[FR] ARCOM issues European election recommendations

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On 6 March 2024, the *Autorité de régulation de la communication audiovisuelle et numérique* (the French audiovisual regulator – ARCOM) adopted a recommendation concerning the European elections taking place on 9 June this year, supplementing its decision of 4 January 2011 on the principle of political pluralism on radio and television during election periods. The recommendation applies to all radio and television services except Arte and the parliamentary channels, whatever their mode of transmission and electronic communication process, from Monday 29 April 2024 until election day. It does not apply to services only accessible online and devoted to the election propaganda of candidates or the political parties and groups that support them.

The fairness principle applies for the six-week period leading up to the election. The broadcasters and services concerned must send to ARCOM, by electronic means, a breakdown of the airtime they allocate to candidates and their supporters, starting on 15 April. All programmes are included (news bulletins and magazine shows, as well as other types of programme). The recommendation states that “reports, commentaries and presentations concerning the elections must be measured and truthful at all times”. As regards coverage of non-election news, radio and television services continue to apply the decision of 22 November 2017 concerning the principle of political pluralism.

On the same day, ARCOM also adopted recommendations on the fight against the manipulation of information on online platforms. These recommendations apply to the so-called very large online platforms and search engines that are now subject to the Digital Services Act (DSA), which fully entered into force on 17 February 2024. The operators concerned, designated by the European Commission, now have to meet additional obligations, primarily linked to the identification and mitigation of systemic risks.

In conjunction with the European Commission guidelines published on 26 March 2024, ARCOM recommended various good practices in order to mitigate the risks of online disinformation during election periods, taking into account the specific characteristics of French electoral law: the setting up of dedicated teams with adequate resources, the designation of operational points of contact, more transparent moderation, the identification of political advertising, etc. It pointed out that “ARCOM does not intend to intervene in specific cases concerning individual moderation measures for online platforms”.

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Recommandation n° 2024-01 du 6 mars 2024 de l'Arcom aux services de radio et de télévision en vue de l'élection des représentants au Parlement européen les 8 et 9 juin 2024

https://www.arcom.fr/sites/default/files/2024-03/Arcom-Recommandation-du-6-mars-2024-aux-services-de-radio-et-television-en-vue-de-election-des-representants-au-Parlement-europeen-les-8-et-9-juin-2024.pdf

ARCOM Recommendation No. 2024-01 of 6 March 2024 to radio and television services in view of the European Parliament election of 8 and 9 June 2024

Préconisations de l'Arcom relatives à la lutte contre la manipulation de l'information sur les plateformes en ligne en vue des élections au Parlement européen du 6 au 9 juin 2024

https://www.arcom.fr/actualites/elections-europeennes-2024-les-regles-fixees-par-larcom

ARCOM recommendations concerning the fight against the manipulation of information on online platforms in view of the European Parliament elections from 6 to 9 June 2024

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