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# CNA NEWSLETTER

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## The first newsletter of the National Audiovisual Council of Romania

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- Upcoming research

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*"A fundamental idea is to ensure that if any electoral candidate is accused of something they have the opportunity to put their point of view in the same conditions in which the accusation was broadcast"*

Rasvan Popescu, CNA President

(see complete TV news bulletin on [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com))

### Editorial

The theme of our first online newsletter is Romania's European Parliament Election - which takes place on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2007. Part of CNA's mission is to monitor the media during elections in Romania, and due to the novelty of this election a number of extra activities have been organised in collaboration with our Phare project.

On the next page you can read about the Audiovisual Study we commissioned about the influence of media on electoral behaviour, and below we present some of the most pertinent quotes from the recent conference we organised on this theme.

The job of the National Audiovisual Council of Romania (generally known by its Romanian acronym "CNA") is to ensure that Romania's TV and radio stations are able to operate in an environment of free speech, mutual respect and competitiveness.

## The role of the Media in the European Parliamentary (EP) Elections

In order to raise awareness in the media about the EP election, CNA organised a conference on "The Role of the Media in the EP Elections" at the Romanian Senate. The event took place on 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> September.

Perspectives were offered by the Romanian media and PR industry, and speakers came from Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia. This is a quote from the Polish speaker:

*"The government should use the media to mobilise the people to go and vote on the day: when, where and how. A study conducted in Poland soon after the EP election showed that around half of the population hadn't realised there had been an election at all."*

- Krzysztof Bobinski, candidate at Poland's 2004 EP election

See *"Don't Let Your Child be Educated by TV"* on page 3

## “The influence of Media on Electoral Behaviour”

### *An Audiovisual Study*

Following a public tender that was won by the CURS research company, the CNA and its Phare project commissioned a study which analyses patterns of media consumption as well as public interest in elections. The title of the study is “The influence of Media on Electoral Behaviour” and a complete version can be downloaded from [www.cna.ro](http://www.cna.ro)

According to Mihaela Botnaru, Director of Monitoring at CNA, “the purpose of the study was to give the CNA council precise information about how the public consume mass media, as compared to other leisure activities, and how interested they are in elections and political news.

“One of the most relevant results for CNA is that the Romanian public are now more interested in televised debates than entertainment shows; and this is a signal for us to pay increased attention to debates and to ensure they are respecting the rules. It is also a useful means to see how well known CNA is among the public.”

Based on interviews with 2000 people, the study is packed with statistics about what form of media the public prefer (TV, radio, newspaper or internet), interest in politics and elections, viewing habits and levels of trust in the CNA as compared to other public institutions.

As regards “media consumption” this study confirms that television is by far the biggest source of information for the most Romanians - and that less than 20% go to the cinema or theatre. One of the results shows that the average Romanian watches 160 minutes of TV a day, as compared to just 50 minutes reading newspapers. News programmes are the most popular type of emission, and 80% say TV is their most important source of information.

In answer to the question “to what extent are you interested in politics?”, a big majority (79%) said they were not. This can be contrasted with a question about what type of news they are most interested in, where the item of most interest was political news (28%, as compared to just 1% interested in news about crimes and accidents).

Regarding the European Parliament Election, 48% say they already know who they will vote for and 37% are interested or very interested in the election. But international experience suggests that more people declare their intention to vote than actually do so on the day.

The study includes an interesting analysis of voter behaviour during the election campaign period - and the direct influence of media on voter behaviour. In the last Parliamentary elections (2004), 42% of those questioned said they decided who to vote for “during the campaign” and 16% decided “after the TV and radio debates”.

The number of people who have heard about CNA has increased to 81% (up from 70% in 2004). Of those who have heard of CNA, 45% have ‘much’ or ‘very much’ trust in the institution.

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*“According to the study, 37% of the Romanian population are ‘interested’ or ‘very interested’ in the European Parliament election”*

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*Inside the European Parliament.*

## “Don’t Let Your Child be Educated by TV”

### *A Media Campaign on the Protection of Minors*

CNA’s research into the effect of television on children was worrying. Almost a third of Romanian children have a TV in their own room, many have seen horror films, and they spend more time in front of the TV than they do at school. CNA decided to act.

With the support of its Phare project, CNA commissioned three TV spots, two radio spots, an outdoor “billboard” campaign and educational material for primary schools (see next newsletter).

