**RULEBOOK**
**ON THE WORK OF THE COORDINATING BODY FOR REPORTING AND ACTING UPON COMPLAINTS DURING ELECTIONS OR REFERENDA**

**(Consolidated text)**

**I. GENERAL PROVISIONS**

# Article 1

This RULEBOOK provides a more detailed regulation of the operational procedures of the Coordinating Body for Reporting and Acting upon Complaints during Elections and Referenda, as well as the procedure and method of exercising the following competences, as established in the Memorandum of Cooperation among the founding parties:

* monitoring the conduct and manner of acting within the online space, including social media networks, during electoral processes and referenda, of the political parties, their candidates, the independent candidates, the online editions of the broadcasters, online media outlets, fact-checkers, influencers, and other entities capable of influencing the public in favour of one’s campaigning during elections or referenda;
* monitoring the dynamics of accepting and signing of the Code of Conduct in the Online Sphere during Electoral Processes and Referenda on the part of the media and the participants in the electoral process, and publishing the list of all entities that have accepted the Code;
* acting upon complaints, deadlines, members’ competence, publishing of the decisions;
* issuing public responses at its own discretion in the form of press releases, statements, press conferences, and other forms of public communication on matters/activities of broad public interest and issues related to the media and all actors within the online space during an election or a referendum period;
* cooperating with the state authorities, non-governmental organizations, and both domestic and international institutions;
* creating public campaigns,
* engaging and consulting external experts and advisors on specific issues and in accordance with the operational needs of the Body.

# Article 2

 The Coordinating Body does not have the status of a legal entity.

**Article 3**

The Coordinating Body is composed of six members and their respective deputies.

The members and deputies are delegated representatives from the following institutions/organizations that are signatories to the Memorandum of Cooperation:
the Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services (AVMU), the Association of Journalists of Macedonia (AJM), the Council of Media Ethics of Macedonia (CMEM), the Macedonian Institute for Media (MIM), the Institute of Communication Studies (ICS), and the “Metamorphosis” Foundation.

Should another legal entity join the Body through signing an Annex to the Memorandum of Cooperation, the number of members of the Coordinating Body shall be expanded accordingly.

**Article 4**

The Coordinating Body shall be active during electoral processes or referenda.

The members of the Coordinating Body shall elect a Coordinator and a Deputy Coordinator from their own ranks.

The mandate of the Coordinator and Deputy Coordinator shall be two years, with the possibility of re-election.

In the event that the Coordinator or Deputy Coordinator resigns, is unable to perform their duties, or the organization that nominated them withdraws from the Coordinating Body, the members shall proceed with the election of a new Coordinator or Deputy Coordinator.

The Coordinating Body shall also be activated in the case of early (snap) elections.

The session to activate the Coordinating Body prior to each electoral process or referendum shall be convened by the Coordinator of the Body.

**Article 5**

The Coordinator or Deputy Coordinator shall represent the Coordinating Body in public through official statements, press conferences, and announcements.

Sessions of the Coordinating Body shall be convened by the Coordinator, or, in the event of the Coordinator’s inability to act, by the Deputy Coordinator.

**Article 6**

Depending on the urgency of the items to be discussed, sessions of the Coordinating Body may be convened either in person, with physical attendance, or online via web-based platforms.

**Article 7**

The Coordinating Body shall adopt decisions by a simple majority of the total number of its members.

In order for the Body to be able to validly deliberate and adopt decisions, at least half plus one of the total number of members, or their deputies, must be present at the session.

If any member of the Body holds a dissenting opinion or a position differing from that of the majority, this shall be noted in the decision. Upon request by the dissenting member and upon submission of a written opinion, the dissenting opinion may also be published alongside the decision.

The decisions shall be signed by the Coordinator or the Deputy Coordinator who presided over the session, regardless of their personal stance on the substance of the decision.

**Article 8**

Upon receipt of a complaint, the Coordinator or Deputy Coordinator shall forward it to the competent member organization within no more than 24 hours, in accordance with the principle of material competence of the organizations as established in the Memorandum.

