

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 clientalist 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 Opper, z.s. (Henry Opper'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