



ANNEX C1: Twinning Fiche

Project title: Enhancement of capacities of the Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services and the Public Service Broadcaster

Beneficiary administration: The Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services of North Macedonia

Twining Reference: MK 20 IPA JH 01 23

Publication notice reference: EuropeAid/ 177231 /DD/ACT/MK

EU funded project

TWINNINGTOOL

ABBREVIATIONS

AVMSD	Audio-visual Media Services Directive
AAVMS	Agency for audio and audio-visual media services
LAAVMS	Law on audio and audio-visual media services
PSB	Public Service Broadcaster
MRT	Macedonian Radio Television
NPAA	National Programme for Adoption of the Acquis Communautaire
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MISA	Ministry of Information Society and Administration
DEU	Delegation of the European Union
SAA	Stabilisation and Association Agreement
AP	Accession Partnership
IPA	Instrument for pre-accession assistance
ECHR	European Court for Human Rights
CSOs	Civil society organisations
O&M	Organisation and Methodology

1. Basic Information

1.1 Programme: Annual Action Programme for Republic of North Macedonia for Year 2020, EU for Rule of Law - IPA 2020/41-831/02.04/MK/RoL

For UK applicants: Please be aware that following the entry into force of the EU-UK Withdrawal Agreement¹ on 1 February 2020 and in particular Articles 127(6), 137 and 138, the references to natural or legal persons residing or established in a Member State of the European Union and to goods originating from an eligible country, as defined under Regulation (EU) No 236/2014² and Annex IV of the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement³, are to be understood as including natural or legal persons residing or established in, and to goods originating from, the United Kingdom⁴. Those persons and goods are therefore eligible under this call.

1.2 Twinning Sector: Justice and Home affairs

1.3 EU funded budget: Maximum EUR 788 000

1.4 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): SDG 16 - Peace, justice and strong institutions

2. Objectives

2.1 Overall Objective

Strengthening the capacities of Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services in accordance with the EU acquis and international standards, as well as supporting the reforms of the Public Service Broadcaster.

2.2 Specific objective

To strengthen institutional and administrative capacities of the Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services and the Public Service Broadcaster based on the legal and regulatory framework, EU acquis and best practices of EU Member States, in order to achieve a more effective and efficient performance.

2.3 Link with Stabilisation and Association Agreement

The project activities will contribute towards the implementation of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA), Title VI - Approximation of Laws and Law Enforcement: Article 94 - Cooperation in the audio-visual field and Article 95 - Electronic communications infrastructure and associated services, having as an objective of ultimate alignment with the acquis by the Republic of North Macedonia, in the priority areas:

- policy development,
- legal and regulatory aspects,
- institution building required for a liberalised environment,

¹ Agreement on the withdrawal of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland from the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community

² Regulation (EU) No 236/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 laying down common rules and procedures for the implementation of the Union's instruments for financing external action.

³ Annex IV to the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement, as revised by Decision 1/2014 of the ACP-EU Council of Ministers (OJ L196/40, 3.7.2014)

⁴ Including the Overseas Countries and Territories having special relations with the United Kingdom, as laid down in Part Four and Annex II of the TFEU

- modernisation of the country's electronic infrastructure and its integration into European and world networks, with a focus on improvements at a regional level,
- international cooperation,
- cooperation within European structures especially those involved in standardisation,
- coordinating positions in international organisations and fora.

The project activities will also contribute towards implementation of Article 69 - Competition and other economic provisions, Article 90 - Social cooperation and Article 92 - Cultural cooperation.

Link with Accession Partnership

On 19 July 2022, the Intergovernmental Conference on accession negotiations took place with North Macedonia. The European Commission immediately launched the screening process, which represents an analytical examination of the body of EU law, carried out jointly by the Commission and the candidate country. This process allows North Macedonia to familiarise itself with the *acquis* and, subsequently, to indicate their level of alignment with EU legislation and outline plans for further alignment.

Furthermore, the project is related to several EU directives, EU policy documents, as well as of the international organisations, such as:

- Audiovisual Media Services Directive (EU) 2018/1808
- Other EU directives and policy documents underpinning the media sector
- The Digital Services Act and Digital Markets Act (a single set of new rules applicable across the whole EU to create a safer and more open digital space)
- EU Human Rights Guidelines on Freedom of Expression Online and Offline
- EU Action Plan against Disinformation
- EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy 2020-2024
- Communication from the Commission on the application of State aid rules to public service broadcasting

The proposal is linked to several Thematic priorities for assistance under IPA II Regulation:

- Establishing and promoting from an early stage the proper functioning of the institutions necessary in order to secure the rule of law. [...] promoting and protecting human rights, [...] fundamental freedoms, including freedom of the media.
- Compliance with the principle of good public administration and economic governance;
- Reforms in preparation for Union membership and related institutions and their capacity-building;

Link with National Programme for Adoption of the *Acquis Communautaire*

Among the main priorities in the National Programme for Adoption of the *Acquis Communautaire* (NPAA) is harmonisation of the Law on audio and audiovisual media services with the Audiovisual Media Services Directive (EU) 2018/1808, process that has been launched by the Ministry of Information Society and Administration. The harmonisation process has been supported by EU-funded project *EU for Freedom of Expression: Alignment of national media legislation with EU *acquis* and media standards*.

Relevant for the project are the Strategy for Development of the Macedonian Radio and Television for the period 2020-2025, and the media regulator's Strategy for Development of Audio and Audio-visual Industry for the period 2019-2023.

