

Self-regulation in the OSCE area

**Office of the
Representative on
Freedom of the
Media**

General Overview



Codes of ethics

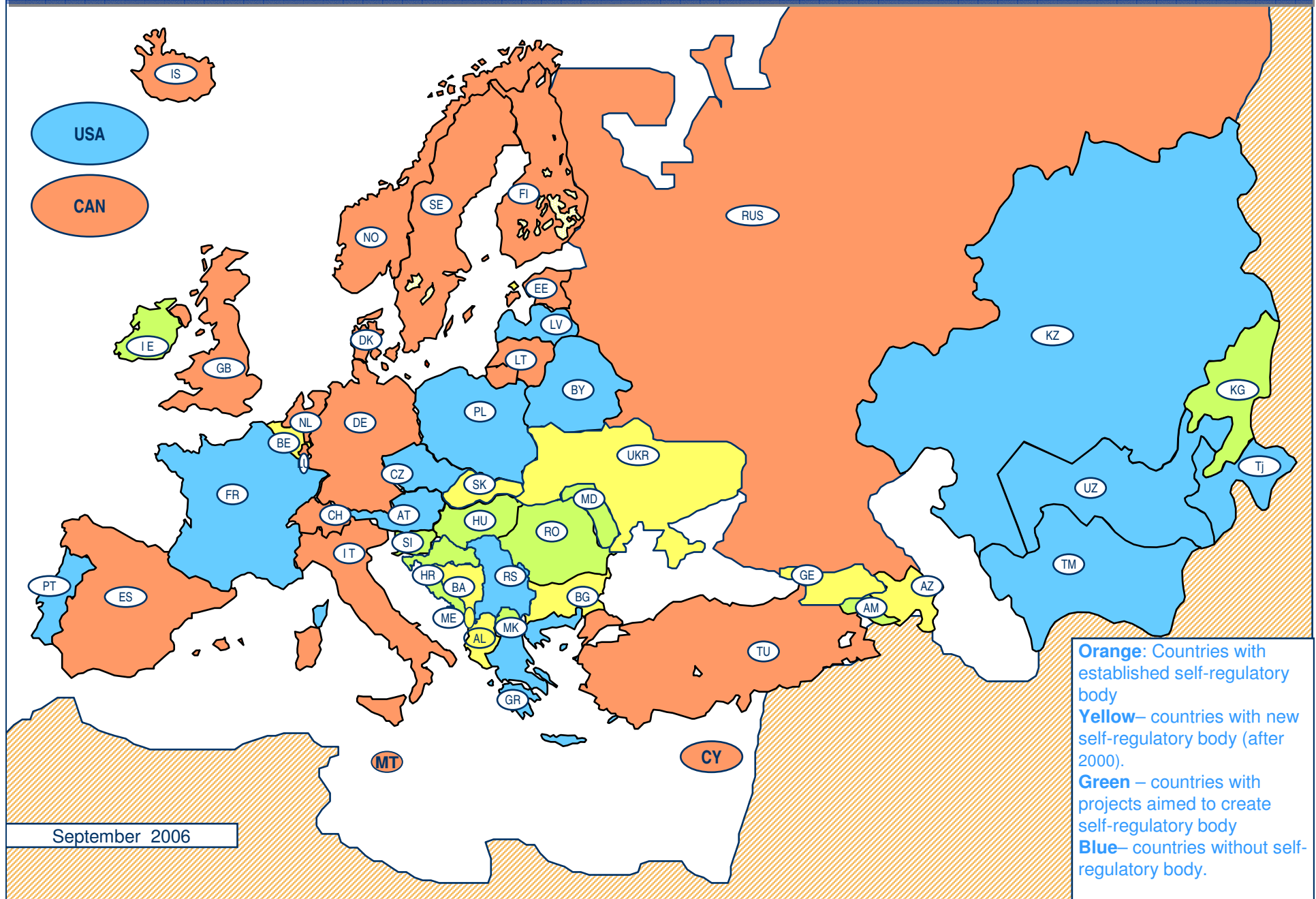
Codes of ethics exist in all OSCE participating States, but not always at the national level.

- **In established democracies: codes have a long tradition, are well-known and respected by media professionals.**
- **In new democracies : codes are not always well-known and often not adhered to by media professionals.**

Self-regulatory mechanisms

- **In established democracies**: These mechanisms are usually self-regulatory bodies (Media Councils, Press Councils)
They can also exist within the media (Ombudspersons), etc.
 - 80% of these countries have a self-regulatory body
- **In new democracies** : These mechanisms are usually part of the activities of journalists' associations (sometimes including a complaints commission). Whereas, Press Councils, Ombudspersons etc. are less developed
 - Today in the entire OSCE area: 45% of the countries have self-regulatory bodies
 - However, we can witness a new trend of establishing self-regulatory bodies

Self-regulatory bodies in OSCE area



Self-regulatory bodies in established democracies

No “One-fits-all” model of self-regulatory body:

- Different time and reason of creation
- Different statutes
- Different codes of ethics
- Different activities
- Different ways of financing

New self-regulatory bodies in the OSCE area since 2000

- South Eastern Europe: Bosnia i Hercegovina (2000), Montenegro (2005), Bulgaria (2005), Albania (2006), Kosovo (2006)
- EU: Belgium (2002), Slovakia (2002)
- Caucasus: Azerbaijan (2003) and Georgia (2005)
- Eastern Europe: Ukraine (2002)

Projects to create self-regulatory body in OSCE area

- South Eastern Europe: Croatia, fYR Macedonia, Romania
- Eastern Europe: Moldova
- EU: Ireland, Slovenia
- Caucasus: Armenia
- Central Asia: Kyrgyzstan

Raising awareness on the advantages of self-regulation

Increasing willingness in the OSCE participating States to establish self-regulatory mechanisms

Why?

Raising consensus on the essential role of self-regulation in new democracies, because:

- self-regulation fosters ethical standards and media quality
- self-regulation preserves editorial independence
- self-regulation is an antidote to judicial action against the media

Common obstacles and difficulties faced by self-regulatory bodies

- **Lack of financial sustainability of the body**
- **Lack of involvement of all media professionals, including publishers**
- **Lack of healthy media situation: weak economy, no pluralism, etc**
- **Lack of knowledge of media professionals concerning ethics**

OSCE Projects

To assist participating States in:

- creating or enhancing self-regulatory mechanisms in order to ensure respect for the code of ethics, and in order to minimize state regulation

How?

- by gathering various case studies and sharing best practices
- by developing a set of trainings for media professionals