLIANCE

November 2025



MEDIA CAPTURE MONITORING REPORT: ROMANIA

The International Press Institute (IPI) and the Media and Journalism Research Center (MJRC) have partnered up to produce the 2025 Media Capture Monitoring Report on Romania, an annual report to measure media capture in the country and the degree to which the Member State meets the new EU regulation to combat the problem.

In August 2025, the European Media Freedom Act (EMFA) came into full force and Member States are required to enact reforms to align with the new regulation.

The Romanian report focuses on EMFA elements directly addressing media capture, namely, the independence of public service media and of media regulators, the misuse of state funds to influence media, and ensuring ownership transparency and media pluralism.

The report examines the standards prescribed by law and how they are currently implemented in practice. It also sets out the areas of reform needed to bring the country into line with EMFA while also making recommendations for where reform can go further.

The report is intended an important tool for journalist and media rights groups and national policy makers to guide reform and monitor the degree to which Romania is meeting its obligations.

The Media Capture project is a part of the Media Freedom Rapid Response (MFRR), a Europe-wide mechanism which tracks, monitors and responds to violations of press and media freedom in EU Member States and Candidate Countries. The project is co-funded by the European Commission.

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Changes in 2024/25

The successive elections held in Romania in 2024 and 2025 had a significant impact on the country's media landscape. Political and electoral advertising injected tens of millions of euros into the market, boosting overall media revenues. However, these funds did not benefit all newsrooms equally: most went to national TV channels and major online outlets, further distorting the media market.

The unexpected outcome of the 2024 presidential elections once again underscored the declining influence of traditional media within Romania's broader information ecosystem, as they continue to lose ground to social media where disinformation and propaganda circulate with minimal oversight from the very large online platforms (VLOPs). Călin Georgescu, a presidential candidate who had received little coverage from mainstream media, managed to reach the second round and gained massive popularity among voters through a well-orchestrated, and, as was later proven, illegal, social media campaign, which ultimately led to the annulment of the elections.

In regards to legislative changes, Romania has yet to implement any elements of the European Media Freedom Act (EMFA). Although the Ministry of Culture initiated some consultations with other institutional stakeholders and some non-governmental organizations, no official draft legislation has been put forward so far.

The National Audiovisual Council (CNA) adopted a new Audiovisual Code, updating secondary audiovisual legislation and extending its powers following the transposition of the amended AVMSD. However, the CNA exceeded its legal authority by ordering the removal of online video content beyond its jurisdiction, applying audiovisual provisions to ordinary social media users.

Independence of media regulators

Despite the independence guarantees set out in the legislation, the National Audiovisual Council (CNA), Romania's media regulator, has consistently demonstrated a high level of political influence. Many members have previously been affiliated with political parties or had other political connections.

In the Romanian media environment, which is characterised by an omnipresent, cliquish relationship between politicians and media owners and journalists, such close personal connections pose a significant risk to the independence of the regulatory body.

The CNA frequently fails to fulfil its mandate of defending the public interest. This is evidenced by a tendency to be slow and reluctant to impose appropriate sanctions.

Consequently, the regulator is perceived as a politicised entity that protects the interests of corrupt media moguls, which has a significantly detrimental impact on its credibility and authority.

During the 2024–2025 elections, the CNA issued specific regulations for audiovisual coverage of candidates' campaigns. Some were controversial, especially those allowing broadcasters to accept payments from political parties for editorial content such as interviews with candidates. Following the annulled presidential elections, the CNA further overstepped¹ its authority by ordering the removal of online materials protected under freedom of expression or falling outside its jurisdiction, including disinformation disseminated by unregistered social media accounts.

Institutionally, in October 2024, Parliament appointed and reappointed seven CNA members, several with clear political affiliations. The regulator's very existence was threatened in 2025 when, facing financial difficulties, the government considered merging the CNA with ANCOM, the communications and postal regulator, for budgetary reasons.

Legislation in line with EMFA provisions: Yes

Effective independence: No

Independence of public service media

Despite the legal framework that defines public broadcasters as "autonomous" and "editorially independent" institutions, both the public radio (the Romanian Radio Broadcasting Company, SRR) and the public television (the Romanian Television Company, TVR) have been subjected to frequent allegations of politicisation, censorship, questionable management practices, internal corruption, and financial mismanagement over the course of their three-decade democratic history. These allegations have had a particularly detrimental impact on the public perception and credibility of the two institutions, particularly that of the television operator.

The two public broadcasters (TVR and SRR) have encountered a number of significant challenges over the past 15-20 years. These include the impact of technological developments and the emergence of new media actors on the media market, economic crises, political instability, and the desire of politicians to exert control over the media.

TVR has been the most adversely affected, having failed to adapt to the new market shifts and consequently losing its relevance in the overall media market. Despite the politicisation of the institution, it was still able to provide some quality content, with its news and current affairs programmes maintaining a reasonable balance and impartiality. Nevertheless, its performance is below expectations, with an audience share that has declined significantly to less than 5%. Conversely, TVR enjoys a greater degree of editorial independence than the majority of private television channels, particularly those focused on news.

¹ See more at <https://apti.ro/content/cna-nu-poate-reglementa-tot-con%C8%9Binutul-video-online>.

Public radio enjoys a more advantageous position than its television counterpart. The station's larger audience share positions it as a genuine alternative to commercial radio stations. As with public television, the content of the public radio station is aligned with its public mission, providing relevant news, debates and reports on issues or areas not covered by commercial radio stations. However, as with TVR, there is a notable absence of bold, critical journalism directed towards the political and economic powers that be, due to the historically embedded obedience within the public radio institution.

Legislation in line with EMFA provisions: Partially
Effective independence: No

Misuse of state funds to influence media output

Romanian legislation provides a framework designed to ensure transparency, fairness, free competition and accountability in public procurement of goods and services. However, the current legal framework does not provide the necessary guarantees of transparency and fairness in the allocation of state advertising funds to media outlets. It has been observed that public authorities, particularly at the local or regional levels, have a tendency to award public advertising in a discriminatory, non-transparent, and preferential manner to media outlets that align with their political or financial interests. To avoid the restrictions imposed by public procurement legislation, authorities exploit legal loopholes that permit them to disburse state advertising funds without a tender.

One such method is the use of intermediaries, namely public companies owned by the same authorities. Such practices not only represent a significant misuse of public resources, but they also have a substantial impact on the local media market, driving the consolidation of media ownership and limiting the viability of independent media outlets. In addition to this form of financing, state funds are allocated to media outlets through political party spending. This is a legally permitted form of state subsidy used by political parties for the promotion of their activities in the media, among other purposes. In October 2025, faced with financial difficulties, the new government reduced the 2025 subsidy for political parties by 20%.

The current system of allocating public funds to media outlets has the effect of further politicising the media landscape in Romania, creating a number of dependencies and distorting the market.

Legislation in line with EMFA provisions: No
Fair and transparent allocation of state funds to media: No

² Law Number 4779, Official Gazette A 27/20.2.2021.

Media pluralism and political/state influence over news media

The Romanian media market is characterised by high diversity, yet there are concerns about the level of political polarisation, the lack of transparency of ownership, and the concentration of ownership, which could have an adverse effect on the market. Concurrently, a proliferation of new independent media outlets has occurred, particularly online.

However, the market fundamentals are not robust. A significant number of outlets are dependent on revenue generated by their owners, who use the media as a means of advancing political or business interests. In other instances, media outlets are used directly by political parties or state entities, as previously outlined. The apparent diversity of the television news offering masks the political affiliation of the majority of those who control these outlets, whether directly or indirectly.

In this context, the latest acquisitions, including the purchase of the news agency Mediafax by Titluri Quality in January 2025 and the subsequent takeover of the G4Media group by the same company in August 2025, further heighten the risk of media instrumentalization, by consolidating ownership in the hands of politically connected actors.

The current regulatory framework governing transparency of media ownership is limited to the broadcasting market. There are currently no regulations in place governing transparency of media revenues. There is no legal obligation for media companies to disclose information regarding revenue generated from public funds or state advertising. The latest concerns regarding market concentration relate to the anticipated convergence and merger of media outlets and large telecommunications companies. This is because powerful telecommunications companies can leverage their position to protect the media outlets they control.

Legislation in line with EMFA provisions: No

Effective media pluralism: No

Independence of media regulators

This section discusses how Article 30 of the AVMSD (Directive 2010/13/EU) is implemented.

Summary

In the Romanian media environment, the close relationship between politicians, media owners and journalists presents a significant risk to the independence of the National Audiovisual Council (CNA), Romania's media regulator. Such situations occur particularly when the Council addresses editorial infringements related to political issues, with some members voting, in various circumstances, in accordance with their political affiliation or affinity.

In an audiovisual market that is closely intertwined with the political landscape, the CNA often struggles to fulfil its mandate of defending the public interest. It is slow to apply sanctions that are commensurate with the offence in question. Even when the Council does take action against serious legal breaches, the sanctions imposed are insufficient to deter such editorial practices. This tacit encouragement of broadcasters to breach legal provisions, professional values and the public's right to free, balanced and fair information is found unacceptable by experts and observers. The CNA's practice of applying a single sanction for a broadcaster's multiple and repeated infringements has been the subject of particular scrutiny.

So too was the practice of applying separate legislation during electoral campaigns, which effectively grants broadcasters *de facto* impunity. The progressive system of sanctions resets each time a new campaign begins, triggering a gradual penalty mechanism: a warning for the first infringement, a small fine for the second, a higher fine for the third, and so on. Moreover, this sanctioning mechanism lacks predictability, as it is inconsistently applied and results, in most cases, in minimal penalties. The limited duration of election campaigns makes it difficult for higher sanctions to be imposed, thereby reinforcing broadcasters' *de facto* impunity. One member of the CNA publicly raised this issue in 2024.

