

## FINAL COMPROMISES

### The protection of journalists around the world and the European Union's policy on the matter

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#### COMP 1 and 1 a (new)

- **Covering AMs:** 1 (Left), 2 (S&D), 5 (The Left); 6 (S&D),
  - **Falls:** AM 3 (ID)
1. Recalls that freedom of expression is a fundamental human right enshrined in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and includes the freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authorities *or commercial entities* and regardless of frontiers; deplors, however, that some governments and *commercial entities* and individuals in positions of power around the globe are systematically threatening this right;
    - 1 a (new) *Stresses that the rights to freedom of expression and information are indispensable conditions for journalists, in order to assist citizens active participation in democratic society and allowing the public to access reliable news, to sharpen their insights and hold opinions on issues of public interest; recalls that journalism, including investigative journalism has been considered an essential “watchdog” to ensure checks and balances in democratic systems while ensuring open pluralistic, public and independent reporting on news.*

#### COMP 2 and 2 a (new)

- **Covering AMs:** 6 (S&D) 3<sup>rd</sup> part; 4; 8 and 9 ; 12 (Greens); 11 (The Left) 15 (Left), 16 EPP, 17 (SD), 18 (Renew) , 22 (Renew), 24 (Greens), 26 (S&D), 27 (Greens) 28 (S&D) 29 (S&D); 37 (The Left); 39 (S&D); 56 (S&D); 63 (EPP) **91 (S&D)**
  - **Falls:** AMs 19 (ECR)
- 2 Underlines that *ensuring the safety and a safe working environment for journalists and media professionals is the precondition for effective media freedom*; notes with regret the shrinking public space, *including for civil society organisations and human rights defenders* and the rise in violence towards journalists and media professionals, including through transnational repression<sup>12</sup>,

<sup>1</sup> Freedom House Report: Defending Democracy in Exile Understanding and Responding to Transnational Repression: [https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/2022-05/Complete\\_TransnationalRepressionReport2022\\_NEW\\_0.pdf](https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/2022-05/Complete_TransnationalRepressionReport2022_NEW_0.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Freedom of expression – EEAS guidelines on freedom of expression - [https://www.eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/09\\_hr\\_guidelines\\_expression\\_en.pdf](https://www.eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/09_hr_guidelines_expression_en.pdf) (EU Guidelines on Human

which is increasingly happening in countries officially at peace ***including in the European Union***<sup>3</sup> and is creating a general sense of insecurity; ; ***stresses that these journalists are often deliberately obstructed in armed conflicts and those media professionals can face access denial, censorship and harassment as well as arbitrary detention and brutal attacks***<sup>1a</sup> deplores that in 2022 58 journalists have been killed, 65 journalists are being held hostage, 49 are missing and 533 journalists are currently imprisoned (a new record)<sup>4</sup> ***over the world***; demands that all detained journalists be released immediately; ***furthermore stresses that journalist faces online and offline threats and attacks including through the use of spyware and ransomware; emphasises the need to safeguard journalists against every type of violence according to the EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy 2020-2024;***

***2a (new). Is particularly concerned about situation of Women journalists and journalists from minorities and other vulnerable groups; which face increasing offline and online threats and attacks and are subject to disproportional and specific threats; underlines that the gender-based violence they are exposed to implies intimidation, stigmatisation, harassment, self-censorship, sexist hate speech, public shaming, trolling, physical assault, rape and murder;***

### **COMP 3**

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- **Covering AMs:** 25 (The Left); AMs 30 (Left), 31 (S&D), 33 (S&D), 34 (ECR), 36 (S&D); 55 (Greens); 56 (S&D); 66 (S&D) ; 89 (EPP); 92 (Greens), AM 93 (S&D) AM 23 (S&D)
  - **Falls:** 32 (ID), 57 (S&D)
- 3 Highlights that the freedom of media and media pluralism have increasingly come under threat in recent years with ***the combined effects of digitalisation and related evolving revenue models, market consolidation and*** globalisation of media streams, ***which create ‘news deserts’ and put at risk the economic sustainability of the sector;*** ***Believes that in this situation special attention should be given to smaller news media operators; stresses that hate speech*** disinformation and propaganda are growing trends in the media landscape worldwide; notes that this trend has been ***exemplified*** by the COVID-19 pandemic and **Russian** war of **aggression** against Ukraine; ***emphasizes that such phenomena can also have the effect of reducing trust in public institutions*** ;believes that this situation should be considered a general threat to the values the European Union stands for as a global actor and to democracy as a whole;