The purpose of the campaign is to inform parents of the potential risks of allowing their children to watch too much television. The campaign messages are “*Don’t Let Your Child be Educated by TV*” and “*Don’t abandon your child in front of the TV*”.

The “outdoor” billboard image above was taken from the first of the TV spots and a total of 87 outdoor billboards have been commissioned by CNA. These will be displayed in Bucharest, Brasov, Cluj, Iasi and Timisoara during December and January.

The first TV spot is set in an ordinary living room late at night. Both of the parents are asleep and the boy is traumatized by what he is seeing. The voiceover says “sleeping parents can give birth to monsters”.

The second and third spots are designed to show the “consequences” of too much TV. The second one shows a young boy at his birthday party. All seems well until he is given a knife to cut the cake and he starts stabbing the cake viciously, finally stabbing his own teddy bear. Everyone is shocked - including the boy - and it has a strong impact.

The third spot features a pretty young girl (see image) in the metro train. She spots a young boy and performs a short but suggestive dance around the vertical bar. The boy smiles, the adults pretend it isn’t happening and it is all over in seconds.

The radio spots are equally “shocking” in the way they address the reality of young people and television. The spots consist of a young boy casually telling his friend some horrendous detail from a horror film he saw; then the voiceover says “you have heard 100 words. Each picture is worth a thousand. Don’t abandon your child in front of the TV.”

All the main TV and radio stations in Romania are currently broadcasting the spots. By the end of October 2007 a monitoring report showed that the TV spots had been broadcast over 1,500 times.

How much impact has the campaign had? According to an Omnibus survey carried out in October, just a month after the campaign was launched, 39% of the population had “seen or heard about” CNA’s campaign about “inappropriate TV programming for children.”



*Child actor from the 3rd TV spot.*

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*“When casting for the 3 spots we interviewed 11 young girls and they knew exactly how to perform erotic dances. It’s too late to protect these children from inappropriate TV content – but their parents need to be informed.”*

*Bogdan Moldovan,  
director of the TV spots*

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*All 3 TV spots can be  
seen on*

[www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)

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## New Research, Training, Study Tours and Next Newsletter

*A summary of recent activities carried out by CNA's Phare project*

CNA's Phare project team was responsible for producing this newsletter, as well as organising the following activities within CNA:

### New Research/Studies:

In addition to the research presented on page 2 of this newsletter, the following studies have also been commissioned:

- *"Habits, attitudes and satisfaction of Radio and TV audiences"*
- *"Children's exposure to TV/Radio programs (cultural models of consumption behaviour)"*
- *"The influence of publicity on children"*

As soon as these studies are finalised they will be launched by CNA, presented to the media and uploaded on its website. They will also be presented in forthcoming newsletters.

### Training:

A lot of training has been going on at CNA in recent months in order to increase skills and knowledge. These include English language training courses (for 30 CNA staff) and the European Computer Driving Licence Course for 32 staff members.

Specialist training has been provided by CNA's main civil society partners (and members of the Phare project consortium) the Centre for Independent Journalism ([www.cji.ro](http://www.cji.ro)) and the

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Media Monitoring Agency ([www.mma.ro](http://www.mma.ro)), as well as audiovisual experts from various EU member states.

Specialist courses included *"Balancing Rights and Identifying Infringements of Privacy"*, (a 3 day course for CNA's regional media monitors) and *"EU Audiovisual Legislation"*.

17 journalists were trained in *"European Audiovisual Trends and their Impact on the Romanian Market"*. According to Ioana Avadani, the lead trainer, "the training was well received but the journalists were insufficiently informed about the digital cross-over issue. This is a reminder that we need to continue to educate and inform journalists." Similar training sessions will take place in Tirgu Mures, Iasi and Craiova

### Study Tours:

During the course of the Phare project, study tours have taken place and CNA staff, and partners, have visited counterpart organisations in Brussels, London and Paris.

The latest study tour took place during November and was led by Attila Gasparik, Deputy President of CNA. A group of CNA staff visited Budapest where they visited the National Radio and Television Commission (ORTT), the AKTI research institution, Magyar Television and the Central European University.

### The Next Newsletter:

The next issue of this newsletter will be published in December 2007 and will include updates on the following issues:

- CNA's new website
- Children's booklet & poster
- New Audiovisual Study