Consequently, because the CNA fails to apply harsher sanctions on broadcasters, it is regarded as a politicised entity that safeguards the interests of corrupt media proprietors, which has had a significantly detrimental effect on its credibility and authority.

Legal and operational independence

The CNA is an autonomous institution, accountable to Parliament. It functions under the

² Mircea Toma, "Semnal de alarmă: televiziunile au imunitate în campanie – CNA e dezarmat de lege" (Alarm signal: television stations have immunity during campaigns – CNA is disarmed by law), Paginademedia, 23 October 2024, see <https://www.paginademedia.ro/stiri-media/mircea-toma-semnal-alarma-alegeri-cna-21811636>.

framework of Law no. 504/2002³ (the Audiovisual Law), which defines its mission as being to act as “the guarantor of the public interest in the audiovisual market”.⁴

In practice, the legislative provisions are not sufficient to guarantee the independence of the CNA. The organisation has been subject to political interference for decades, which has had a detrimental impact on its public reputation and credibility. It is notable that a controlling political culture, which seeks to exert influence over public institutions, is still prevalent across the political spectrum. The CNA has not been exempt from such practices.

Composition of the regulator’s board

The Council, the main governance structure of the CNA, comprises 11 members, all of whom are approved by Parliament. Six members are nominated by the two chambers of Parliament, two by the Presidency, and three by the Government. In accordance with political agreements, representatives from all political parties represented in Parliament may be nominated.⁵ The opposition has consistently been represented on the Council. To prevent the Council from being controlled by the political party in power, the six-year mandates of Council members are staggered to avoid an overlap with the political power term.

The law does not clearly define the performance or technical criteria to be used for the evaluation of the CNA's annual activity report, which leaves the authority open to political pressures. In the event that Parliament does not approve the CNA's annual report, the CNA President is automatically dismissed from this administrative function, and becomes a regular member. The Parliament then requests that Council proposes a new candidate from among its members for the CNA President position. The renomination of the dismissed President is possible. Nevertheless, this legal provision leaves the CNA President under a constant threat of dismissal, which could result in political control of the position.

In October 2024, the Romanian Parliament approved the appointment and reappointment of seven members to the National Audiovisual Council (CNA). Several appointees have clear political affiliations, such as Georgică Severin, a former Social Democratic Party senator and head of the public radio broadcaster, raising renewed concerns about the politicisation of the regulator.⁶ For the past year, the CNA has operated without a formally appointed President, being managed instead by its Vice-President.⁷ This situation stems from the system of behind-closed-doors political negotiations through which parties distribute public positions in key institutions.

³ Legea audiovizualului nr. 504/2002, cu modificările și completările ulterioare, see (in Romanian): <https://www.cna.ro/article12050,12050.html> (hereafter Audiovisual Law).

⁴ Audiovisual Law, Art. 10.

⁵ Audiovisual Law, Art. 13.

⁶ Iulia Bunea, “CNA are membri noi: Georgică Severin, Vasile Bănescu, Daniela Bârsan și Lucian Dindirică se numără printre cei propuși” (The CNA has new members: Georgică Severin, Vasile Bănescu, Daniela Bârsan and Lucian Dindirică among those proposed), Pagina de Media, 18 October 2024, see <https://www.paginademediei.ro/cna/cna-membri-cna-noi-21751015>.

⁷ See more at <https://cna.ro-Membrii-Consiliului-.html>.

Independence of the regulator's members

The regulatory framework is explicit in stating that members of the CNA must refrain from any political or commercial affiliation during their tenure. In the event of a conflict of interest, the member in question is removed from the Council by right and their position becomes vacant. It is then filled by a substitute, elected through the same parliamentary process as the full member.⁸

Financial autonomy

The Audiovisual Law does not provide the budget for the CNA. Instead, the CNA's budget is set by the government through the annual national budget law, which is then adopted by Parliament.

The CNA's annual budget is publicly available, and the institution publishes annual activity and budgetary reports. The budget remains relatively stable, but it is insufficient to guarantee the effective fulfilment of the CNA's legal obligations.

In 2024, the CNA's total budget amounted to approximately €3.4 million⁹, with an increased allocation in the initial 2025 State Budget of €4.45 million.¹⁰ However, the budget cuts introduced by the new government in the autumn of 2025 reduced this allocation by €250,000.¹¹ The institution is expected to modernise its monitoring capacity through an EU-funded project designed to “transform the CNA into a digital authority capable of intervening in real time on audiovisual content, especially in the online environment.”¹²

At the same time, the Council needs to expand its expert staff, particularly in light of new regulations that impose additional responsibilities related to online content. The CNA currently faces a shortage of human resources: it employs only 31 content monitors — a figure far too low for Romania's crowded audiovisual market. By the end of 2024, just 121 of the 151 available positions had been filled.¹³

Tasks and accountability

The legislation is precise in defining the CNA's mandate and competencies. In accordance with the law, the CNA is responsible for monitoring the programmes of broadcasters/audiovisual media services providers operating in Romania to ensure compliance with audiovisual norms and legislation.

⁸ Audiovisual Law, Art. 12.

⁹ See the CNA's budget at https://www.cna.ro/IMG/pdf/Buget_2024.pdf.

¹⁰ See the CNA's budget at https://www.cna.ro/IMG/pdf/Buget_2025.pdf.

¹¹ See more at https://mfinante.gov.ro/static/10/Mfp/transparenta/Anexa2proiectOUGrectificarebugetdestat2025_29092025.pdf.

¹² Iulia Bunea, “CNA se digitalizează cu peste 20 de milioane de euro. Cel mai mare proiect din istoria instituției: analiză a conținutului cu ajutorul inteligenței artificiale, platforme de interacțiune cu publicul și un nou program de educație media,” Pagina de Media, 28 May 2025, see <https://www.paginademediei.ro/cna/cna-digitalizeaza-pest-20-milioane-euro-cel-mare-proiect-istoria-institutiei-analiza-continutului-ajutorul-inteligenței-artificiale-platforme-interacțiune-publicul-program-educatie-media-22048290>.

¹³ Information collected from CNA's annual reports.

According to the Audiovisual Law, CNA is entitled to establish its own bylaws. The most comprehensive secondary legislation adopted by the Romanian regulator is the Regulatory Code of Audiovisual Content.¹⁴ Furthermore, CNA issues other specific regulations, such as those pertaining to the coverage of election campaigns in the audiovisual media.

In August 2025, the Audiovisual Code was revised to expand the CNA's authority in line with the transposition of Directive (EU) 2018/1808 into Romania's Audiovisual Law no. 504/2002. The updated Code unifies the regulatory framework to ensure equal standards of protection and responsibility across television, radio, and digital environments. It applies to traditional broadcasters, on-demand audiovisual services, and video-sharing platforms under Romanian jurisdiction.¹⁵

The CNA is the public institution responsible for vetting and granting audiovisual licences. Broadcasting licences, which permit broadcasters to utilise frequencies and technical infrastructure, are issued by the telecom regulator, the National Authority for Administration and Regulations in Communications (ANCOM).¹⁶ The two regulatory authorities collaborate closely throughout the licensing process.

When formulating detailed regulations, the CNA adheres to a long-standing practice of transparent consultation with a diverse range of stakeholders, including broadcasters, civil society, and professional associations. This practice has been well-received by all parties, as it enhances transparency.

The financial difficulties faced by the new Romanian government have raised concerns about the future of the CNA. According to several sources, the government considered merging the CNA with ANCOM as part of budget austerity measures.¹⁷ The merger, reportedly planned for July 2025 through a government ordinance, sparked strong opposition. A CNA member publicly denounced the idea, while ActiveWatch and other NGOs criticised the proposal¹⁸, warning that it would undermine the Council's role as guarantor of the public interest in audiovisual matters and its responsibilities under the DSA, EMFA, and as the Council of Europe's focal point for the Safety of Journalists.

During the 2024 election cycle, the CNA adopted a series of controversial regulations governing campaign coverage that raised serious ethical and legal concerns. The Council and several private broadcasters defended the practice of accepting payments from political parties for interviews with electoral candidates, arguing it was lawful, a stance that led to the rejection of a provision explicitly prohibiting such payments for programs involving editorial input. Media NGO ActiveWatch¹⁹ strongly criticized this interpretation,

¹⁴ Decision no. 220, dated February 24th, 2011 regarding the Regulatory Code of the Audiovisual Content, see <https://www.cna.ro/Decision-no-220-dated-February.html>.

¹⁵ See more in this news release from CNA: <https://www.cna.ro/Comunicat-de-pres-ref-Noul-Cod-de.html>.

¹⁶ See more at <https://www.ancom.ro>.

¹⁷ Mirela Neag, "Un elefant se unește cu o furnică, iar furnicii i se taie 4 picioare. Acuze că cineva încearcă să-l prostească pe premier în procesul de restructurare," HotNews, 27 June 2025, see <https://hotnews.ro/un-elefant-se-uneeste-cu-o-furnica-iar-furnicii-i-se-taie-4-picioare-accuze-ca-cineva-incearca-sa-l-prosteasca-pe-premier-in-procesul-de-restructurare-2016368>.

¹⁸ See more here: <https://activewatch.ro/articole/comasarea-cna-cu-ancom-pune-%C3%AEn-pericol-libertatea-media/>.