3. Description

3.1 Background and justification

The EU Charter of Fundamental Rights contains an explicit right to the protection of freedom of expression (Article 11). Technical developments and new types of content, influenced changes in the media market landscape, but also viewership habits of the audiences, particularly of younger

generations and necessity for their effective protection. Therefore, the European Union modernized its legal framework by adopting the Audiovisual Media Services Directive (EU) 2018/1808.

Furthermore, this project will contribute for meeting the recommendations given by the European commission in the Urgent Reform Priorities and the Reports of the Senior Experts' Group on systemic Rule of Law issues led by Reinhard Priebe from 2015 and 2017 for addressing systemic issues with regard to media.

The 2022 European Commission Country Report for North Macedonia noted that the country has achieved "some level of preparation/is moderately prepared in the area of freedom of expression". One of the key recommendations to the country issued by the European Commission in the 2022 Country Report is to revise the legal framework in the area of media in accordance with the EU acquis and European standards in particular by continuing the efforts for the harmonisation of national laws with the revised European Directive on Audiovisual Media Services; as well as to step up action to implement the strategy to reform the public broadcaster and finalise appointments for the public service broadcaster's programme council and the media regulator's council.

The Constitution of North Macedonia⁵, guarantees freedom of expression together with freedom of speech, free access to information and reception and transmission of information, while censorship is prohibited.

As an EU-membership candidate country, the Republic of North Macedonia is obligated to harmonize its legislation with that of the EU, thus entailing new expanded competencies of the Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services that need to be put in practice.

One key element of media literacy is fight against disinformation. Lately, especially with the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the social networks and video platforms noted the largest influx of disinformation to date. These are issues that require a nation-wide approach, although the focus is often on media themselves. The EU-project is expected to support the media regulator and the public service broadcaster in respective areas of their mandates linked to the new technologies.

Institutional framework

The Agency for Audio and Audio-visual Media Services (AVMU) is an independent, non-profit regulatory body with public competencies and duties for ensuring transparency of the work of broadcasters, protection and development of pluralism of audio and audio-visual media, protection of minors, protection of interest of citizens in the area of audio and audio-visual media services, etc. AVMU will also be part of the activities related to freedom of expression.

The Law on Audio and audio-visual media services establishes the Agency for audio and audio-visual media services as regulatory body for media. The Agency is legal successor of the former Broadcasting Council.

The Agency for audio and audio-visual media services regularly informs about its activities and published reports on its website www.avmu.mk. The content of the website is available in Macedonian, Albanian and English language, as well as information is accessible to people with visual impediments.

According to Article 6 of the Law on Audio and Audio-visual Media Services, the Agency performs the following duties and responsibilities:

- ensures transparency in the broadcaster's work;

⁵ The Constitution of the Republic of North Macedonia, Official Gazette 52/1991, Article 16 states: "The freedom of personal conviction, conscience, thought and public expression of thought is guaranteed. The freedom of speech, public address, public information and the establishment of institutions for public information is guaranteed. Free access to information and the freedom of reception and transmission of information are guaranteed. The right of reply via the mass media is guaranteed. The right to a correction in the mass media is guaranteed. The right to protect a source of information in the mass media is guaranteed. Censorship is prohibited."

- ensures the protection and development of pluralism in the sphere of audio and audio-visual media services, encourages and supports the existence of diverse and independent audio and audio-visual media services;
- takes measures in accordance with the Law in cases where provisions of the Law on Audio and Audio-visual Media Services, or regulations adopted on the basis of is Law and terms and obligations stipulated by the licenses are violated;
- ensures the protection of minors;
- adopts acts derived from the Law on Audio and Audio-visual Media Services;
- ensures the protection of citizens' interests in the area of audio and audio-visual media services;
- detects the existence of illicit media concentration;
- decides on the assignment, extension or revocation of licenses for television or radio broadcasting;
- takes measures to temporarily restrict on transmission and reception of audio and audio-visual media services from other countries on the territory of the Republic of North Macedonia;
- adopts a list of events of major importance;
- encourages media literacy;
- maintains the registries established by the Law;
- conducts researches and analyses on specific issues concerning audio and audio-visual media services;
- performs audience measurement in terms of viewership or listenership of the programmes, i.e programme services of the broadcasters in the Republic of North Macedonia;
- prescribes the manner of audience measurement in terms of viewership or listenership of the programmess, i.e. programme services of the broadcasters in the Republic of North Macedonia
- performs other duties determinate by the Law on Audio and Audio-visual Media Services.

The Public Service Broadcaster performs activities of public interest in the field of broadcasting, including production and provisioning of radio and television programmes in accordance to the Law on audio and audio-visual media services. The Public Service Broadcaster will be part of this Action in all activities related to freedom of expression.

According to Chapter VI of the Law on Audio and Audio-visual Media Service, work of the Public Broadcasting Service has been defined and regulated. In particular, Article 104, Macedonian Radio Television (Makedonska radiotelevizija) performs the following duties and responsibilities:

- (1) The functions of a public broadcasting service in the Republic of North Macedonia shall be performed by the Macedonian Radio Television (hereinafter: MRT).
- (2) The Republic of North Macedonia is the founder of MRT; it shall operate as public enterprise in accordance with the manner and conditions specified in this Law and the acts adopted thereof.
- (3) MRT, being a public broadcasting service in Republic of North Macedonia is independent from any state body, other public legal entity or enterprise and should be impartial towards them in its editorial and business policy.
- (4) MRT shall perform business activity of public interest in the field of broadcasting in the Republic of Macedonia, including production and provisioning of radio and television programmes and programme services in accordance with Article 107 of this Law, by realising the programme obligations, standards and principles in accordance with Article 91,92,110 and 111 of this Law.
- (5) The seat of MRT shall be in Skopje.
- (6) MRT shall establish regional production centres.
- (7) The abbreviated name of the Macedonian Radio Television shall be MRT.

