[RO] Audiovisual Licence Not Renewed for Commercial TV station

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On 30 January 2014, the Consiliul Naţional al Audiovizualului (National Audiovisual Council - CNA) decided not to renew the audiovisual licence of the commercial TV station Taraf TV, a music channel specialising in broadcasting party music and manele, an originally Turkish-derived music genre. The licence of Taraf TV had to be renewed before 15 February 2014 and needed for its renewal the votes of six members of the CNA in favour. Only five members voted for the extension of the licence (see IRIS 2012-6/31).

There is a controversial debate in Romania about the manele style, nowadays a mixture of Turkish, Greek and Arabic elements. Intellectuals oppose this large musical movement mostly because of its false grammar, simplistic lyrics, and its allegedly antisocial overall message. Most members of CNA found that the on-going broadcasting of manele breached audiovisual legislation by presenting women mimicking sex movements and in degrading situations along with minors surrounded by almost naked women. The Council also found that the TV station no longer broadcasts within the programme schedule licenced in July 2012. According to the monitors, Taraf TV only aired 1.19 % own productions instead of 15% declared and licenced.

The main shareholders of Taraf TV are the sons of a former Romanian politician and entrepreneur in the Romanian tabloid media. The shareholders declared they will appeal the CNA’s decision. The decision was also criticised by the director of ActiveWatch, a media and human rights watchdog organisation. She described the decision of CNA as arbitrary, since it was not based on legal matters but on public taste related aspects instead.

At the same time, Taraf TV was fined with RON 15,000 (approximately EUR 3,300) for breaches of audiovisual legislation regarding protection of minors by showing the women half-naked and faking sexual conduct. Art. 39 (2) of the Audiovisual Law foresees that broadcasting TV or radio programmes that are likely to impair the physical, mental and moral development of minors are permitted only if, by selecting the time of the broadcast, or by any technical measure by means of encoding or as an effect of other systems of conditioned access, it can be assured that under normal conditions minors do not have access to the respective content. According to CNA’s findings, Taraf TV also breached Art. 18 (b) and (c) and Art. 19 of the Audiovisual Code. These regulations require programmes

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containing sex scenes, inappropriate or vulgar language and behaviour, or persons in degrading situations must not be broadcast between 6.00 and 23.00. Due to these breaches, CNA also decided on 30 January to forbid broadcasting of 15 specific videos of manele before 23.00, which had already been aired by Taraf TV.

Extras din procesul verbal al şedinţei de joi, 30 ianuarie 2014

http://www.cna.ro/Extras-din-procesul-verbal-al,6758.html

Extract from the minutes of the meeting of 30 January 2014

Comunicat de presă, Şedinţa din 30.01.2014 - sancţiuni

http://www.cna.ro/article6748,6748.html

Press release, the 30 January 2014 meeting - sanctions

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