¹⁹ ActiveWatch, "Sponsorizarea politică a emisiunilor de știri și actualitate politică de către partide este interzisă de lege" (Political sponsorship of news and current affairs programmes by parties is prohibited by law), ActiveWatch, 5 April 2024, [see here](#)

warning that it contravenes both national audiovisual law and EU rules prohibiting political sponsorship of news and current affairs content.

Following the presidential election, in which far-right candidate Călin Georgescu's online campaign was marred by manipulation, the CNA further damaged its credibility by overstepping its mandate: it ordered the removal of online videos protected under freedom of expression, and the removal of online videos outside its jurisdiction on the grounds of disinformation. This included removal of content posted by regular social media users. These arbitrary measures, lacking clear legal basis and due process²⁰, were widely criticised as acts of censorship that risk undermining the CNA's impartiality and legitimacy as a public watchdog.²¹

Appeal mechanisms

CNA decisions can be appealed in court, and broadcasters have exercised this right with varying degrees of success. In 2024, the Council was involved in 179 legal disputes, 78 of which had been resolved by the courts, while the remainder were still pending, most before the Supreme Court of Justice. Of the 78 concluded cases, 62 were decided in favour of the CNA.²²

Power to request information

The CNA is entitled to request information and data *ex officio* in the event that other public authorities make a request in that respect or if citizens file a formal complaint. Furthermore, the Council is empowered to issue urgent requests to the National Institute for Research & Development in Informatics-ICI Bucharest²³ for the purpose of obtaining information regarding individuals who may be in violation of audiovisual legislation or secondary legislation, specifically those who own .ro domain names.

Independent monitoring of the regulator's activity

The CNA's meetings are open to the public and the proceedings are broadcast on the institution's Facebook page. The decisions of the CNA are published on its website. All monitoring reports drafted by the CNA are sent to the broadcasters, who are invited to provide their own commentary on the conclusions presented. This practice is rarely replicated in the case of the audiovisual content posted on VLOPs, even when the owners of the targeted social media accounts can be identified.

There is no independent or parliamentary report on the activity of CNA, with the exception

²⁰ Asociația pentru Tehnologie și Internet (ApTI), "CNA nu poate reglementa tot conținutul video online" (CNA cannot regulate all online video content), ApTI, 15 December 2024, see <https://apti.ro/content/cna-nu-poate-reglementa-tot-con%C8%9Binutul-video-online>.

²¹ ActiveWatch, "CNA nu trebuie să cenzureze abuziv dreptul constituțional al cetățenilor la libertatea de opinie" (The CNA must not abusively censor citizens' constitutional right to freedom of opinion), ActiveWatch, 16 December 2024, see <https://activewatch.ro/articole/cna-nu-trebuie-s%C4%83-cenzureze-abuziv-dreptul-constitu%C8%9Bional-al-cet%C4%83%C5%A3enilor-la-libertatea-de-opinie/>.

²² See <https://www.cna.ro/Raport-anual-2024.html>.

²³ See more at <https://www.ici.ro/en/>.

of the annual report drafted and submitted by CNA to Parliament. It is evident that Parliament does not prioritise monitoring CNA's activity unless there are substantial interests at stake, such as the appointment or removal of CNA's members or its President. Local media NGOs, such as ActiveWatch, the Association for Technology and Internet, and the Center for Independent Journalism (CIJ), follow the institution's activity, with a particular focus on its enforcement of the law. However, they lack the financial resources to publish the findings of their monitoring on a regular basis.

Independence of public service media

This section discusses how Article 5 of the EMFA is implemented.

Summary

Despite the legal framework that defines public broadcasters as “autonomous” and “editorially independent” institutions, both SRR and TVR have faced persistent challenges in maintaining their reputation and credibility, being subject of frequent allegations of politicisation, censorship, questionable management practices, internal corruption, and financial mismanagement, particularly within the context of public television.

The two public broadcasters (TVR and SRR) have experienced rather disparate developments over the past 15-20 years. TVR has been the most adversely affected, having failed to adapt to the new market shifts and thereby losing its relevance in the overall media market.

Despite operating 14 channels, including regional and international ones, TVR has failed to attract a significant audience. Most of its channels register fewer than 10,000 daily viewers, a poor performance in a country of 19 million inhabitants. Market research data show that in 2024, TVR1 and TVR2, the company's flagship channels, had a combined audience of fewer than 75,000 viewers per minute nationwide.²⁴ By comparison, the most-watched channel, Pro TV, reached 621,000 viewers, while TVR's overall market share stood at just 2.8%.

Public radio is in a more advantageous position than its television counterpart. Its larger audiences position the station as a genuine alternative to commercial radio stations. Radio România Actualități, the flagship public radio station, currently ranks third nationwide, with an audience of nearly 1.6 million listeners out of a total radio audience of 11.36 million.²⁵

But even in such rather dramatic circumstances for public television, the politicians' appetite for control does not seem to diminish. Upon the formation of a new political majority in Parliament, MPs appear to view it as their responsibility to appoint their own individuals to leadership positions within public television and radio. This practice is

²⁴ Petre Barbu, “Televiziunile cu cele mai mari audiențe la nivel național în anul 2024” (Television networks with the highest national audiences in 2024), Forbes România, 5 February 2025, see <https://www.forbes.ro/exclusiv-televiziunile-cu-cele-mai-mari-audiente-la-nivel-national-in-anul-2024-429973>.

²⁵ See more data here: https://www.audienta-radio.ro/userfiles/items/Rezultate%20SAR%20W1_2025.pdf.

particularly prevalent among the country's two main political parties, the Social Democratic Party (PSD) and the National Liberal Party (PNL), now serving as coalition partners in government.

Finally, the public news agency Agerpres continues to be a significant player in the Romanian media landscape, leveraging its extensive resources, including a network of correspondents covering the entire country. In contrast to public broadcasters, the fate of Agerpres' management does not hinge on the parliamentary vote on its annual report. In 2017, efforts to amend the legislation governing Agerpres, which would have undermined the management's autonomy, were ultimately unsuccessful.

Editorial and operational independence

Public service media

The law regulating the public broadcasters states that the public radio (SRR) and public television (TVR) are “autonomous” institutions, “editorially independent”²⁶, and “their programmes are protected from any interference by public authorities, as well as from the influence of any parties, socio-political formations, trade unions, commercial and economic bodies or groups of pressure”.²⁷

Public service broadcasters are accountable to Parliament. The management is represented by three bodies whose responsibilities are rather poorly established by the law: the Council of Administration, the President-General Manager and the Executive Committee.

The national news agency

The legislation regulating the national press agency Agerpres defines its status as “an autonomous public institution of national interest, with legal personality, editorially independent, under the control of the Parliament”.²⁸

Legal provisions guaranteeing plurality of information

Public service media

There are legal provisions guaranteeing plurality of information on public service media in Romania. According to the law regulating them, public service broadcasters have a legal mandate to “ensure pluralism, free expression of ideas and opinions, free communication of information, as well as to correctly inform the public”.²⁹ The public broadcasters are distributed for free, and available in all households in Romania. All public television channels are on the must-carry list.³⁰

²⁶ Legea nr. 41 /1994 privind organizarea și funcționarea Societății Române de Radiodifuziune și Societății Române de Televiziune (hereafter PSB Law), see (in Romanian) <https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocument/4122>, Art. 1

²⁷ PSB Law, Art. 8.

²⁸ Agerpres Law, Art. 1.

²⁹ Agerpres Law, Art. 3.2.

³⁰ PSB Law, Art. 19.

The national news agency

There are legal provisions guaranteeing plurality of information on the Romanian national news agency. Article 3.2 of the law regulating the national press agency Agerpres states that “the information must be presented and transmitted faithfully, without any influence from public authorities or other legal entities under public or private law”.³¹

Governance bodies: composition

Public service media

There are no legal guarantees in national law to ensure that the procedures for the appointment and the dismissal of the head of management or the members of the management board of public service media providers aim to guarantee the independence of these outlets.

According to the law, the Councils of Administration of the two public broadcasters are composed of 13 members each. They are appointed by Parliament upon nomination by the following institutions: political parties in Parliament (eight seats), the Government (one seat), the Presidency (one seat) and national minorities group in Parliament (one seat), plus two representatives of the respective broadcaster, elected by the employees. The eight members nominated by Parliament are distributed according to the political representation, including representatives of the opposition.³²

In addition, Parliament is vested with the legal authority to appoint the President of the Council in both institutions, following nomination by the Council members. The Presidents of the SRR and TVR also serve as General Managers, who are heads of the Executive Committees responsible for the day-to-day operations of the two broadcasters. Another potential legal vulnerability is the consolidation of the President's and General Manager's powers into a single position. This structure facilitates government control of the institution, as it requires pressure to be applied to a single individual: the President-General Manager.³³

Furthermore, the dismissal mechanism of the Council, resulting from the rejection of the annual report submitted to Parliament, is employed by politicians to exert pressure and control over the two institutions.

The national news agency

Agerpres is managed by an Executive Committee, headed by a General Manager who is selected by the Prime Minister and confirmed by Parliament following the approval of the media and culture commissions. The General Manager's term of office is five years, with

³¹ Agerpres Law, Art. 3.2.

³² PSB Law, Art. 19.

³³ PSB Law, Art. 18-23.

the aim of avoiding any overlap with the parliamentary cycle. This approach helps to ensure that the General Manager is not subject to political pressure from the ruling party.³⁴ Furthermore, the General Manager is protected from dismissal if Parliament rejects Agerpres' annual report. This provides the news agency's management with greater independence from political forces and greater institutional stability.