(8) The property and operational assets of MRT shall be managed and used by MRT, in a manner and under the conditions determined by this Law.

(9) Journalists and editors of MRT, as well as the persons that are directly involved in the production of the MRT programmes do not have a status of public servants.

3.2 Ongoing reforms

In March 2021, the Government adopted the Europe at Home Agenda, aimed to ensure a greater focus of the reforms in certain priority areas. The Agenda focuses on the areas included in the Cluster Fundamentals, such as electoral reforms, judiciary, fight against crime and corruption, human rights, media reform, economic governance and public administration reform. The Ministry of Justice initiated amendments to the Criminal Code and the Law on Civil Liability for Insult and Defamation, while the Ministry of Information Society and Administration initiated harmonisation of the Law on audio and audio-visual media services with the new Media Directive.

The current Law on Media was adopted in 2013, and amended in 2014, removing online media from the regulation. Thus, digital news media outlets are not legally obliged to disclose ownership data, while this requirement is obligatory for the print and broadcasting media. Furthermore, the legislation neither imposes restrictions on the concentration of ownership of digital media, nor is there a relevant body that monitors this issue.

In the Electoral Code, the term "electronic media" (internet portals), is mentioned especially in the area of media presentation, without this expression being defined.

In December 2019, the Association of Journalists and Council of Media Ethics established a registry of online media (promedia.mk) which is voluntary and sets a number of minimum professional requirements, including publishing of ownership data. However, there are still digital news media which are not members of the self-regulation registry that do not comply with the self-regulatory code. In July 2019, authorities presented an action plan for decisive action against disinformation and invested certain efforts in building strategies to combating fake news and disinformation. The country announced inclusion of media literacy in the school curricula.

Government advertising on commercial channels is banned since 2018. Since then, there have been a number of initiatives from some of the broadcasters, demanding from the Government of North Macedonia to revise this decision. In the second half of 2022, group of MPs submitted to the Parliament draft amendments to the Law on audio and audio-visual media services introducing government campaigns of public interest.

In August 2021, the Ministry of Information Society and Administration announced establishment of a working group consisted of various media experts, associations and stakeholders that should have been part of the consultation process with regard media reforms, but formal appointment of the working group is still delayed.

Few video sharing platforms are operating in the country, both domestically and internationally registered undertakings.

In the 2022 Country Report for North Macedonia, the European Commission notes that "overall, the country made limited progress during the reporting period to address the previous recommendations... Freedom of expression and pluralistic viewpoints continued to thrive in a generally favourable overall political context. Despite this, the media reforms expected stalled due to a lack of political consensus and a shift in focus due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Challenges remain in implementing the legal framework encompassing the work of media, especially on the Law on Audio and Audiovisual Media Services. Although instances of physical and verbal violence decreased, online threats against journalists and media workers are increasing. The working conditions for media workers remain challenging, especially their labour and social rights. The authorities and the media regulator supported media outlets during the COVID-19 pandemic. The country now needs to draw up a strategy on reform of the media, with the support of all stakeholders."

The reform of the public service broadcaster has been further delayed. The government continued to decrease the allocation of funds to the regulator, the public broadcaster and the public enterprise for broadcasting. The budget for public service broadcaster is considered insufficient in order the five-year development strategy to be implemented. Appointment of the members of PSB programming council is further delayed in the Parliament, as well of the council of the Agency for Audio and Audio-visual Media Services.

3.3 Linked activities

- IPA EUIF 2018 EU for Freedom of Expression: Alignment of national media legislation with EU acquis and media standards (start date: 1 September 2022 | 12 months' duration)

The project activities are grouped in six thematic areas/components:

- 1) Revision of national media legislation (Law on media, Law on audio and audio-visual media services, etc.), technical and organisational framework with regard EU acquis and draft legal proposals and recommendations accordingly.
- 2) Analysis of media market and legal framework on competitiveness (pluralism, transparency in the ownership structure, local and regional media vis-à-vis national media, funding and investment opportunities, state aid, etc.).
- 3) Analysis of existing legal framework, including absence of legal provisions tackling technological developments and new media (online media, social media, video-on-demand platforms, disinformation, hate speech, media literacy, etc.) and prepare recommendations.
- 4) Legal framework protecting journalists' social and labour rights (survey on existing practices, union organisation, role of various inspectorates, etc.) and prepare recommendations.
- 5) Revision of legal and strategic policy documents encompassing work of the Public Service Broadcaster financial sustainability, editorial independence, state aid rules, etc.
- 6) Analysis of the capacities of the Agency for audio and audio-visual media services with regard functionality and effective independence from government based on Media Directive requirements (competencies of the regulatory body, strengthening independence, etc.) and prepare recommendations.

- EU-funded regional project: Technical Assistance for Public Service Media in the Western Balkans (February 2018 - July 2022)

The project's overall objective contributed towards reform and professional development of Public Service Media in the Western Balkans in order to produce increasingly pluralistic, independent and accountable content.

The programme had three specific objectives, as follows:

1. To re-establish European standards and best practices across the Western Balkans as a common frame of reference for independent and professional media, both with regard to models for funding, election and functioning of governing bodies of PSMs.
2. To generate co-operation between the six PSBs on policies and practice in the reform process, including integrated newsrooms, editorial guidelines, and long-term strategies.
3. To expand cooperation on investigative journalism, mechanisms for co-production on selected topics and regional exchange of digitised archive materials.