* To the Complaints Commission of the Council of Media Ethics of Macedonia – if the complaint concerns published content in newspapers and their electronic editions, online media, or the internet editions of broadcasters;
* To the Council of Honour at the Association of Journalists of Macedonia – if the complaint concerns violations of professional standards and ethics by journalists in the course of their reporting. The Council shall be obliged to review the complaint and determine whether the journalist acted in accordance with the Journalists' Code of Ethics; and
* To the "Metamorphosis" Foundation – if the complaint concerns the dissemination of disinformation through online media or social networks, or by political parties, their candidates, independent candidates, influencers, and other entities capable of influencing the public in favour of a certain campaign.

The AVMU shall also be responsible for the development and maintenance of the website on which all decisions of the Coordinating Body and its member organizations shall be published.

The meetings of the Coordinating Body shall be held on the premises of the member organizations that are signatories to the Memorandum, or online via one of the designated web platforms.

Minutes shall be kept for the course of each session.

Voting at the sessions of the Coordinating Body shall be conducted publicly.

**Article 9**

A complaint regarding media-related violations may be submitted to this Body by any citizen, participants in the electoral process, governmental and non-governmental organizations, public authorities and institutions, as well as any legal entity or natural person directly or indirectly affected.

The complaints shall be submitted to the following email address: koordinativnotelozaizbori@avmu.mk.

Given the short timeframes of the election campaign and pre-election period, the handling of complaints by the member bodies of this Coordinating Body — the Association of Journalists of Macedonia (AJM), the Council of Media Ethics of Macedonia (CMEM), the Metamorphosis Foundation, or the Agency — shall be treated as urgent.

**Article 10**

 The member of the Coordinating Body to whom the complaint has been referred shall act upon it within a period not exceeding three (3) days and shall submit an opinion (recommendation) to the Coordinating Body. Upon receipt of the opinion/recommendation, the Coordinating Body shall deliberate on the complaint and adopt a decision in accordance with Article 7 of this Rulebook.

 In cases where the preparation of an opinion requires a complex analysis or consultation with other members of the Coordinating Body, or expert opinion from another relevant institution/organization, the deadline for the member of the Coordinating Body to whom the complaint has been referred may be extended to five (5) days.

 The decisions of the Coordinating Body shall be delivered to the complainant, published on the Body’s official website, and disseminated through the communication channels of its member organizations.

**II. COOPERATION WITH INSTITUTIONS, INDIVIDUALS, EXPERTS**

**Article 11**

If the Coordinating Body determines that expert opinion is required on a specific matter arising from a submitted complaint, it may engage or involve legal entities or natural persons who are experts in the relevant field.

**Article 12**

The Coordinating Body shall cooperate with all institutions responsible for the implementation or monitoring of the electoral process and, when necessary, shall conduct consultations with them or provide an appropriate opinion, if required.

**Article 13**

The Coordinating Body may receive donations to ensure an uninterrupted, prompt, and efficient functioning of the Body, to enhance its technical and technological capacities, as well as to support the exchange of or monitoring of best practices of similar self-regulatory bodies in other countries, to develop public campaigns, utilize social media, and prepare publications, reports, debates, and forums aimed at raising public awareness.

The donations must not be connected to entities subject to monitoring as defined in the Code, or from legal or natural persons affiliated with such entities.

Each member organization of the Body may contribute donations for various aspects of the Coordinating Body’s operations, thereby supporting the full realization of the purpose for which the Body has been formed.

The decision to accept, reject, or manage a donation shall be made by the Coordinating Body.

**Article 14**

The Coordinating Body shall design public campaigns on matters of public interest related to the electoral process and the conduct of all participants in the online space, and shall distribute such campaigns through traditional and online media, as well as via the social networks.

**Article 15**

For all matters not regulated by this Rulebook, the provisions of the rulebooks (bylaws) of the respective member organization of the Body, which govern specific issues, shall apply, provided that the majority of the members of the Coordinating Body agree thereto.

**Article 16**

This Rulebook shall enter into force upon its adoption at the session of the Coordinating Body on 26 August 2025, and shall be published on the website <https://izborenkodeksonline.mk/>.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Skopje,26.08.2026 | **Coordinating Bodyfor Monitoring Compliance with the Principles and Standards of the Code****Biljana Georgievska****Coordinator** |