Governance bodies: appointment

Public service media

The appointment of members of the Councils of Administration of public television and public radio is conducted through public hearings held by the media and culture commissions of the Parliament. However, this does not provide assurance regarding the professionalism, integrity or independence of the individuals nominated. In practice, the nominations are the result of behind-the-scenes political negotiations.

The national news agency

The members of the Agerpres Executive Committee are selected from managerial positions that are open to competition. The Agerpres Executive Committee comprises the General Manager, the Deputy Managers and the Managers of the Technical and Financial Departments.³⁵ In accordance with the law, they are not permitted to have any political affiliation.

Governance bodies: term

Public service media

The term of office for members of the Councils of Administration responsible for public television and public radio is four years.³⁶ However, there is often a discrepancy between the end of a mandate and the end of the parliamentary cycle. This is because the possibility of dismissal is high, particularly in the case of public television, due to the frequent changes in the political landscape.

The national news agency

The General Manager of Agerpres serves a five-year term, which does not coincide with the parliamentary cycle.³⁷

³⁴ Agerpres Law, Art. 14-17.

³⁵ Agerpres Law, Art. 14.

³⁶ PSB Law, Art. 20.

³⁷ Agerpres Law, Art. 14.

Governance bodies: dismissal conditions

Public service media

There are no legal requirements for justifying the dismissal of a director or member of the board of directors of a public service media provider.

The dismissal of the Council of Administration of public television and, respectively, public radio represents the primary mechanism by which politicians exert pressure and control over the two institutions. In accordance with the legislation, a vote by Parliament to reject the annual reports submitted by the two institutions will result in the immediate dismissal of the Council of Administration.³⁸

This legal provision subjects the management bodies to a constant state of vulnerability, particularly when there are significant shifts in political power, such as a change in the majority in Parliament. The provision has been misused on numerous occasions over the past three decades, resulting in frequent changes to the Council of Administration with the formation of new parliamentary majorities. The absence of specific, measurable and objective criteria to assess the performance of public broadcasters allows for the rejection of annual reports based on arbitrary criteria that suit the interests of politicians in power.

The timing of the parliamentary debate and vote on the annual reports has, on occasion, been aligned with the implementation of political strategies. For instance, it is not uncommon for Parliament to postpone the debate on the reports if there is no appetite for changing the leadership of the public broadcasters or if the majority wishes to maintain the leadership that has been appointed. In some cases, the annual reports were discussed and voted on two or three years after they had been submitted.

The national news agency

The legislation regulating the national news agency Agerpres clearly sets out the grounds on which its General Manager can be dismissed. These include resignation, inability to perform the duties of the role for a period of more than six months, a final conviction for criminal activity, and a situation of incompatibility as defined by law. There is no other legal recourse available to Parliament that would permit the dismissal of Agerpres' General Manager.

Funding

Public service media

In 2016, the funding mechanism of the two public broadcasters was revised.³⁹ The previous funding system, based on income from a licence fee paid by the country's households,

³⁸ PSB Law, Art. 46.

³⁹ PSB Law, Art. 39-40.

was replaced with a state budget allocation. The change in funding model has increased the vulnerability of public television and radio institutions to political influence.

The financial allocation from the state budget is calculated based on a flat tax per capita, with separate calculations for each institution. Despite the considerable financial support allocated to these two institutions within the context of the Romanian media market, they continue to express concerns regarding the adequacy of funding to meet their operational costs.

No irregularities have been identified in the state aid provided to public service media providers in Romania.

The two institutions also generate income from advertising sales, though these are relatively modest amounts, particularly in the case of TVR. No evidence has been found of any access restrictions imposed by either institution on their advertising time. The specific details regarding the tariffs or contracts are not publicly available. However, both institutions do include the total income generated from commercial advertisements in their annual reports.

With a 2025 budget of approximately €95 million⁴⁰, of which €86 million comes from the state budget, TVR's market performance remains well below expectations in a television market valued at around €426 million in 2024.⁴¹ The broadcaster's estimated loss for 2025 is approximately €4.4 million.

The national news agency

In 2025, Agerpres had a total budget of over €6.5 million, primarily funded by the state budget (nearly €6 million), with additional revenue of about €650,000 generated from its own activities.⁴² Compared with its main competitor, the privately owned News.ro, Agerpres enjoys a clear advantage in both financial and human resources.

Independent monitoring mechanisms

There are no independent authorities or bodies or mechanisms free from political influence that monitor the following aspects related to the public service broadcasters in Romania: their editorial/operational independence, the provision of plurality of information and opinions, the procedure of appointment and dismissal of their head of management or their members of the management board, and their funding procedure.

⁴⁰ Societatea Română de Televiziune, "Buget SRTV 2025" (TVR Budget 2025), TVR, February 2025, see http://mediatvr.tvr.ro/media-tvr/other/202503/buget-srtv-2025_75991800.pdf.

⁴¹ Profit.ro, "Piața de publicitate din România se apropie de un miliard de euro. Numai reclamele TV sar de 400 milioane euro. Digitalul vine puternic din urmă" (Romania's advertising market nears one billion euros. TV ads alone exceed 400 million euros, with digital catching up fast), Profit.ro, 21 May 2024, see <https://www.profit.ro/povesti-cu-profit/piata-de-publicitate-din-romania-se-apropie-de-un-miliard-de-euro-numai-reclamele-tv-sar-de-400-milioane-euro-digitalul-vine-puternic-din-urma-22085344>.

⁴² [1] Agerpres, "Bugetul instituției pentru anul 2025" (Agency budget for 2025), Agerpres, February 2025, see <http://media.agerpres.ro/media/other/202503/buget-agerpres-2025.pdf>.

There are instances when programs or editorial practices of the public broadcasters breach the audiovisual regulations, but they are rare and bear no resemblance to the practices of some private broadcasters. The sanctions applied by CNA are public and available on its website.

The Romanian Court of Accounts conducts an annual review of how public broadcasters manage their budgets. However, this is largely an auditing process that is applied to all state-run companies in the country. The results of their audits are made public.

Misuse of state funds to influence media output

This section discusses how Article 25 of the EMFA is implemented.

Summary

Romanian legislation provides a framework that aims to ensure transparency, fairness, free competition and accountability in public procurement of goods and services. The primary document in this regard is the Law on Public Procurement, which was adopted in 2016. The National Agency for Public Procurement (ANAP)⁴³, a public body, is responsible for ensuring the legality, transparency and efficiency of public procurement. Another entity involved in public procurement is the National Council for Solving Complaints (CNSC), which provides a forum for challenging public procurement decisions.⁴⁴

The existence of this legal framework, however, does not ensure transparency and fairness in the process of awarding state advertising funds to media outlets, as this type of funding does not fall within the scope of the Law on Public Procurement. Public authorities, particularly at local or regional levels, made a practice of doling out public advertising in a discriminatory, non-transparent, and preferential manner to media outlets that favour their political or financial interests. To avoid restrictions imposed by public procurement legal provisions, authorities use legal loopholes that allow them to disburse state ad funds without a tender, for example by using intermediaries - authorities' subordinated companies.

Such practices represent a significant misuse of public resources and a distortion of the local media market, favouring compliant media outlets and limiting the viability of independent media. The content published as part of these state advertising deals is frequently designed to promote high-ranking officials in local state bodies. Furthermore, state advertising is employed to prevent the publication of critical content regarding these officials and their institutions.

In addition to that form of financing, state funds are funnelled to media outlets through political party spending, a form of state subsidy legally used by political parties to promote their activities in the media, among other purposes. Political party expenditures do not fall under the provisions of the Law on Public Procurement.

⁴³ See <https://anap.gov.ro/web/en/about-napp/>.

⁴⁴ See <http://www.cnscl.ro/>.

All these patterns of distributing public funds to the media further instrumentalise the media outlets, creating numerous dependencies and badly distorting the media market in Romania.

The successive rounds of elections held in Romania in 2024 and 2025 had a significant impact on the country's media landscape. Political and electoral advertising injected tens of millions of euros into the market⁴⁵, boosting overall media revenues. However, these financial flows did not benefit all newsrooms equally: the bulk of the funds went to national TV news channels and major online outlets, further distorting the media market.

In October 2025, faced with financial difficulties, the new government reduced the 2025 subsidy for political parties by 20%, from an initial allocation of RON 284 million (€57 million) to RON 232 million (€46.5 million).⁴⁶

State funding spending: legal provisions, criteria for distribution and tender procedures

The Law on Public Procurement was enacted in 2016⁴⁷, following a period of significant legislative reform over the past 25 years.

In accordance with the Public Procurement Law, all public procurement of goods or services must be conducted through a defined set of procedures. These include the publication of an announcement of intention, followed by an announcement of participation, along with comprehensive documentation of the technical and financial specifications of the goods or services to be purchased.

All of the aforementioned details must be made public on various platforms, depending on the circumstances. This may include the institution's website, media outlets, or Seap.ro, the official government platform that hosts data about public procurements.⁴⁸ Once the tender process is complete, the public authority is legally required to publish an announcement of the award, including details of the procurement contract signing.

In practice, public authorities, especially local or regional authorities, tend to distribute public advertising in a discriminatory, non-transparent and preferential manner to media outlets that serve their political or financial interests. The challenging economic context of the local media market, where only a limited number of outlets benefit from nationally distributed advertising contracts, makes local media players highly dependent on income

⁴⁵ Expert Forum, "Subvențiile și rambursările pentru partidele politice în 2024: cum au ajuns partidele să fie finanțate aproape integral de stat" (Subsidies and reimbursements for political parties in 2024: how parties came to be funded almost entirely by the state), Expert Forum, 2 February 2025, see <https://expertforum.ro/subventia-partidelor-politice-in-2024/>.