- IPA 2020 Direct grant to Council of Media Ethics (start date: 4 January 2021 | 30 months' duration)

The overall project objectives is strengthening of press freedom and freedom of expression in the media in North Macedonia. The specific objective is enhancing self-regulation in the media.

Project results and outputs:

R 1. Capacity of CMEM strengthened and media self-regulation further promoted.

R 2. Improved integrity and professionalism in the newsrooms.

R.3. Promotion of the Registry of professional online media-Promedia, as well as the process of reviewing the criteria for membership in the Registry for professional online media-Promedia.

R 4. Strengthened image of the Council of Media Ethics of Macedonia through wider media campaign and media activities in the public

- IPA 2020 Call for Proposals aimed to enhance social and economic rights of journalists [budget: 500.000EUR], three grant contracts awarded to civil society/media organisations.
- 2021-2022 Civil Society Facility and Media Programme Call for Proposals priority on freedom of expression addressing issues as media integrity, digital literacy, upholding journalism quality standards, safety of the journalists, disinformation, hate speech, gender equality in media (gender-sensitive journalism, good practices in tackling online violence of women journalists, capacity building on safety of women journalists, closing the gender gap in newsrooms, etc.) – two grants awarded to civil society/media organisations;
- 2016-2017 Civil Society Facility and Media Programme [Budget available: 1.5 million EUR| duration: 36-40 months' duration] - three grants awarded to civil society/media organisations;
- CSF 2014-2015 [budget available: 2.5 million EUR | duration up to 36 months] – seven grants awarded to civil society/media organisations;
- IPA 2009 Supply of equipment for media monitoring has been provided to the Agency and audio and audio-visual media services [Budget: 650.000 EUR]
- EU-CoE project: Reinforcing Judicial Expertise on Freedom of Expression and the Media (JUFREX), implemented in partnership with the Council of Europe (CoE). The programme provides support to the judiciary in applying the European Court of Human Rights case-law system and offers training, including technical expertise to media regulatory authorities and media associations. [Budget 2.5 million EUR].
- EU-regional Training Programme to improve Quality and Professionalism of Journalism (€2 million): supports a regional network led by the Balkan Investigative Reporting Network (BIRN) to enhance journalism education and to promote exchanges between journalists and academia from the EU and Western Balkans. The Regional EU Award Scheme for Investigative Journalism is financed within this framework.
- Building Trust in Media (€1.5 million): implemented in partnership with UNESCO, the programme supports media accountability, media internal governance and media information literacy.
- Direct grant to the European Endowment for Democracy (€4 million): Flexible re-granting scheme for media and pro-democracy support in fast changing environments.

3.4 List of applicable *Union acquis*/standards/norms

- Safeguards for the independence of broadcasting are in line with the general principle of freedom of expression as embodied in Article 11 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (9) and Article 10 of the European Convention of Human Rights, a general principle of law the respect of which is ensured by the European Courts (10).
- The Communication from the Commission on the application of State aid rules to public service broadcasting (2009/C 257/01).
- The Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council of 25 January 1999 concerning public service broadcasting (Official Journal C 030 , 05/02/1999 P. 0001 – 0001) underlines that ‘broad public access, without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunities, to various channels and services is a necessary precondition for fulfilling the special obligation of public service broadcasting’. Moreover, public service broadcasting needs to ‘benefit from technological progress’, bring ‘the public the benefits of the new audiovisual and information services and the new technologies’ and to undertake ‘the development and diversification of activities in the digital age’.
- Audiovisual Media Services Directive (EU) 2018/1808
- The Digital Services Act and Digital Markets Act (a single set of new rules applicable across the whole EU to create a safer and more open digital space)
- EU Human Rights Guidelines on Freedom of Expression Online and Offline
- EU Action Plan against Disinformation
- EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy 2020-2024

Relevant legislation in North Macedonia

- Law on audio and audio-visual media services
- Law on media
- Electoral Code
- Criminal Code
- Law on Civil Liability for Insult and Defamation
- Law on Public Enterprises
- Law on Public Sector Employees

3.5 Results per component

The twinning project will have two components i) supporting the Agency for audio and audio-visual media services (Component 1); ii) and the Public Service Broadcaster (Component 2).

Component 1: Supporting the Agency for audio and audio-visual media services

Mandatory result 1 (Enhanced administrative capacity of the Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services (AVMS) for implementing the legislation which is (to be) harmonized with the new AVMS Directive.

In the context of Mandatory Result 1, the following sub-results are expected to be achieved:

- Capacity for implementing the AVMSD as part of the competencies of the Agency improved.
-
- Knowledge of both the staff and the (new) Council of the Agency on the best practices of transposing the Directive into the national legislation increased.
-

Mandatory result 2: Promoted media literacy skills and a more effective combat against disinformation/fake news and unethical media reporting, including monitoring of media reporting on human rights.

In the context of Mandatory Result 2, the following sub-results are expected to be achieved:

- Skills for effective monitoring and implementation of the legal provisions further developed about media literacy, detection, analysis and exposure of disinformation, monitoring of media content reporting on gender based violence enhanced and other human rights.

Component 2: Supporting the Public Service Broadcaster

Mandatory Result 3 Upgrade the tools to follow and assess the public opinion particularly on the value of PSB services, as well as enable the production of higher-quality programmes based on proper audience segmentation and new and better journalistic and management approaches.

