

## **Press release of the Agency Council after the 210<sup>th</sup> meeting**

At yesterday's meeting, the Council of the Agency for Electronic Media concluded that the Public Administration Bill directly interfered with independence of the Agency for Electronic Media (AEM).

AEM is one of the pillars of protection and development of the media freedom, and its activities are carefully monitored in the process of stabilization and association with the EU. All relevant European standards define an independent position of the regulatory authority for AVM services, which is why the provision of AEM's independence is one of the closing benchmarks under negotiating chapter 10 – Information society and media.

The European Commission pays particular attention to independence of the AVMS regulators, which is evident from the fact that the proposed amendments to the AVMS Directive, which will be adopted next month by the European Parliament, explicitly spells out that the regulatory authority for electronic media must be independent from both government and the media industry.

It is important to remind that Montenegro is obliged to transpose the whole AVMS Directive to its legislation. In view of the aforesaid, the proposed bill is completely incompliant with the Directive.

We believe that the proposed legal provisions return the whole process of independent regulation in the field of AVM services to the very beginning. The regulator is reduced to the executive authority without any guarantees of independence.

In addition, the Council of the Agency for Electronic Media adopted the Financial Plan and the Work Plan of the Agency for Electronic Media for 2019, and a decision awarding the rights to broadcast radio programme on the basis of a public call launched on 11 July 2018.