⁴⁶ Cristian Andrei, "Bolojan s-a ținut de cuvânt, dar n-a anunțat. Guvernul a tăiat din banii partidelor. 'Unii dintre liderii partidelor nu au știut'" (Bolojan kept his word but did not announce it. The government cut party funds. "Some party leaders did not know"), HotNews.ro, 17 October 2025, <https://hotnews.ro/bolojan-s-a-tinut-de-cuvant-dar-n-a-anuntat-guvernul-a-taiat-din-banii-partidelor-unii-dintre-liderii-partidelor-nu-au-stiut-2088480>.

⁴⁷ Legea nr. 98/2016 privind achizițiile publice (hereafter Public Procurement Law), see (in Romanian) <https://anap.gov.ro/web/legea-nr-982016-privind-achizitiile-publice/>.

⁴⁸ <https://www.anfp.gov.ro/R/Doc/2020/Proiecte/Manuale/Manual%20achizitii%20publice%20noul%20pachet%20legislativ%20mai%2019.pdf>.

from local authorities, either through advertising contracts or through other services such as promotional materials or subscriptions. Local media owners have reported instances where the content published as part of advertising contracts is not labelled as such.⁴⁹

The law allows such contracts to be awarded directly, without a public tender, if their value is below the threshold set by the law, which is approximately €35,000 (depending on the local currency exchange rate).⁵⁰ However, there is an obligation to publish a notice of intention and a notice of award for this threshold. Authorities may award advertising contracts directly, without prior notice, if the amount is less than €1,800. This amount can represent a significant income by local media market standards, especially if the media outlet benefits from several similar contracts. This allows politicians or managers of public authorities to award them preferentially, based on subjective criteria, to friendly media outlets.

Such practices not only represent a waste of public resources, but also have the effect of distorting the local media market, with the result that media players who do not serve the public interest are favoured. Independent media outlets that adhere to ethical standards and pursue their journalistic mission are at a disadvantage, facing challenging economic and editorial decisions.

During the last years, large advertising contracts have been distributed to major national or local media outlets by institutions with significant resources such as some of the district city halls in Bucharest. Ads paid for by these city halls usually promote, directly or indirectly, the district mayors of Bucharest, taking advantage of a legal loophole allowing this kind of political publicity outside the electoral campaign windows.

These ad sales agreements are signed by some of the district city halls through intermediaries, usually subordinated commercial companies established or owned by those city halls tasked with producing and distributing the ads. This procedure is permitted by law, allowing public authorities to assign contracts to subordinated companies, which then contract private businesses, not having to comply with the restrictions imposed by the public procurement regulations.

An investigation published by the news portal G4Media unveiled⁵¹ that a company owned by the Bucharest District 3 City Hall contracted €6 million in ad services to several media outlets in the summer of 2023. Those media outlets published advertising materials about the activities of the mayor of the Bucharest District 3 without labelling them as such, a blatant case of public misleading. Moreover, advertising contracts are meant not only to promote local officials, but also to secure their protection by media outlets.

One other method of transferring state funds to the private media is through subscription

⁴⁹ Cristina Lupu, "Starea mass-media din România în anul super-electoral 2024" (The state of mass media in Romania in the super-election year 2024), Center for Independent Journalism Romania, 2023, see <https://cji.ro/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Starea-mass-media-din-Romania-in-pragul-anului-super-electoral-2024-1.pdf>.

⁵⁰ See Public Procurement Law, cit.

⁵¹ Sorin Semeniuc, Dan Tăpălagă, "Primăria Sectorului 3 a atribuit fără licitație un contract de 6 milioane de euro pentru propagandă..." (The District 3 City Hall awarded without tender a €6m contract for propaganda...), G4Media, 25 September 2023, [see here](#)

contracts, assigned under no transparent criteria to preferential media outlets. For example, in January 2024, the Bucharest District 4 City Hall acquired 200 annual subscriptions for the daily newspaper Jurnalul Național worth over €30,000.⁵²

One of the main ways in which state money is channelled to media companies is through public funds earmarked for political parties. These funds, which are state budget subsidies to political parties, are regulated by the Law on the Financing of Political Parties no. 334/2006.⁵³ Following an amendment in 2015, the law massively increased the funds allocated to political parties. Parties are allowed to spend these funds on various activities, including one called “media and propaganda”.

As a result, Romania’s media market has been flooded with party money in recent years, distributed with little transparency or accountability. Compared with 2023, subsidies for political parties increased by nearly 70% in 2024 (an electoral year), reaching a total of €77 million, of which approximately €47 million was spent on media and propaganda activities.⁵⁴ In addition, more than €130 million from the state budget was allocated to cover candidates’ electoral expenses⁵⁵, a substantial share of which went to political advertising in the media.

The Permanent Electoral Authority (AEP)⁵⁶ is the authority in charge of monitoring this type of spending. Political parties must report the total amounts spent for media and propaganda, including the details of those expenses (the final recipient, the total amount, and the outputs) to the AEP. The contracts for this type of spending do not fall under the Public Procurement Law or related regulations. Yet, their content should be governed, theoretically, by the Law on Access to Public Interest Information.⁵⁷

In practice, both the AEP and the political parties fail to disclose the details of the party expenses in the media. Moreover, most political parties use intermediary companies, such as advertising or PR agencies, to distribute their funds to media outlets as a way to hide the traces of the public money. They do so often as there are no transparency-related legal obligations regarding this form of spending if they do it via third-parties.

The Audiovisual Law forbids any politically sponsored content in the audiovisual media outside the electoral campaigns. However, political parties and some media outlets found ways to circumvent these restrictions, too, for example by signing contracts for content published on the websites of the broadcasters, which is not covered by the Audiovisual Law. According to media investigations, this content in most cases bears no political

⁵² Cristina Lupu, “Starea mass-media din România...”, cit.

⁵³ Legea nr. 334 din 17 iulie 2006 privind finanțarea activității partidelor politice și a campaniilor electorale (hereafter Political Party Financing Law), see (in Romanian) <https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocument/73672>.

⁵⁴ Expert Forum, “Subvențiile și rambursările pentru partidele politice în 2024: cum au ajuns partidele să fie finanțate aproape integral de stat” (Subsidies and reimbursements for political parties in 2024: how parties came to be funded almost entirely by the state), Expert Forum, 2 February 2025, see <https://expertforum.ro/subventia-partidelor-politice-in-2024/>.

⁵⁵ Simona Cărlugea, “De la 8 la 386 milioane de lei. De ce a crescut, în 10 ani, subvenția pentru partidele parlamentare și care sunt riscurile pentru România” (From 8 to 386 million lei: why party subsidies for parliamentary parties have increased over the past 10 years and what risks they pose for Romania), Europa Liberă România, 9 February 2025.

⁵⁶ See <https://www.roaep.ro>.

⁵⁷ Legea nr. 544 din 12 octombrie 2001 privind liberul acces la informațiile de interes public (hereafter Access to Public Information Law), see (in Romanian) <https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocument/31413>.

advertising marking⁵⁸, having the potential effect of misleading the public.

Political party spending is also used as an instrument to ensure favourable content for certain politicians or parties as media outlets receiving such funds do not publish critical information about the parties financing them. Moreover, some parties are allegedly using public funds to pay for smear campaigns against their opponents, which are misleadingly presented as journalistic content.⁵⁹

Finally, the government uses funds to distribute to friendly outlets at times of crisis. During the COVID-19 pandemic, for example, the government created a media subsidy program for all media outlets interested in running a four-month information and awareness campaign on COVID-19 effects. The program received over €40 million, a massive amount per Romanian media standards, which was distributed based on an opaque mechanism, without any qualitative criteria. It has contributed to and bolstered a toxic practice, that of preferential state funding of media, whose main costs are the editorial independence and the credibility of the media industry.

Transparency of state media contracts

State advertising spending must follow the same procedures as other forms of state spending, as set out in the Public Procurement Law. Data on state advertising spending, including the legal names of media service providers and the total annual amount spent per service, must be made publicly available on the Seap.ro platform or on the websites of the public institutions that award these advertising contracts. However, the data on Seap.ro contain many errors and the searches are limited by design, while the information on the websites of the public institutions and subordinate bodies is sometimes published in sections that are difficult to access, and sometimes not published at all.

However, the publication of the state advertising contracts, although it ensures transparency, does not guarantee fairness as the decision-making process regarding the awards of the funds is made at the local level.

The Romanian Court of Accounts⁶⁰ and the National Agency for Public Procurement (ANAP) have the legal mandate to monitor any public expense or acquisition and to request more information about them. The National Council for Solving Complaints (CNSC) can also receive challenges regarding public procurement decisions.

Monitoring state advertising spending

There is no political interest or appetite to monitor the distribution of advertising

⁵⁸ Cristian Andrei, "Laude trase la indigo la adresa PSD pe site-urile Antena 3, RTV și ȘtiriPeSurse.ro. Niciunul dintre articole nu e marcat cu Publicitate" (Identical praises for the PSD published on the websites of Antena 3, RTV and ȘtiriPeSurse.ro; none of the articles marked as advertising), HotNews.ro, 11 August 2024, see <https://hotnews.ro/psd-a-comandat-laude-trase-la-indigo-pe-site-urile-antena-3-rtv-si-stiripesurse-ro-niciunul-dintre-articole-nu-e-marcate-ca-publicitate-1768016>.

