

[GE] National regulator comes close to suspending broadcaster

IRIS 2026-9:1/10

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The Communications Commission (ComCom), the national regulatory authority (NRA) of Georgia, announced, on 1 October 2026, that it had issued a monetary fine of GEL 10 000 to television broadcaster *Formula*. Based on a three-day monitoring of programme, ComCom identified cases in which presenters and correspondents expressed personal opinions during news programmes, in breach of the impartiality requirements established by law. This included assessments of current political and public affairs based on personal attitudes, which is restricted under the Law of Georgia on Broadcasting.

As *Formula* had already received three sanctions for similar violations over the past year, a written warning and fines of GEL 2 500 and GEL 5 000 (see IRIS 2025-9:1/9). The Law on Broadcasting stipulates that the broadcaster be then fined an amount of up to 3% of its annual revenue, but not less than GEL 10 000 (about EUR 3 500). *Formula* is the first Georgian broadcaster to receive a warning and three monetary penalties within a 12-month period, which brings it close to having its broadcasting licence suspended (as per Law on Broadcasting, Art. 72, paras 1-3).

In addition, in July 2026, the Tbilisi City Court, in a criminal case, found *Formula* guilty of “false denunciation” and sentenced the outlet to another fine of GEL 10 000. The court also ruled that the broadcaster must retract the statements that damaged the victim’s “name, honour and dignity” (see IRIS 2026-6:1/4).

According to an alert published on the Council of Europe’s Platform on Safety of Journalists on 9 October 2026, the NRA has “contributed to a chilling effect on media organisations and journalists” as it “increased regulatory pressure on media outlets in practice, issuing warnings and initiating proceedings following government complaints concerning the use of a wide range of terminology, including the use of wording that questions the legitimacy of state institutions and political leaders.”

Law of Georgia on Broadcasting, N 780, 23 December 2004, as amended 23 June 2026, Chapter II

<https://matsne.gov.ge/en/document/view/32866?publication=84>

Georgia: Media Regulation and Expansion of the Regulator's Powers. 9 October 2026, Alert No. 162/2026. Council of Europe Safety of Journalists Platform

<https://fom.coe.int/en/alerte/detail/107644422;globalSearch=false>

Position of the Communications Commission on the Alerts No. 162/2026; No. 166/2026 & No. 219/2026 published on the Safety of Journalists Platform of the Council of Europe

<https://rm.coe.int/georgia-reply-en-communications-commission-09october2026/48802e36c3>

