

16 July 2025

Office of the Prime Minister
19 Herodou Attikou Street
Maximos Mansion
10674 Athens
Attiki
Greece

CC:

Michalis Chrysochoidis, Minister of Citizen Protection
Georgios Floridis, Minister of Justice
Pavlos Marinakis, State Secretary to the Prime Minister and Government Spokesperson
Lieutenant General Dimitrios Mallios, Chief of the Hellenic Police
Ambassador Ioannis Vrailas, Permanent Representation to the EU
Ambassador Nicolas Sigalas, Permanent Representative of Greece to the Council of Europe
Dr. Dimitrios Galamatis, Secretary General of Communication and Media, Presidency of the Government

Dear Prime Minister,

We, the undersigned organizations, are writing to you to request written information on the Greek government's upcoming plans to undertake meaningful reforms to address ongoing media freedom concerns in the country.

We write to you within the ongoing framework and efforts of the Council of Europe's "Journalists Matter Campaign," in addition to Greece's obligations as an EU member state, including under the European Media Freedom Act, the Anti-SLAPP Directive and the 2021 Journalist Safety Recommendation.

Our organizations have been monitoring and reporting on press freedom in Greece for many years and continue to have serious concerns, including the lack of legal safeguards and accountability for the surveillance of journalists; threats, harassment, physical attacks, and murders of journalists; government pressure on editorial and media independence, including the use of public funds and advertising; lack of independence for Greece's public broadcaster, ERT, and the Athens-Macedonian News Agency; and legal threats, including the prevalence of Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation (SLAPPs) and criminal defamation — all of which lead to widespread self-censorship.

In its [June 2025 report](#), the Media Pluralism Monitor, a tool developed by the Centre for Media Pluralism and Media Freedom at the European University Institute (a project co-funded by the EU) to evaluate media ecosystems across Europe found that Greece performed badly across its

four thematic assessment areas: fundamental protection, market plurality, political independence, and social inclusiveness.

Given the persistent concerns about media freedom in Greece and the continued attention they generate, we would kindly like to request the national authorities provide, in writing, an overview of specific, targeted and measurable steps that will be taken to:

1. Fully implement the [recommendations](#) of the European Parliament's PEGA Committee regarding surveillance, including strengthening institutional and legal safeguards, effective ex ante and ex post scrutiny, as well as independent oversight of state surveillance practices; re-opening investigations into the abusive deployment of spyware against journalists with a view to providing full judicial remedy; re-establishing the authority of the Hellenic Authority for Communication Security and Privacy to inform citizens about lifting confidentiality for communications; removing the existing three-year period preventing targeted individuals from accessing information about their surveillance initiated for reasons of national security.
2. Abolish criminal defamation, in line with calls by the Council of Europe's [Parliamentary Assembly](#) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.
3. Undertake all necessary legal, procedural, and practical safeguards to end Strategic Lawsuits against Public Participation, in line with the [EU's anti-SLAPP Directive](#) and [the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers' Recommendation on SLAPPs](#), and fulfil the commitment that the government has made — in meetings with NGOs — to broaden the implementation of the EU anti-SLAPP Directive to apply to domestic cases.
4. Repeal Law No. 1178/81 "[On civil liability of the press and certain other provisions](#)" and reform civil defamation provisions to introduce adequate safeguards to prevent unwarranted limitations on freedom of expression, including through SLAPPs. These safeguards should include a limitation on non-material damages claimed in civil defamation suits against journalists and media outlets.
5. Ambitiously undertake all necessary reforms — using the European Media Freedom Act as a basis — to address media capture in Greece, including ownership and market concentration, such as the establishment of a truly transparent and operational media ownership registry; measures to guarantee editorial independence, including the independent appointment of leadership positions, management and oversight of government-run news outlets; transparent oversight of state funding to the media; and the immediate removal of the public broadcaster, ERT, and the Athens-Macedonian News Agency from under the oversight of your office.
6. Put in place measures to stop smear campaigns against journalists, and the harassment and intimidation of journalists by public officials, including the immediate condemnation of such acts by political leadership in Greece and, where possible, hold individuals to account in line with the [European Commission Journalist Safety Recommendation 2021](#).
7. Increase resources and support to law enforcement with a view toward strengthening their capacity to investigate all crimes against journalists, and publicly share information on what support activities are being put in place as well as their intended outcome;

address impunity for unsolved murders of journalists, and where possible publicly disclose actions taken by the authorities to do so.

We lastly call on you to consider opening a consultative process to establish a national action plan that could comprehensively bring together these proposals and, in doing so, make a demonstrable and unequivocal commitment to defending press freedom. Such an action plan should also be accompanied by a full review of the effectiveness and independence of the Task Force on Ensuring the Protection, Safety, and Empowerment of Journalists and other Media Professionals to act as a robust actor to defend all journalists, including those critical of your government, and to enable ambitious press freedom reforms.

We would like to thank you in advance for the consideration of our request.

Signed:

Association of European Journalists (AEJ)
Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ)
European Federation of Journalists (EFJ)
European Centre for Press and Media Freedom (ECPMF)
Free Press Unlimited (FPU)
Human Rights Watch (HRW)
Index on Censorship
International Press Institute (IPI)
Reporters Without Borders (RSF)
Vouliwatch