[FR] Arcom warns Europe 1 following comments that were likely to incite hatred and encourage discriminatory behaviour

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On 7 January 2026, the French audiovisual regulator (Arcom) issued a formal warning to the company that runs the Europe 1 radio station regarding repeated breaches of the obligation not to encourage discriminatory behaviour and to maintain control over broadcast content. However, a programme broadcast on 26 January 2026 covered the rape of an elderly woman in Nice, the main suspect for which was a Tunisian national who had been ordered to leave French territory. During this broadcast, the panellists referred to several other crimes or offences committed or allegedly committed by undocumented immigrants, as well as the government's response to these incidents and migration policy. The presenter then stated: “And let’s remember, as [the Minister for Justice] said last night, that there are between 600,000 and 800,000 undocumented immigrants in France. ‘That’s a huge number,’ he said. He proposed introducing migration quotas and suspending immigration for two or three years. We’re not saying that all migrants are rapists, but many are, as the figures show.” None of the other panellists reacted to these comments.

In a decision of 21 October 2026, Arcom stated that remarks claiming that "many migrants are rapists", which suggested that the presence in France of this group of people posed a major risk to public safety, were likely to incite hatred and encourage discriminatory behaviour towards them on the grounds of their origin or nationality. They therefore constituted a breach of Article 15 of the Act of 30 September 1986 and of the provisions of the radio station’s licence. Furthermore, Arcom noted that nobody in the studio had qualified or contradicted these remarks. It was irrelevant that the presenter who had made the remarks had stated that she was not referring to all migrants: this was insufficient to mitigate the generalisation inherent in and the particularly stigmatising nature of her remarks, which had targeted a group of people on the grounds of their origin or nationality.

The fact that the disputed remarks, made by the presenter herself, had not been contradicted or moderated by the other participants in the programme was also deemed by Arcom to constitute a breach of the provisions of the channel’s licence agreement, which included an obligation to maintain control over broadcast content. The station was given formal notice to comply with these obligations in future.

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Décision du 21 octobre 2026 mettant en demeure la société Europe 1 Télécompagnie, JO du 27 octobre 2026

https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jorf/id/JORFTEXT000055018817

Decision of 21 October 2026 issuing a formal notice to Europe 1 Télécompagnie, Official Journal of 27 October 2026

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