⁵⁹ "Editia #145: Campanie plătită al cărei scop a fost decredibilizarea Emiliei Șercan" (Paid campaign whose purpose was to discredit Emilia Șercan), Misreport, 31 January 2023, see <https://misreport.substack.com/p/editia-145>

⁶⁰ See <https://www.curteadeconturi.ro>.

contracts in Romania. Consequently, neither the ANAP nor other relevant bodies oversee the allocation of state advertising funds to media service providers, nor do they prepare reports on this matter.

The Center for Independent Journalism (CIJ), a Bucharest-based media NGO, publishes an annual report on the state of the Romanian media industry, which also includes data on government advertising expenditure to media service providers. The reports comprise a general assessment of the media based on interviews with media managers and journalists. Most of the information about problematic public procurement practices in the media mainly comes to light due to investigations published by independent and quality media outlets.

Media pluralism and political/state influence over news media

This section discusses how Articles 6 and 22 of the EMFA are implemented.

Summary

The Romanian media market is characterised by a high degree of diversity, but also by an unhealthy degree of political polarisation, low transparency of ownership and a medium level of ownership concentration, which has decreased in the past with the proliferation of new media, especially in the online environment.

However, the market fundamentals remain weak, with many outlets dependent on revenues provided by their owners, who use the media as a tool to advance political or business interests. In other cases, political parties or state institutions directly employ the media to shape the content they disseminate (see the section on Misuse of state funds to influence media output in this report). The apparent diversity of television news, for instance, masks the political affiliations and interests of those who directly or indirectly control most of these outlets.

The regulatory framework pertaining to media ownership transparency is currently limited to the broadcasting market. Conversely, there are currently no regulations in place governing the transparency of media revenue. Information on the ownership structure of broadcasters, including beneficial owners, is available for public inspection on the website of the CNA. Information on ownership for all other companies is available in the National Commercial Registry database⁶¹, but it is subject to a fee and not readily searchable.

Concentration of media ownership is covered both by the Competition Law⁶², whose provisions apply in a similar manner to all markets, and by the Audiovisual Law, which contains specific provisions, but only for the broadcasting sector. Relevant for the discussion on media pluralism are the criteria laid down in the Audiovisual Law for

⁶¹ See <https://www.onrc.ro>.

⁶² Legea concurenței nr. 21/1996 (Competition Law), see <https://lege5.ro/gratuit/he3dmmjvgy/legea-concurenței-nr-21-1996>.

determining the “dominant position in the formation of public opinion” in the audiovisual market.⁶³

The unexpected outcome of the 2024 presidential elections once again underscored the declining influence of traditional and mainstream media within Romania’s broader information ecosystem, as they continue to lose ground to social media platforms. On these platforms, disinformation and propaganda circulate with minimal oversight from the very large online platforms (VLOPs). A candidate who had received little coverage from mainstream media managed to reach the second round and gained massive popularity among voters through a well-orchestrated social media campaign later ruled illegal by the Romanian Constitutional Court⁶⁴, which ultimately led to the annulment of the elections in December 2024.

Transparency: legal requirements

Media ownership

Only the legal subjects of the audiovisual legislation (broadcasters and online distribution platforms) are required by the audiovisual legislation to make their legal name and contact details publicly available.⁶⁵ In practice, the contact details published by some broadcasters lead nowhere, either because the e-mail address is invalid or the telephone numbers are not available. The same is true of online media where a significant number of publications (mainly local media outlets) do not provide any contact information.

Only the audiovisual sector is under the obligation to disclose its ownership structure.⁶⁶ The CNA publishes on its website a document containing the full ownership structure of all broadcasting companies, including beneficial owners. The law requires any individual or entity holding a stake of at least 10% in a licensed broadcasting company or any other company that owns shares in a broadcasting company to inform the audiovisual regulator.⁶⁷

All ownership data about companies in Romania, including media companies, is available in the National Commercial Registry database. Access to this information is available for a fee, and expertise in data searching is required, which makes it challenging for the general public to find information about business owners. There are no specific regulations requiring media outlets to disclose the fact that they are owned by the state or a public authority.

In the event that a public authority owns a publication (print or online), the data in question should, in theory, be made available by the relevant outlets, given that public money is involved. However, there are currently no specific rules governing this. However, instances of such ownership are uncommon, and no instances of non-compliance with transparency regulations have been publicly reported. Furthermore, such information can

⁶³ In Romanian, the law refers to the “dominant” position as the “predominant” position.

⁶⁴ See the court’s decision here: https://www.ccr.ro/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Hotarare_32_2024.pdf.

⁶⁵ Audiovisual Law, Art. 74.

⁶⁶ Audiovisual Law, Art. 48-49.

⁶⁷ Audiovisual Law, Art. 43.5.

be obtained from public authorities through the Law on Access to Public Interest Information.

In the context of a year with four different rounds of elections in 2024, one CNA member proposed that CNA publish a list of all media owners who have political affiliations or are standing for election. This would be in line with the EMFA provisions on declaring “actual or potential conflicts of interest that might affect the provision of news”.⁶⁸ The proposal was not accepted by the other CNA members, who stated that there was no legal foundation for such a measure. Furthermore, they stated that a list would be incomplete, would not encompass other interests such as business interests, and could potentially result in a decline in public trust in the media. Accordingly, in the opinion of the majority of CNA members, the publication of such a list would be controversial.⁶⁹

State funding

There are no regulations in place that require media companies to disclose the total annual amount of public funds for state advertising that they have received, including revenues from third-country public authorities or entities.

The Constitution provides the framework for potential legislation that could oblige media outlets to disclose their sources of funding. However, such legal provisions were never adopted. As an alternative, the information in question can be obtained from public authorities using the Public Information Law. However, the poor implementation of this law and the limited interest, mainly from journalists or NGOs, has resulted in a general lack of transparency regarding this information.

National media ownership databases

In accordance with audiovisual legislation, all legal entities in possession of an audiovisual licence are obliged to disclose their complete ownership structure to the CNA. While not legally binding, the CNA publishes a comprehensive list of all licensed broadcasters on its website, including all relevant ownership data.

It should be noted, however, that the national law does not require national regulatory authorities to develop national media ownership databases containing detailed ownership and financial data.

Assessment of media market concentrations

There are currently no legal provisions in place that require an assessment of media market concentrations with the potential to significantly impact media pluralism and editorial independence.

⁶⁸ European Media Freedom Act (EMFA), Art 6.

⁶⁹ Iulia Bunea, “CNA nu vrea să publice lista televiziunilor cu patroni politicieni sau candidați la alegeri...” (CNA does not want to publish the list of TV stations owned by politicians or electoral candidates), Pagina de Media, 22 May 2024, see <https://www.paginademedi.ro/cna/cna-propunere-actionari-politicieni-televiziuni-radiouri-21599510>

The Competition Law does not include any specific provisions regarding the media market. The Competition Council (CC), Romania's anti-trust regulator, applies the same rules to the media as it does to any other market. However, the Audiovisual Law contains specific regulations regarding the broadcasting sector. The rules set out in both the Competition Law and the Audiovisual Law are transparent, objective, proportionate and non-discriminatory.

None of the aforementioned regulations address the issue of vertical concentration across the media market. This is a significant concern, given that the largest media groups in the country own media outlets with strong positions in multiple sectors, including television, radio, and online.

Notification of media market concentrations

In line with the Audiovisual Law, any individual or entity holding at least 10% of the shares in a licensed broadcasting company or any other company owning shares in a broadcasting company is required to inform the CNA.

Any transactions, acquisitions or mergers between media companies must be reported to the CC if, according to the Competition Law, the combined turnover of the enterprises involved in the deal exceeds €10 million or at least two of the enterprises involved have an individual turnover of more than €4 million in Romania.⁷⁰

The Audiovisual Law designates the CNA as the legal authority responsible for assessing whether a broadcaster is in a position of “predominance” in forming public opinion.⁷¹ This obligates the broadcast regulator to notify the “competent authorities” regarding any practices that restrict competition, result in market concentration, or constitute an abuse of a dominant position. All such activities are subject to supervision by the CC.

Impact of media market concentration on media pluralism

The Audiovisual Law sets out the criteria for determining the entity that holds the “predominant position in the formation of public opinion” on the audiovisual market. This is defined as a person or legal entity that owns, directly or indirectly, over 20% of a broadcasting company, or provides programme services with a significant weight in the formation of public opinion. This includes services such as general programmes, news, analyses and debates on political and/or economic topics or current affairs.

A natural or legal person is deemed to hold a predominant position in the formation of public opinion if the weighted audience share of the programme services assigned to them exceeds 30% of the significant market. In assessing the dominant role in shaping public opinion, the legislation also considers the influence of personal family ties, in accordance with the prevailing commercial and economic-financial legislation. The legislation sets out clear criteria for determining audience share.

⁷⁰ Competition Law, Art. 13.

⁷¹ Audiovisual Law, Art. 44.

