

8 February 2023

Dear Members of the European Parliament,

We, the undersigned journalists, press freedom, civil society, and digital rights groups, are writing to you to reiterate our full support for a strengthened and timely **European Media Freedom Act (EMFA)**.

Many journalists around the EU find themselves in increasingly captured media markets, where independent voices are sidelined by economic pressure. Journalists and media outlets struggle for financial viability and critical media are often discriminated against by (illiberal) politicians blocking access to sustainable financial resources. Others are coerced to report a certain official narrative because of political pressure. Politically-influenced media takeovers create an environment where critical reporters are in the minority.

Media freedom and pluralism is the precondition of stable democracy and the rule of law. Independent media helps to form public opinion and has a direct influence on the outcome of elections.

The EMFA seeks to protect media independence by drawing up common European standards on freedom from editorial interference and illegal surveillance, guaranteeing media pluralism, providing greater transparency on ownership and financial relations with the state, ending the abuse of state funds to create clientelist media, protecting the independence of public service media and the independence of national regulatory authorities and ensuring there is an economic environment in which independent journalism can flourish.

These are crucial issues and we call on Members of the European Parliament to engage constructively in this vital debate to ensure that the EMFA becomes a strong, coherent regulation establishing harmonised legal safeguards across Europe.

Signed:

Access Now

aditus foundation

ARTICLE 19

Association of European Journalists (AEJ Belgium)

Association of European Journalists (International federation)

Association of online publishers, CZ (AOV)

Centre for Democracy & Technology, Europe Office

Civil Liberties Union for Europe (Liberties)

Civil Rights Defenders

Citizens Network Watchdog Poland

Coalition for Creativity (C4C)

Committee to Protect Journalists

Daphne Caruana Galizia Foundation

DEMAS – Association for Democracy Assistance and Human Rights

European Centre for Press and Media Freedom (ECPMF)

European Federation of Journalists
European Partnership for Democracy
Free Press Unlimited (Netherlands)
Global Forum for Media Development (GFMD)
Global Media Registry (GMR)
Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights (HFHR, Warsaw)
Human Rights House Foundation (HRHF)
Human Rights Monitoring Institute
Human Rights Watch
Hungarian Civil Liberties Union (HCLU)
Institute of Public Affairs, Warsaw
International Partnership for Human Rights (IPHR)
International Press Institute
Internet Society - Bulgaria (ISOC-Bulgaria)
Irish Council for Civil Liberties (ICCL)
Media Diversity Institute (MDI)
Novinářský klub Jindřicha Oppera, z.s. (Henry Oppera's club of journalists)
Osservatorio Balcani Caucaso Transeuropa (OBCT)
Ossigeno.info
Poland's Association of Journalists and Authors of the Public Radio, Warsaw
Peace Institute, Ljubljana
Public Media Alliance (PMA)
Reporters Without Borders (RSF)
Repubblica
Society of Journalists, Warsaw
South East Europe Media Organisation (SEEMO)
Sindikat novinarjev Slovenije
Transparency International EU
Wikimedia Europe
Wikimédia France