

REGULATION
**of Central Electoral Commission on coverage of the electoral campaign for
election of Governor (Bashkan) of Gagauzia (Gagauz Yeri) by mass media of the
Autonomous Territorial Unit Gagauzia (Gagauz Yeri).**

I. General conditions

1. The regulation establishes the mode and principles of coverage of the electoral campaign by mass media of the Autonomous Territorial Unit Gagauzia of Moldova.

2. The Central Electoral Commission cooperates with mass media in the process of organisation and conduct of elections to hold manifestations for civic education of electors and information of population about electoral process.

3. The electoral campaign for election of Governor (Bashkan) of Gagauzia will benefit of airtime in rush hours of audience and special newspaper space in broadcast and print media.

4. Public mass media publishes free of charge the materials by Central Electoral Commission related to the electoral process, including on civic education of electors.

5. Electoral candidates are ensured equal rights in the electoral campaign, they are provided equal possibilities to use mass media in compliance with the concept on media coverage of the electoral campaign for election of Governor (Bashkan) of Gagauzia (Gagauz Yeri), confirmed by editorial staffs and this Regulation.

6. The Central Electoral Commission establishes the conditions for coverage of the electoral campaign by all broadcast and print media of the autonomy in line with this Regulation.

7. Electoral broadcasts and printed articles are identified with a special stamp, sound and/or video signals in order to make a difference from other broadcasts or articles.

8. Media outlets create special groups of journalists under internal orders to work throughout electoral period in order to create optimal conditions for publication of electoral articles.

9. Mass media publishes all electoral articles of electoral candidates in the column "Elections-2006". The remark "Paid from electoral fund" of respective electoral candidate follows the article.

10. The tax for broadcasting of publishing of electoral advertising cannot be higher than for commercial advertising.

11. The airtime for the electoral campaign is given in the same hours of audience; it is given to all electoral candidates under fair conditions.

12. The airtime and newspaper space are given to electoral candidates at their request after their registration with the Central Electoral Commission.

13. Paid and free airtime and newspaper space reserved and given for an electoral candidate but unused under his responsibility is not recovered.

14. Paid and free airtime and newspaper space reserved and given to an electoral candidate but unused for technical reasons is rescheduled in line with internal rules.

15. Electoral candidate is responsible for the contents of the electoral advertising.

16. No comment is allowed for the pre-election materials published by Central Electoral Commission and electoral candidates.

17. Airtime and newspaper space are given to the electoral candidate after the latter pays the amount stipulated by the contract signed between media outlet and electoral competitor.

18. The release of results of social surveys and other sorts of pre-election forecasts is stopped with 10 days before elections.

19. Electoral propaganda is prohibited on Election Day and on the day before elections.

20. The release of results of polls on participation of voters in elections and the candidates they voted is prohibited on Election Day before closure of polling stations.

21. Media outlets give the right of reply to electoral candidates on basis of a decision by Central Electoral Commission within 72 hours since the decision was made. The Friday before elections is the last day to exercise the right of reply. The right of reply is given by the same media outlet and under the same criteria as under which the candidate suffered the damage.

22. Mass media representatives enjoy the same rights like accredited observers.

23. The Central Electoral Commission settles conflicts between electoral candidates and public and private media outlets in line with legislation in force. Decisions by the Central Electoral Commission may be contested in law courts in compliance with the effective legislation.

24. Broadcast and print media outlets releasing pre-election materials inform the Central Electoral Commission every week about airtime and newspaper space given for free or for pay.

II. Free airtime

25. The public broadcasting company Teleradio Gagauzia and other public broadcasters must give free airtime to electoral candidates in the electoral period as follows: 20 minutes on television and 40 minutes on radio.

26. Maximum 6 minutes of airtime on television and 10 minutes on radio can be given to an electoral candidate for free a day. The electoral candidate holds the right to use the free airtime gradually, in compliance with the free airtime schedule established under internal rules of the broadcaster.

III. Paid airtime

27. Public and private broadcasters must give paid airtime to all electoral candidates on basis of equal and unbiased principles as follows: not more than 30 minutes on television and 30 minutes on radio to every electoral candidate.

28. Paid airtime given to electoral candidate must be maximum 2 minutes a day at every TV channel and 2 minutes a day at every radio channel. The electoral candidate holds the right to use paid airtime gradually in line with the airtime schedule established by internal norms.

IV. Pre-election debates

29. Public broadcasters must and private broadcasters hold the right to organise public debates under equal conditions for all electoral candidates throughout electoral period. Debates are organised after the term established by law on election of Governor (Basjkan) of Gagauzia (Gagauz Yeri) for registration of electoral candidates. Broadcasters hold the right to give maximum 40 minutes a week at one or more programmes, except for Sunday, at pre-election debates. This airtime may be used at one or several programmes.

30. Electoral candidates or their representatives participate in pre-election debates. Topics of pre-election debates are established by broadcasters after preliminary consultations with electoral candidates.

31. Electoral candidates are invited at pre-election debates in written form with 7 days before every programme, together or in groups created on basis of one of the principles:

- in the order in what electoral competitors requested the broadcaster;
- in the order of registration of electoral candidates by Central Electoral Commission;
- in alphabetical order;
- in the order drawn by lots;

32. Refusal to participate or absence of one or more electoral competitors at pre-election debates is made public and cannot serve as a reason to postpone or cancel the programme. If one or more electoral candidates are absent, the airtime given to them is excluded from the total airtime of the programme and it is not recovered.

33. The rules of discussion are told to electoral candidates at the same time with their invitation to participate in pre-election debates and before the programme.

34. Broadcasters measure the time with audio or video means that participants in debates are capable to understand.

35. The broadcasting of advertising in general and electoral advertising in particular is prohibited during pre-election debates.

36. Electoral candidates are free to tell their opinions during public debates. But following actions are prohibited:

- incitement to destabilisation of public order, attempt on inviolability of person and estate;
- use of expressions that harm the honour and dignity;
- disclosure of secrets protected by law;
- use of any expressions capable to backbite candidates or their representatives;
- combination of colours and/or sounds like national symbols of the Autonomous Territorial Unit of Gagauzia, the Republic of Moldova or other states;
- use of video or audio records with historical personalities of Gagauzia, Moldova or other states;

37. Editors and moderators of pre-election debates must:

- be unbiased;
- ensure the necessary balance of opinions during the programme, allowing every participant in debates to tell his point of view;
- clearly formulate questions, be neutral and unbiased;
- support the conduct of discussion for interests of the electoral campaign and on the necessary topic;
- interfere in discussion when the conduct or opinions of invitees violate Title IV (37). If invitees violate the order, the moderator is free to turn off the microphone or to stop the programme.

38. Private broadcasters unwilling to participate in the electoral campaign make public their decision with five days after publication of this Regulation, notifying the Central Electoral Election in written form.