In response to the recent decision by some of Romania's leading television stations to opt out of the must-carry system and demand payments for the redistribution of their programming, the CC initiated an in-depth analysis of the television market in August 2024. The CC aims to assess the impact of this practice on the TV redistribution market, but its remit will extend much further. It will investigate the TV production market, the TV redistribution market, and the TV advertising market, with a view to establishing the level of market concentration, the markets' health and other market features.⁷²

In accordance with the Audiovisual Law, when it is determined that a natural or legal person holds a dominant position in the formation of public opinion, exceeding the audience quota, the CNA requires the broadcasters with a significant influence in this formation to rectify the situation by aligning with the accepted audience quota. This is to be achieved within a specified timeframe. Should the situation remain unresolved beyond the specified timeframe, the CNA will mandate the implementation of tangible measures, including a reduction in participation quotas or the number of licences held within a period of three months. Should the broadcaster fail to comply with the aforementioned conditions, the CNA reserves the right to withdraw its broadcasting licence.

With regard to the remainder of the media market (online and print), the general regulations set out in the Competition Law will apply.

Over the past 10 years, a number of media acquisitions have been subject to scrutiny by the CC, including the acquisition of Prima TV by Clever Business Transilvania, the acquisition of cable operator AKTA TV by cable operator RCS & RDS, and the purchase of Gazeta Sporturilor by Ringier. All were subsequently approved by the antitrust regulator.⁷³

The most concerning ownership concentration trend currently is the convergence and merger of media outlets and large telecommunications companies. The leading cable operator in Romania, RCS & RDS, is owned by the same entity that also owns a major media group. This group runs the news channel Digi 24 and the website Digi24.ro, which is the leader in terms of Internet traffic and audience, and also in the top three most quoted websites in Romania.⁷⁴ The owner of the RCS & RDS group is Digi Communications N.V., a telecommunication company listed on the Bucharest Stock Exchange, with businesses in Romania, Spain, Italy, and more recently in Portugal and Belgium.⁷⁵

In 2025, the Competition Council approved the transaction through which Vodafone Romania S.A. plans to acquire Telekom Romania Mobile Communications S.A. As part of the deal, Digi Romania S.A. (where Digi Communications N.V. is a majority shareholder⁷⁶) would assume ownership of certain assets from the same company, including rights to

⁷² "Consiliul Concurenței investighează televiziunile care au renunțat la regimul must carry și cer bani pentru a transmite programe" (The Competition Council is investigating television stations that have opted out of the must carry regime and are demanding money to broadcast programmes), Economedia, 19 august 2024, see <https://economedia.ro/consiliul-concurenței-investighează-televiziunile-care-au-renunțat-la-regimul-must-carry-si-cer-bani-pentru-a-transmite-programe.html>.

⁷³ Source: Competition Council.

⁷⁴ Adriana Diură, "Cele mai citate surse..." (The most cited sources), Pagina de Media, 8 May 2024, see <https://www.paginademedia.ro/stiri-media/cele-mai-citate-surse-media-martie-21584305>.

⁷⁵ See more at <https://www.digi-communications.ro/>.

⁷⁶ See https://cna.ro/IMG/pdf/Actionari_site_actualizat_2025.pdf.

specific radio frequencies, portions of tower infrastructure and equipment, as well as the entire prepaid mobile telephone business.⁷⁷

There have been several instances where broadcasters have alleged that cable providers have engaged in discriminatory or abusive practices and implemented policies that are unfair to consumers. In 2022, RCS & RDS was issued a fine by the CNA for failing to position Aleph News TV alongside the news channels in its programme grid. Aleph News TV is a direct competitor in the market of Digi 24 TV, which is owned by the same entity as RCS & RDS. The CC accepted a complaint⁷⁸ from Aleph News TV that RCS & RDS has a dominant market position in the cable market. The Council is investigating whether this position has been abused.⁷⁹ RCS & RDS presented the CC with a list of commitments, which are currently under discussion. In a further development, the CNA has informed the CC that RCS & RDS has declined to permit the redistribution of certain of its own must-carry channels on rival online platforms.⁸⁰

Impact of media market concentration on editorial independence

In line with the Constitution, any form of censorship is prohibited in Romania.⁸¹ The same principle is reiterated in the Audiovisual Law, which also guarantees the editorial independence of media service providers.⁸²

Nevertheless, in practice, the CNA has never issued any sanctions based on these provisions, as it considered that investigating specific situations was beyond the scope of its mandate. Furthermore, there are no corresponding sanctions in law for these provisions. On a positive note, the CNA demonstrated a more supportive approach, issuing in December 2023 a public statement in support of editorial freedom principles during a conflict between journalists and the management of Ringier in Romania.⁸³

There are no legal obligations in place requiring any of the parties involved in media market concentration to protect media pluralism and editorial independence.

Over the past decade, there have been several mergers and acquisitions that have impacted the editorial independence of various media outlets. One of the most egregious violations of editorial independence in Romania over the past five years involved the Swiss-owned Ringier Group management. Ringier owns two leading publications: the generalist

⁷⁷ See the news release from the Competition Council: <https://www.consiliulconcurentei.ro/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Comunicat-de-presa-Consiliul-Concurentei-Autorizare-Telekom-iulie-2025.pdf>.

⁷⁸ Iulia Bunea, "Consiliul Concurenței investighează RCS pentru posibil abuz de poziție dominantă, după plângerea Aleph" (The Competition Council is investigating RCS for possible abuse of a dominant position, following Aleph's complaint), Pagina de Media, 1 June 2022, see <https://www.paginademedi.ro/stiri-media/consiliul-concurentei-ancheta-rs-aleph-20725336>.

⁷⁹ Iulia Bunea, "Ce promite RCS&RDS pentru a închide o investigație privind un posibil abuz de poziție dominantă pe piața TV, pornită de la plângerea Aleph News" (What RCS&RDS promises to close an investigation regarding a possible abuse of a dominant position on the TV market, started by the Aleph News complaint), Pagina de Media, 31 January 2024, see <https://www.paginademedi.ro/stiri-media/rcs-angajamente-investigatie-consiliul-concurentei-21478225>.

⁸⁰ Iulia Bunea, "RCS refuză să dea Digi24, dar și celelalte posturi ale sale, pe alte platforme online..." (RCS refuses to offer Digi24, as well as its other stations, on other online platforms...), Pagina de Media, 14 March 2024, see <https://www.paginademedi.ro/cna/cna-rs-must-carry-consiliul-concurentei-21521834>.

⁸¹ Constitution, Art. 30 (2).

⁸² Audiovisual Law, Art. 6.

⁸³ "Romania: IPI stands by Libertatea as layoffs deepen concerns over pressure on editorial independence", IPI, 20 December 2023, see <https://ipi.media/romania-ipi-stands-by-libertatea-as-layoffs-deepen-concerns-over-pressure-on-editorial-independence/>.

newspaper *Libertatea* and the sports daily *Gazeta Sporturilor*, both of which are well positioned in the online market. The editorial management of the two publications was dismissed by Ringier in late 2023 after they declined to accept the interference in editorial decisions, as publicly disclosed by the journalists involved.⁸⁴ The acquisition of *Gazeta Sporturilor* by Ringier in 2018 was subject to an in-depth review by the CC, which concluded that the transaction would not impede effective competition in the Romanian market, particularly in terms of creating or consolidating a dominant position.⁸⁵

In another instance, a group of broadcasters alleged that their competitors had formed cartels with the objective of winning tenders for various sports competitions, including the football national league. In 2019, public television broadcaster TVR submitted a formal complaint to the CC regarding this matter. The broadcasting rights were awarded to a company, eAD, which did not have any broadcasting operations. eAD subsequently sold the broadcasting rights to various broadcasters, including Digi Sport and Telekom Sport, which were both owned by telecommunications companies at the time.⁸⁶

Following the intense election period, Romania's media market saw a major consolidation drive led by Titluri Quality, which expanded its portfolio through a series of acquisitions. In January 2025, the company, controlled by controversial businessman Radu Budeanu, who previously faced corruption charges, purchased the news agency Mediafax.⁸⁷ The real shock came in August 2025, when Titluri Quality acquired the G4Media group, known for its investigative journalism and anti-corruption reporting, for an alleged €5 million.⁸⁸ The transaction drew scrutiny from the Commission for the Examination of Foreign Direct Investments (CEISD), a government body tasked with enforcing EU Regulation 2019/452, which announced in August 2025 that it was reviewing the deal on national security grounds.⁸⁹ In October 2025, the transaction passed CEISD's scrutiny and the Competition Council approved it.⁹⁰

⁸⁴ "Romania: IPI stands by *Libertatea*...", cit.

⁸⁵ Iulia Bunea, "Gazeta Sporturilor trece oficial la Ringier. Consiliul Concurenței a autorizat tranzacția" (Gazeta Sporturilor officially moves to Ringier. The Competition Council authorised the transaction), *Pagina de Media*, 23 August 2018, see <https://www.paginademedia.ro/2018/08/gazeta-sporturilor-ringier-consiliul-concurenteii/>.

⁸⁶ "Au venit banii din drepturile TV! Anunț de ultimă oră înainte de startul noului sezon din Liga 1" (The money from the TV rights has arrived! Last minute announcement before the start of the new League 1 season), *GSP*, 12 July 2019, see <https://www.gsp.ro/fotbal/liga-1/ead-detinatorul-drepturilor-tv-in-liga-1-a-platit-prima-transa-catre-lpf-571964.html>.

⁸⁷ "Mogulul Radu Budeanu, apropiat de PSD, cumpără agenția de știri Mediafax de la Dan Șucu și mogulul Adrian Sârbu, care a instigat la vot în alb în turul 2 al prezidențialelor," *G4Media.ro*, 10 January 2025, <https://www.g4media.ro/mogulul-radu-budeanu-apropiat-de-psd-cumpara-agentia-de-stiri-mediafax-de-la-mogulul-adrian-sarbu-care-a-instigat-la-vot-in-alb-in-turul-2-al-prezidentialelor.html>.

