

Media and digital rights regulation in Ukraine

DSLJ monthly digest on media and digital rights regulation in Ukraine provides an overview of the proposed and adopted legislation in the spheres of freedom of expression, media regulation, privacy and data protection, Internet regulation in general, and the activities of the National Broadcasting Council in the area of Media Law implementation.

Events and Highlights

On 4 June, the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy **presented the [Strategy for the Development of Media Literacy 2026](#)**. The Strategy aims to protect the population from Russian propaganda and disinformation and educate citizens on the use of illegal AI tools by the aggressor state.

On June 25, the first Intergovernmental Conference between Ukraine and the EU **[took place](#)**, marking **the start of Ukraine's official accession negotiations with the EU**. Among the [negotiation chapters](#), Chapter 10's implementation ("Digital Transformation and Media") will focus on aligning Ukrainian legislation with EU standards in terms of electronic communications, audiovisual policy, cybersecurity, and data protection.

On the same day, the Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights issued its decision in the case [Ukraine v Russia \(re Crimea\)](#), where the **Court found Russia responsible for human rights violations in Crimea**. The ECtHR [established](#) the **violation of the freedom of expression of media and journalists due to the suppression of non-Russian media**. In particular, all of the Ukrainian television channels in Crimea were shut down, and the only Ukrainian-language newspaper was banned from distribution. There were reported systematic instances of revoking broadcasting licences, issuance of "warnings" to media outlets deemed "extremist", criminal investigations, and harassment and intimidation of journalists.

Freedom of Expression and Media Regulation

Draft Law #11304 suggests supplementing the Code of Ukraine on Administrative Offences by adding the provision which **prohibits the placement of information containing profanity in the advertisement**. The dissemination of advertisements with abusive, vulgar, obscene or other inappropriate words and expressions leads to the imposition of fines on ad producers in the sum between 850-1190 UAH (roughly 20-27 EUR) and on ad disseminators – between 1700-4250 UAH (roughly 40-98 EUR). The draft is currently being processed by the Parliamentary Committee on Law Enforcement Activities.

Draft Law #11321, registered in June, aims at strengthening the guarantees of media freedom as well as the citizens' access to information. According to the draft, **accredited journalists are allowed to move freely in areas under martial law, even during curfew hours**. In terms of the work of the parliamentary committees, the draft offers to **post the video recordings of their open meetings on the Parliament's official website within 24 hours after the meetings end**. This **initiative positively impacts the media**, particularly addressing [journalists' concerns](#) about being restricted in movement when returning from business trips during curfew. On 21 June, the draft was recommended for adoption in the first reading by the Parliamentary Committee on Freedom of Expression.

Draft Law #10392 on Academic Integrity, registered in January, **was adopted in the first reading**. In particular, the draft establishes obligatory marking of AI-generated content in academic works, considering the **failure to mark such content or its publication as original work as plagiarism**. The draft is now awaiting the second reading.

Draft Law #9432 on the use of English in Ukraine, analysed in detail in the [July 2023 digest](#), was finally **adopted by the Parliament on 4 June** without the norms influencing the language quotas for the media or the use of languages in cinema. However, the Cabinet of Ministers will be obliged to adopt a state program supporting the screening of movies in English in cinemas, taking into account the screening quota provisions of the Language Law. **On 26 June, the President signed the law**.

Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine did not proceed to the next stages of reviewing other drafts, described in the [previous digests](#), which include proposals to enhance the Parliament's transparency, numerous amendments to the speech-related offences in the Code of Ukraine on Administrative Offences

and Criminal Code of Ukraine, and the decriminalisation of pornography. [Draft Law #7033-d](#) on the prevention of disclosure of certain information in the texts of court decisions, analysed in [May](#), is still awaiting a second reading.

Privacy and Data Protection

Although no drafts touching upon privacy were registered in June, certain legislative steps were taken towards the drafts analysed in previous digests. Unlike [Draft Law #11228](#), which was dismissed by the Parliament, the alternative **[Draft Law #11228-1 on counterintelligence activities](#)**, analysed in [May](#), **was adopted in the first reading on 5 June** and is now awaiting the second reading by the Parliamentary Committee on Law Enforcement Activities. The draft, however, **still contains vague provisions and inconsistencies with other laws** regarding the functions of authorised bodies as well as their direct access to data without any preconditions.

There was no progress on other drafts analysed in previous digests in June. These include the drafts on [a unified system of public security video monitoring](#), [personal data protection](#), [porn-related draft laws](#), and [Draft Law #9396](#), which excludes prosecutorial discretion in temporary access to sensitive personal data. [Draft Law #10190](#), which suggests criminalising electronic communication fraud, is still awaiting a second reading.

Internet Regulation

No legislative steps were taken regarding the previously submitted initiatives, namely **[Draft Law #10101](#)**, which permits the monitoring of the Internet to block unlicensed online gambling websites and mobile applications, and **[Draft Law #11115](#)**, analysed in detail [in the March digest](#), which aims to regulate the information-sharing platforms.

National Broadcasting Council

In line with the requirements of the Law on Media, three co-regulatory bodies were finally established. In June, NBC [announced](#) that working groups **registered the co-regulatory bodies as public associations in the spheres of audiovisual media, audio media and online media** on 7, 10 and 12 June, respectively. The purpose of these bodies is to **involve the media in setting content standards, preventing censorship and ensuring compliance with codes of conduct for information dissemination**. The next step in this process will be the formation of working groups to develop the broadcasting codes and the election of expert boards to review cases for compliance with the respective codes interpreting the content provisions of the Law on Media.

Digital Security Lab Ukraine is a non-government organisation aiming to create a human-rights-centered digital environment in Ukraine. We work toward achieving this goal by providing digital security support for high-risk Ukrainian human rights and media organisations and by contributing to policy development in the field of human rights on the Internet through conducting legal monitoring, research and analysis, advocacy, and awareness-raising campaigns.

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