In the context of mandatory result 3 the following sub-results are expected to be achieved:

- Strengthened capacities of PSB staff for reaching audience, including through various Internet/social media channels.
Assessment and policy documents created on transformation of radio and television production, including recommendations for supply of technical equipment, as well as improvements regarding editorial and management structures of PSB.

Mandatory Result 4 Improved understanding of the European standards and practices about media freedom and public broadcasting service.

In the context of mandatory result 5 the following sub-results are expected to be achieved:

- Knowledge of the PSB staff increased for current (and new) programme council on the European standards and practices about media freedom and functioning of public broadcasting service in EU Member States.

3.6 Means/input from the EU Member State Partner Administration(s)

The project will be implemented in the form of a Twinning contract between the Beneficiary Country (BC) and EU Member State(s). The implementation of the project requires one Project Leader (PL) with responsibility for the overall coordination of project activities and one Resident Twinning Adviser (RTA) to manage implementation of project activities, Component Leaders (CLs) and pool of short-term experts within the limits of the budget. It is essential that the team have sufficient broad expertise to cover all areas included in the project description.

Proposals submitted by Member States shall be concise and focused on the strategy and methodology and an indicative timetable underpinning this, the administrative model suggested, the quality of the expertise to be mobilised and clearly show the administrative structure and capacity of the Member State entities. Proposals shall be detailed enough to respond adequately to the Twinning Fiche, but are not expected to contain a fully elaborated project. They shall contain enough detail about the strategy and methodology and indicate the sequencing and mention key activities during the implementation of the project to ensure the achievement of overall and specific objectives and mandatory result/outputs.

The interested EU Member State(s) shall include in their proposal the CVs of the designated Project Leader (PL) and the Resident Twinning Advisor (RTA), as well as the CVs of the potential designated Component Leaders (CLs).

The Twinning project will be implemented by close-cooperation between the partners aiming to achieve the mandatory results in sustainable manner.

The set of proposed activities will be further developed with the Twinning partners when drafting the initial work plan and successive rolling work plan every three months, keeping in mind that the final list of activities will be decided in cooperation with the Twinning partner. The components are closely inter-linked and need to be sequenced accordingly.

3.6.1 Profile and tasks of the PL

Qualifications and skills

- Proven contractual relation to a public administration or mandated body (see Twinning Manual 4.1.4.2);
- University degree in journalism/communications/social sciences/law/economics/public administration or similar discipline relevant to the project or equivalent professional experience of 8 years
- At least 3 years of specific experience within media regulatory authority or other relevant administration/ body;
- Experience in project management;
- He/she must have good leadership skills and a broad knowledge of policies, data processing and data protection;
- Fluency in written and spoken English;

Tasks of Project Leader

- General overall supervision and coordination of the project;
- The STEs deliver their expertise under the overall responsibility of the Member State PL and the coordination and supervision of the RTA. Bears the overall responsibility for the correct and successful implementation of the project and for its sound financial management;
- Permanent contacts with the main counterpart in the BC;
- Responsible to undertake all activities specified in the project and for achieving the mandatory results.

The participation in quarterly meetings of the Project Steering Committee.

3.6.2 Profile and tasks of the RTA

Qualifications and skills

- Proven contractual relation to a public administration or mandated body (see Twinning Manual 4.1.4.2);
- University degree in journalism/communications/social sciences/law/economics/public administration or similar discipline relevant to the project or equivalent professional experience of 8 years;
- At least 3 years of specific experience in an EU MS media regulatory authority or public service broadcaster or other relevant administration/body;
- Experience in project management;
- Experience in implementing similar or related assistance and cooperation projects will be considered an asset;
- Fluency in written and spoken English;

Tasks:

- Throughout its entire duration he/she is in charge of the day-to-day implementation, including preparation of STE mission to enable the experts to be aware of the specifics of North Macedonia, quality review of mission reports and recommendations;
- Advice and technical assistance to the representatives of the Beneficiary administration;
- Reports regularly to the Member State PL;
- Quality support on reports and recommendations of STE in view of the current situation in the Beneficiary administration;
- Actively contribute to the work of any sector monitoring process set up in the Beneficiary country;
- Regularly updates the work plan to be transmitted to the Project Steering Committee under the authority of the Member State PL;
- Advising on EU policies and best practices, related legislation and regulations;
- Networking with stakeholders of the project in North Macedonia and in MS.

3.6.3 Profile and tasks of Component Leaders

The Component Leaders will be responsible for achievement of project results, ensuring the activities for the co-operation and information exchange between the RTA and the Beneficiary side and ensuring that all the required support of the management and staff of the EU side are available.

Qualifications and skills:

- Proven contractual relation to a public administration or mandated body (see Twinning Manual 4.1.4.2);
- University degree in journalism/communications/social sciences/law/economics/public administration or similar discipline relevant to the project or equivalent professional experience of 8 years
- Minimum 3 years of specific experience within media regulatory authority or public service broadcaster or other relevant body;
- Experience in project management;
- He/she must have good leadership skills and a broad knowledge of policies, data processing and data protection;
- Fluency in written and spoken English;

Tasks:

- Provide practical expertise/advice to relevant staff for execution of different tasks related to the project;
- Assist in key tasks, in the field of drafting legislation and by-laws, training, preparing guidelines for strategic use and management of training and providing training;
- Contribute to the project reporting, to drafting the notes and other documents and reports on their missions;
- Address cross-cutting issues;
- Provide technical advice, support and assist the beneficiary institution in the context of the project's components;
- Prepare analyses as necessary for the project implementation;
- Participate in preparation of both interim and final reports.

