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## **EU Commission: European Media Freedom Act. Editorial independence, no spyware against media, control over state advertising**

The Commission has decided to put forward legislation to protect media and information freedom as a response to the critical situation in the field. The European Media Freedom Act has a wide scope. First of all, it protects the independence of editors: the regulation will require Member States to “respect the effective editorial freedom of media service providers and improve the protection of journalistic sources”. In addition, media service providers will have to “ensure transparency of ownership by publicly disclosing such information and take measures with a view to guaranteeing the independence of individual editorial decisions”. Secondly, the Media Freedom Act includes strong safeguards against the use of spyware against media, journalists and their families. Where public service media exist, “their funding provided should be adequate and stable, in order to ensure editorial independence”. The Media Freedom Act requires Member States to assess the impact of media market concentrations on media pluralism and editorial independence. “It also requires that any legislative, regulatory or administrative measure taken by a Member State that could affect the media is duly justified and proportionate”. State advertising will have to be transparent: the Media Freedom Act will set new requirements for the allocation of state advertising to media, so that it is transparent and non-discriminatory. “The Act will also enhance the transparency and objectivity of audience measurement systems, which have an impact on media advertising revenues, particularly online”.

Valentina Bombelli