[RO] The News România TV station loses its licence

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The Romanian commercial News România TV station has lost its licence. The National Audiovisual Council (CNA) did not extend the audiovisual licence of the audiovisual service due to repeated breaches of the Audiovisual Law no. 504/2002 (see inter alia IRIS 2013-3/25, IRIS 2014-3/38 and IRIS 2014-1/39).

Following the analysis of the documents presented by the Licensing Office and the Monitoring Department of the CNA, and on hearing the representative of the company invited to participate in the meeting, the members of the Council found insufficient argument in support of the request for the extension of the audiovisual licence for the NEWS ROMÂNIA programme service with regard to the criteria provided by CNA Decision no. 277/2013.

The Council considered that the TV station had repeatedly breached Article 8 of the Audiovisual Law, mostly paragraphs a), h) and m). Article 8 states: “After hearing the applicants, the CNA will decide on the granting or extension of the audiovisual license, taking into account the following general criteria: a) respecting the public interest; (...) h) respecting political and social pluralism, cultural, linguistic and religious diversity, informing, educating and entertaining the public; (...) m) the situation of the sanctions applied, reporting on them and the measures taken regarding entry into legality, where applicable”.

Thus, in relation to the stated criteria, the members of the Council found that the licence holder had a consistent behaviour of non-compliance with the legal provisions that regulate the audiovisual field and the obligations set for it as an audiovisual licence holder. The members of the Council also took into account the fact that, although it had been sanctioned several times, the broadcaster had failed to review its conduct or comply with the legal provisions in the audiovisual field. The licence holder had had four sanctions applied during 2021, of which a fine of RON 10 000 (EUR 2 020) for disregarding the provisions regarding correct information had been imposed, but despite this, from the beginning of 2022 and until the analysis of the request for the extension of the audiovisual license, three summonses and seven further fines totaling RON 185 000 (EUR 37370) had been applied (two of these being RON 50 000 (EUR 10 000each) for non-compliance with the provisions regarding correct public information.

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The members of the Council also took into account the conduct of the holder of the audiovisual licence regarding legal obligations during the nine years in which he had held the audiovisual licence for the programme service named NEWS ROMNIA. In this regard, they considered the repeated changes to data declared to the authority in order to obtain the audiovisual licence, the modification of the audiovisual licence without the prior consent of the Council, as required by the legislation in force, and the failure to inform or submit documents related to: the modification of the structure of the company's associates; the modification of the headquarters of the studio which had been authorised by the CNA, and of the registered office of the company; the modification of the technical means of broadcasting for which the audiovisual license had been issued (from satellite to cable); and changing the name of the company holding the license.

The National Audiovisual Council unanimously rejected the request of NEWS ROMÂNIA COMMUNICATION (formerly ESTRADA TV), to extend the validity of the audiovisual licence for the broadcasting of the television programme service called NEWS ROMÂNIA from Bucharest through electronic communication networks.

Răspuns CNA nr. 8380/29.07.2022 la petițiile referitoare la decizia CNA de respingere a solicitării S.C. NEWS ROMÂNIA COMMUNICATION S.R.L. (fostă SC ESTRADA TV SRL) de prelungire a valabilității licenței

https://www.cna.ro/article12069,12069.html

CNA Answer no. 8380/29.07.2022 to the petitions regarding the decision of the CNA to reject the request of S.C. NEWS ROMÂNIA COMMUNICATION S.R.L. (formerly SC ESTRADA TV SRL) to extend the validity of the license

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