3.6.4 Profile and tasks of other short-term experts

Qualifications and skills

- University degree in journalism/communications/social sciences/law/economics/public administration or similar discipline relevant to the project or equivalent professional experience of 8 years
- Minimum 3 years of experience in an EU MS public administration or in areas relevant to their specific assignment;
- Fluency in written and spoken English;
- Good skills in reporting and communication.

Tasks:

- Delivering expertise under the overall responsibility of the Member State PL and the coordination and supervision of the RTA;
- Delivering support to the Beneficiary administration through specific activities in the Beneficiary country, including workshops, seminars, training sessions, meetings with officials of the Beneficiary administration, joint drafting sessions, etc;
- Preparation and reporting work, before and after their missions to the Beneficiary country.

4. Budget

Maximum budget available for the Grant: EUR 788,000

Twinning Contract	IPA Community Contribution	TOTAL
Enhancement of the capacities of the Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services and the Public Service Broadcaster	100% 788 000 EUR	788 000 EUR

5. Implementation Arrangements

- 5.1 The Delegation of European Union will act as a Contracting Authority for the project, responsible for all administrative and procedural aspects of the selection process, contracting matters and financial management including payments.

Mr. Steffen Hudolin
Head of Cooperation
European Union Delegation
St. Cyril and Methodius 52b,
1000 Skopje

- 5.2 Institutional framework

The main final Beneficiary is the Agency for audio and audio-visual media services and co-beneficiary is the Public Service Broadcaster and all its employees. Both entities will ensure efficient coordination with officials and counterparts in the relevant line institution.

- 5.3 Counterparts in the final Beneficiary administration:

- 5.3.1 Contact persons:

Dimitar Tanurov, Senior Associate for European Integration and International Cooperation
Agency for audio and audio-visual media services
Address: Makedonija 38, 1000 Skopje
North Macedonia

Maja Damjanovska, Advisor to the Director of the Public Service Broadcaster
Makedonska radio Televizija (MRTV)
Address: Goce Delcev bb, 1000 Skopje
North Macedonia

5.3.2 PL counterpart

Dimitar Tanurov, Senior Associate for European Integration and International Cooperation
Agency for audio and audio-visual media services
Address: Makedonija 38, 1000 Skopje
North Macedonia

5.3.3 RTA counterpart

Dimitar Tanurov, Senior Associate for European Integration and International Cooperation
Agency for audio and audio-visual media services
Address: Makedonija 38, 1000 Skopje
North Macedonia

6. Duration of the project

The implementation period of the Action is **18 months**.

The overall execution period of the Twinning project is 21 months. The execution period of the contract shall enter into force upon the date of notification by the Contracting Authority of the contract signed by all parties, whereas it shall end 3 months after the implementation period of the Action.

7. Management and reporting

7.1 Language

The official language of the project is the one used as contract language under the instrument (English). All formal communications regarding the project, including interim and final reports, shall be produced in the language of the contract.

7.2 Project Steering Committee

A project steering committee (PSC) shall oversee the implementation of the project. The main duties of the PSC include verification of the progress and achievements *via-à-vis* the mandatory results/outputs chain (from mandatory results/outputs per component to impact), ensuring good coordination among the actors, finalising the interim reports and discuss the updated work plan.

Other details concerning the establishment and functioning of the PSC are described in the Twinning Manual.

7.3 Reporting

All reports shall have a narrative section and a financial section. They shall include as a minimum the information detailed in section 5.5.2 (interim reports) and 5.5.3 (final report) of the Twinning Manual. Reports need to go beyond activities and inputs. Two types of reports are foreseen in the framework of Twinning: interim quarterly reports and final report. An interim quarterly report shall be presented for discussion at each meeting of the PSC. The narrative part shall primarily take stock of the progress and achievements *vis-à-vis* the mandatory results and provide precise recommendations and corrective measures to be decided by in order to ensure the further progress.

8. Sustainability

The achievements of a Twinning project (activities, documentation and mandatory results) should be maintained by the management of the Agency for audio and audio-visual media services and the Public Service Broadcaster as a permanent asset to the final Beneficiaries administration even after the end of the Twinning project implementation.

The MS Twinning partners shall transfer the know-how necessary to achieve the mandatory results to the final Beneficiary administration. During the project, the twinning partners should develop documents/handouts, guidelines that will be easily accessible for later use by the final beneficiary administration. Staff benefiting from trainings/study visit shall transfer knowledge through subsequent training to their colleagues, and training resources will be further used by the final Beneficiaries. Sustainability of project's results will be further elaborated in the course of the project as a joint responsibility of the MS partner and BC institution. Furthermore, in the final report twinning partners will include specific recommendations for safeguarding the achievement of mandatory results in the final beneficiary administrations.

9. Crosscutting issues (*equal opportunity, environment, climate etc...*)

Based on the fundamental principles of promoting equality and combating discrimination, participation in the project will be guaranteed on the basis of equal access regardless of sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation. Equal participation of men and women during the implementation of the project will be assured.

Equal Opportunities and non-discrimination

In the implementation of activities under this Twinning Fiche, the principles of equal opportunities and non-discrimination shall apply, so that participation in the project will be guaranteed on the basis of equal access regardless of sex, ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age, etc. Gender equality incentives are incorporated particularly in activities concerning capacity building.

Environment and climate change

The activities under this Twinning Fiche do not have a direct global impact on the protection of the environment. For all the activities, however, recycling of paper and the reduction of paper - based activities are recommended.