⁸⁸ David Leonard Bularca, "G4Media a fost reprezentată în vânzarea către Radu Budeanu de fostul director al Roșia Montană Gold Corporation. 'S-a vândut cu 5 milioane de euro', susțin două surse / 'Sunt clauze de confidențialitate și nu pot spune nimic,' a zis Dan Tăpălagă," *HotNews.ro*, 13 August 2025. <https://hotnews.ro/g4media-s-a-vandut-cu-5-milioane-de-euro-catre-radu-budeanu-a-fost-reprezentata-de-fostul-director-al-rosia-montana-gold-corporation-2044179>.

⁸⁹ Adrian Vasilache, "Vânzarea G4Media, analizată din punctul de vedere al securității naționale de o autoritate din subordinea Guvernului" (The sale of G4Media, analysed from a national security perspective by an authority subordinated to the Government), *HotNews.ro*, 26 August 2025, see <https://hotnews.ro/vanzarea-g4media-analizata-din-punctul-de-vedere-al-securitatii-nationale-de-o-autoritate-din-subordinea-guvernului-explicatiile-sefului-consiliului-concurenteii-2052226>; see also Consiliul Concurenței, "Analiza din punctul de vedere al securității naționale – G4Media," August 2025, <https://www.consiliulconcurenteii.ro/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/analiza-securitate-G4-Media-aug-2025.pdf>.

⁹⁰ Adrian Nicolae, "Achiziția grupului G4Media de către Titluri Quality, avizată de CEISD și autorizată de Consiliul Concurenței" (Acquisition of the G4Media group by Titluri Quality, approved by CEISD and authorized by the Competition Council), *Gandul*, 31 octombrie 2025, see <https://www.gandul.ro/media/achizitia-grupului-g4media-de-catre-titluri-quality-avizata-de-ceisd-si-autorizata-de-consiliul-concurenteii-20689291>.

RECOMMENDATIONS: WHAT IS NEEDED TO 32 CAPTURE-PROOF THE ROMANIAN MEDIA?

The recommendations are structured as follows:

- a) *Recommendations aimed at aligning national legislation with the EMFA's general provisions; and*
- b) *Recommendations aimed at enhancing the media environment regardless of EMFA.*

Independence of media regulators

Brief overview of EMFA provisions

The 2018 amendment of the Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD) already set out the requirements for independent media regulators. These include functional independence from governments, impartiality and transparency, operation without instructions, clearly defined competences and powers, an effective appeal mechanism, a proper mechanism to appoint and dismiss the head and the body of the authority, and also adequate financial and human resources and enforcement powers. In light of the above, EMFA essentially reiterates the stipulations set forth in Article 30 of the AVMSD, with the notable addition of provisions pertaining to the requisite resources, specifically technical resources, and the authority to request information and data. Consequently, prior to the implementation of EMFA, Member States are obliged to adhere to the majority of the requirements pertaining to independent media regulators as outlined in Article 30 of the AVMSD.

Aligning with EMFA's general provisions: what is needed?

Romanian legislation is broadly consistent with EMFA's overarching principles regarding the autonomy of its media regulatory body.

Further enhancing the media environment: what is needed?

- Legal provisions should be introduced to make the CNA board more politically independent (solutions could include strengthening nomination process, introducing transparent criteria for potential members, or prohibiting individuals with political affiliation from being appointed).
- Legislation should be amended to provide criteria for the evaluation of the annual reports by the Parliament.
- The institution and its status should be strengthened including through an adequate budget which should ensure a proper functioning and fulfilment of its mission.
- The CNA sanctions should be more accurately regulated/defined in order to fulfil their role of discouraging editorial practices which breach the regulatory standards and harm the public interest.
- The government should provide the CNA with adequate financial resources, and should not alter its current institutional structure, such as through a merger with ANCOM, as that may compromise its independence and ability to effectively implement its tasks.

Independence of public service media

Brief overview of EMFA provisions

Article 5 of EMFA requires that governments guarantee the independent functioning of public media, including ensuring their editorial and functional independence, that procedures for appointing the management guarantee the independence of public media, that those appointed are done so on the basis of transparent, open, effective and non-discriminatory procedures and criteria, that funding is transparent, adequate, sustainable and predictable and can guarantee the editorial independence of the public media, and that an independent body is designated to monitor the application of these principles.

Aligning with EMFA's general provisions: what is needed?

The recommendations were first published in November 2024. Since then, neither the conditions within the media environment have undergone substantive change, nor have the recommendations been implemented. As a result, they remain relevant as of October 2025.

- The criteria for appointing the members of the governing bodies of public service broadcasters should be revised in order to enhance their independence from political influence and to guarantee the professionalism and integrity of the members. This may include strengthening the professional criteria and providing civil society with a greater role in either nominating supervisory board members or in being nominated as supervisory board members.
- The law should be amended to also outline clear procedures for the dismissal of the heads of management or members of the management board including that any dismissal must be duly justified on the basis of no longer being able to fulfil the conditions required to perform their duties. Dismissals should also include the possibility of judicial review.
- The powers of the different management bodies of public broadcasters should be more clearly defined in the legal framework, in order to avoid concentration of power into the hands of the current President-General Manager and facilitate more effective accountability mechanisms. This may be done by separating the roles of President of the Council of Administration and General Manager of the Executive Committee. The General Manager would then be an executive directly accountable to the Council of Administration.
- An independent monitoring mechanism should be established to monitor compliance with legal requirements for editorial independence, balanced coverage and fairness and the degree to which it fulfils its public service mandate.

Further enhancing the media environment: what is needed?

- The legislation should be revised to provide more detailed and clear criteria for the evaluation of the annual reports. This will help to avoid excessive discretionary decisions backed by political motivations. The current practice of automatically dismissing the entire Council of Administration in the event of a parliamentary veto

over the annual report of the public broadcasters should be revised.

- Funding mechanisms for the public service broadcasters should be redefined in order to avoid the institution becoming overly dependent on budgets decided and transferred by the government.
- The public mission of the broadcaster should be more clearly defined, to be aligned more closely with recent technological and market trends and be used as a guide for evaluating the criteria in annual activity reports.
- The National Press Agency - Agerpres - Information about the members of the Executive Committee should be more transparent and open to public scrutiny. The institution functions without a Council of Administration. The legislation should provide for such a body in order to ensure public oversight.

Misuse of state funds to influence media output

Brief overview of EMFA provisions

Article 25 of the EMFA states that, while public procurement rules remain unchanged, state advertising must be awarded in accordance with transparent, objective, proportionate and non-discriminatory criteria.

Aligning with EMFA's general provisions: what is needed?

The recommendations were first published in November 2024. Since then, neither the conditions within the media environment have undergone substantive change, nor have the recommendations been implemented. As a result, they remain relevant as of October 2025.

- The legislation on public procurement pertaining to state advertising should be enforced with greater rigour and brought into line with the requirements of EMFA. This should include the award of funds in accordance with transparent, objective, proportionate and non-discriminatory criteria, made publicly available in advance and awarded through open, proportionate and non-discriminatory procedures.
- The current legal loopholes enabling public authorities to distribute advertising contracts without a tender, without prior notice, or through third-party intermediaries should be closed in order to prevent the proliferation of such practices.
- The oversight body designated to monitor state advertising (National Agency for Public Procurement - ANAP) should ensure compliance with the rules, and issue annual reports.
- Political party funding of media outlets for propaganda purposes should be more strictly regulated and limited, ensuring full transparency. All materials funded by political parties should be labelled as such.

Further enhancing the media environment: what is needed?

The obligations related to the distribution of state funding should exceed the requirements of EMFA and be applied to all local authorities, irrespective of population size.

Media pluralism and political/state influence over news media

Brief overview of EMFA provisions

Article 6 of the EMFA requires news media organisations to provide information about their owners, including potential conflicts of interest, and to implement measures to ensure editorial independence. Article 22 of the EMFA requires governments to implement a system for the assessment of concentrations that could have a significant impact on media pluralism and editorial independence.

Aligning with EMFA's general provisions: what is needed?

The recommendations were first published in November 2024. Since then, neither the conditions within the media environment have undergone substantive change, nor have the recommendations been implemented. As a result, they remain relevant as of October 2025.

- Legislation should be enacted to require all media service providers (not just those subject to the audiovisual legislation) to provide data on their legal representatives and structure of ownership, and easily accessible contact information.
- Legislation should be enacted to require transparency regarding the funding of news media service providers from state budgets or other sources of public money.
- Legal provisions requiring media service providers to make public any potential conflicts of interest, especially those related to the political or business interests of their owners, which might affect their editorial independence should be adopted (such as requirements to publish a list of media owners who stand for election).
- The government should designate a body to implement the above and to publish the content in a publicly accessible national media ownership database.

Further enhancing the media environment: what is needed?

- The CNA should revise its procedures and operational processes to ensure effective enforcement of audiovisual regulations against broadcasters. Concurrently, the institution's budget and human resources should be realigned to reflect its expanded remit for regulating online audiovisual media.
- Legislation should be updated to enable an assessment of the level of concentration on the online market. For example, many television stations have an equivalent website, which is sometimes operated by a different legal entity, and are also market leaders in the online space.

MEDIA CAPTURE MONITORING REPORT: ROMANIA

NOVEMBER 2025

This report by IPI is part of the Media Freedom Rapid Response, which tracks, monitors and responds to violations of press and media freedom in EU Member States and Candidate Countries. This project provides legal and practical support, public advocacy and information to protect journalists and media workers.

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