Minorities and vulnerable groups

This Twinning Fiche does not deal with minorities and vulnerable groups in any direct manner, but as a general principle, sensitivity towards minorities and vulnerable groups, where meaningful, should be reflected in the improved provision of public services.

Civil Society/Stakeholders involvement

This Twinning Fiche will involve civil society, academia, think tanks and other stakeholders if needed.

10. Conditionality and sequencing

The implementation of this project requires the full commitment and participation of the senior management of the final beneficiary institution. In addition to providing the twinning partner with adequate staff and other resources to operate effectively, the senior management must be actively involved in the development and implementation of the policies and institutional change required to deliver the project results.

Conditionality

- Appointment of counterpart personnel by the final beneficiary before the launch of the call of proposal and guaranteeing the continuity of the appointed and trained staff;
- Allocation of working space and facilities by the final beneficiary within the premises of the final beneficiaries before contract signature;
- Participation by the final beneficiary in the selection process as per EU regulations;
- Organisation, selection and appointment of members of working groups, steering and coordination committees, seminars by the beneficiaries;
- Use and application of project outputs.

11. Indicators for performance measurement

Component 1

Measurable indicators regarding Mandatory Result 1 - **Enhanced administrative capacity of the Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services (AVMS) for implementing the legislation which is (to be) harmonized with the new AVMS Directive.**

- New or amendments to the existing secondary legislation related to the new AVMSD drafted
- Tailor-made trainings for approximately 30 participants, based on previously assessed training needs of the target groups provided
- Know-how gained of good practices and experience in implementing the AVMSD

Measurable indicators regarding Mandatory Result 2

- Code of Practice against Disinformation Drafted.
- Tailor-made practical trainings on monitoring media content reporting on gender based violence and other human rights issues organised.

Component 2

Measurable indicators regarding Mandatory Result 3

- Training methodology developed for reaching out audience and measurement of different Internet based and digitally distributed content by MRTV staff.
- Methodology on audience research developed (TV channels and online platforms).
- Assessment of available equipment and proposal for necessary new equipment carried out, providing also provisional budget estimations.
- An editorial policy and guidelines for all channels of MRT developed.

Measurable indicators regarding Mandatory Result 4

- Know-how of current (and new) members of the Programme Council about European standards on freedom of media and public service broadcaster increased.
-
- Assessments of the existing procedures, including recommendations for improvement of independence and professional development, internal procedures ensuring political and financial independence, etc. prepared;
- A communication and human resources strategies developed, including indicative budget.

12. Facilities available

The final Beneficiary institution the Agency for audio and audiovisual media services, commit itself to make available free of any charge for the project:

- office space for the RTA /the RTA assistant(s) and short-term experts for the entire duration of their secondment including chairs, tables, air-conditioning, etc.;
- computers including laptops and photocopiers;
- software and licenses including email systems and Internet access (enabling speedy communication);
- security measures linked to infrastructure and/or communication systems;
- secretarial support;
- venues for conferences, training and workshops;
- information access rights relevant to the assignment.

ANNEXES TO PROJECT FICHE

Logical framework matrix in standard format

Organisational chart of the Agency for audio and audio-visual media services ([EN version](#))

Annual Report of the Agency for audio and audio-visual media services (The following [link](#) contains the annual Programme, Plans and Work Reports of the Agency, as well as the annual reports on the work of the Agency. The plans and reports are only in Macedonian language)

Annual Report of the Public Service Broadcaster – [MK version](#)

2020-2025 Strategy for Development of the Macedonian Radio and Television – [MK version](#)

2019-2023 Strategy for Development of Audio and Audio-visual Industry – [MK version](#)

Law on audio and audiovisual media services ([MK version](#))

Annex C1a : Simplified Logical Framework

	Description	Indicators (with relevant baseline and target data)	Sources of verification	Risks	Assumptions (external to project)
Overall Objective	The EU-project overall objective is to strengthen the capacities of Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services in accordance with the EU acquis and international standards, as well as to support the reforms of the Public Service Broadcaster.	Positive assessments of the Agency's and MRTV's performance in the EC's Country Reports, and other domestic and international organisations' assessments	EC Country Reports Domestic and international organisations' reports	Delays in harmonisation of the national legislation with the Media Directive Further delay by the Parliament to appoint new members of the Council of the Agency for audio and audiovisual media services and the Programme Council of the Public Service Broadcaster	Harmonization of the Law on Audio and Audiovisual Media Services with the revised AVMS Directive. Appointment of the Council at the Agency for audio and audiovisual media services and the Programme Council at the Public Service Broadcaster Willingness on the part of the other regulatory bodies to cooperate and exchange experiences
Specific (Project) Objective(s)	Specific Objective 1: To strengthen institutional and administrative capacities of the Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services and the Public Service Broadcaster based on the legal and regulatory framework, EU acquis and best practices of EU Member States, in order to achieve a more effective and efficient performance.	Extent to which tasks of relevant institutions are executed in line with EU regulations and international standards in the area of broadcasting and media regulation. (Moderate/Advanced)	Annual Reports of beneficiary institutions EC Country Reports Domestic and international organisations' reports		

	Description	Indicators (with relevant baseline and target data)	Sources of verification	Risks	Assumptions (external to project)
Mandatory results/outputs by components	<p>Mandatory result 1: Enhanced administrative capacity of the Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services (AVMS) for implementing the legislation which is (to be) harmonized with the new AVMS Directive.</p> <p>Mandatory result 2: Promoted media literacy skills and a more effective combat against disinformation/fake news and unethical media reporting, including monitoring of media reporting on human rights.</p> <p>Mandatory Result 3 Upgrade the tools to follow and assess the public opinion particularly on the value of PSB services, as well as enable the production of higher-quality programmes based on proper audience segmentation and new and better journalistic and management approaches.</p> <p>Mandatory Result 4 Improved understanding of the European standards and practices about media freedom and public broadcasting service.</p>	<p>Proposal of secondary legislation (by –laws and policy documents) based on harmonised legislation with Media Directive created [Non-existent]</p> <p>Knowledge on EU acquis, European practices, media literacy, disinformation, unethical reporting, human rights issues in media, enhanced at the media regulator [Non-existent - Moderate]</p> <p>Number of employees supported in implementation of the Public Service Broadcaster’ Strategy, as well as proposals of upgraded tools and assessments put forward [Non-existent - Moderate]</p> <p>Number of employees and members of the Programme Council provided with the trainings on European standards and practices about media freedom and functioning of public service broadcaster. [Non-existent - Moderate]</p>	<p>Quarterly reports to the AAVMS Council</p> <p>Annual report on the work of the AAVMS to the Parliament</p> <p>Evaluation forms from study visits, workshops</p> <p>Annual Report of the Public Service Broadcaster</p>		
Sub-results per component (optional and indicative)	<p><i>Component 1:</i> Capacity for implementing the AVMSD as part of the competencies of the Agency improved.</p> <p>Knowledge of both the staff and the (new) Council of the Agency on the best practices of transposing the Directive into the national legislation increased.</p> <p>Skills for effective monitoring and implementation of the legal provisions further developed about media literacy, detection, analysis and exposure of disinformation, monitoring of media content reporting on gender based violence enhanced and other human rights.</p>	<p><i>Component 1:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🚦 Training programme for strengthening the administrative capacities of secondary legislation (by –laws and policy documents) based on harmonised legislation with Media Directive created. 🚦 Number of capacity building events conducted for staff of the media regulator. 🚦 Study visit aimed at exchanging good regulatory practices and experiences in implementing the revised AMSD Directive (with special focus on online media, video sharing platforms, social networks) organised. 🚦 Number of capacity building events/workshops with media professionals and members of the 	<p>Evaluation forms from study visits, workshops & trainings</p> <p>Policies/guidelines/instructions/procedures</p> <p>Annual Report of the Macedonian Radio and Television</p> <p>Project reports</p>	<p>Insufficient human and technical resources allocated to pair the Twinning Administration staff;</p> <p>Lack of commitment of relevant institutions to the project;</p> <p>Unclear division of responsibilities among involved stakeholders;</p>	<p>Smooth and effective cooperation between all parties involved in the project;</p> <p>Completion of activities according to the time schedule and the budget of the project;</p> <p>Support and commitment by involved stakeholders;</p>

	Description	Indicators (with relevant baseline and target data)	Sources of verification	Risks	Assumptions (external to project)
		<p>Media Literacy Network aimed at sharing the EU concepts on disinformation and misinformation, challenges and dilemmas, EU activities and tools to tackle disinformation and misinformation conducted;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Code of Practice against disinformation drafted Number of capacity building events for safe media environment for children organised. Study visit to ECHR (Strasbourg) organised on practices on the most sensitive cases of the European Court of Human Rights dealing with respect of human rights and freedoms. Number of trainings on monitoring media content reporting on gender-based violence conducted. <p><i>Component 2:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of PSB staff trained on data-analysis, audience research and programme content development. Assessments on audience measurement, social media/online content, new necessary equipment, further digitalisation of the radio and TV, etc. performed Strategy to increase viewership and build trust in the public created. Guidelines on editorial policy among all channels of PSB created. Technical staff and journalists trained on editorial production, recording, editing, balanced and independent reporting, professional standards, respect of the rights of minorities and other human rights, etc. Assessment of existing procedures on hiring, 	Websites of the media regulator and PSB	<p>Lack of sufficient information and delays in ensuring documents necessary for implementation of the activities;</p> <p>Further delay in appointment of PSB Programme Council and Council of the media regulator by the Parliament;</p>	<p>Sufficient flow of relevant information among project team and beneficiary institutions;</p> <p>Dedicated staff by the beneficiaries is present and devoted to the project's implementation;</p>
	<p><i>Component 2:</i></p> <p>Strengthened capacities of PSB staff for reaching audience, including through various Internet/social media channels.</p> <p>Assessment and policy documents created on</p>				

	Description	Indicators (with relevant baseline and target data)	Sources of verification	Risks	Assumptions (external to project)
	<p>transformation of radio and television production, including recommendations for supply of technical equipment, as well as improvements regarding editorial and management structures of PSB.</p> <p>Knowledge of the PSB staff increased for current (and new) programme council on the European standards and practices about media freedom and functioning of public broadcasting service in EU Member States.</p>	<p>dismissal and promoting staff and middle management carried out.</p> <p>✚ Number of recommendations for improvement of independence and professional development, internal procedures ensuring political and financial independence, technical development, etc. developed.</p> <p>✚ Communication and human resources strategy developed, defining internal and external communication of PSB staff.</p> <p>✚ Number of activities / trainings on European standards and practices about media freedom and public broadcasting service organised.</p> <p>✚ Number of policy documents and programing scheme enhancing production of quality program content developed</p> <p>✚ Number of training for journalists, editorial, technical and management structures on data-analysis, social media/internet content production, professional standards, etc. organised.</p>			