***3 a (new). Encourages the strengthening and implementation of codes of ethics and journalistic standards established by press and media councils and support solidarity and collaboration between journalists and media outlets to improve journalist safety;***

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rights).

<sup>3</sup> Commission Rule of Law Report

<sup>4</sup> <https://rsf.org/en/new-record-number-journalists-jailed-worldwide>

**3 b (new)** *Notes with concerns that as an effect of the general digitalisation and globalisation of the media market, a growing number of journalists are forced in to freelance non-contract and precarious work and insists on the importance of ensuring decent working conditions for journalists and media workers; notes the increasing use of freelancers, particularly young journalists and media workers at the start of their career, to cover high-risk areas and conflict zones;*

## **COMP 4**

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- **Covering AMs:** 40 (Left) ,41 (S&D), 42, 44 (S&D), 38, 43 (Renew), 46 (The Left); AM 44 (S&D) 47 (Greens), 50, 51 and 54 (Left) AM 20 (The Left), AM 79; 80 (S&D), AM 93 (S&D)
4. Calls on the EU and the Member States to **reaffirm** the profound links between media freedom and democracy, **including in non-EU countries (rapporteur)**, and identify pathways to rebuild safe spaces for information and communication **including in the digital sphere** with a particular focus on fact-checking tools for media professionals and the spreading of best practices in the profession and education for information and media literacy for all **as a tool to ensure broader understanding and interest in information received**, thereby also countering the danger of ‘news fatigue’; **reiterates its call for media education to be included in formal and informal settings, including through education curricula in order to foster media literacy, skills and competences and promote and support of critical thinking; in this respect, looks forward to the Commission’s mid-term review of the Digital Education Action Plan (2012-2027);notes that ensuring media freedom should be included in EU partnerships programs** with non -EU countries;
- 4 a (new).** *calls therefore on the Commission, the Member States and the European External Action Service (EEAS) to promote programs and policies aimed at fostering education of journalists media actors and the general public on their rights and protection mechanisms, including but not limited to showcasing real examples and best practices;*

- **Covering AMs:** 31 (S&D – Last part), 45, 52 (The Left), 53 (S&D), 62 (Greens); 59, 61 (Renew), 66, 68 (S&D) 70, 72 (Renew); 74 (S&D), 35 (Greens) 52 (The Left) 64 (S&D), 35 (Greens), 78 (Greens) 58 (S&D) (69 S&D); 88 (Greens)
  - **Falls:** 67(Renew)
5. Believes that in order to improve its external governance, the EU needs to lead by example and deliver on its domestic media policy ambitions ***with full coherence and consistency***; welcomes, in this context, the adoption of the Digital Services Act<sup>5</sup>, and ***calls for effective measures to be introduced in*** the recently published proposals for a directive against ‘strategic lawsuits against public participation’ (the anti-SLAPP directive) (COM(2022)0177) and the European Media Freedom Act (COM(2022)0457), which are signs the EU is taking a more robust approach to media policies; ***takes the view that these could be inspirational for other regions in the world and contribute to set positive global standards; recalls the Council of Europe's recommendations<sup>6</sup> on defamation to ensure proportionality of sanctions and respect of human rights; in addition calls on the Commission to look at the effectiveness of the tiered channels reporting system established in the Whistleblower directive<sup>7</sup> and its effects on reporting conditions for investigative journalism in its monitoring of its transposition;***
- 5 a (new). believes that EU programmes, funds and initiatives such as Creative Europe, EU Media and Audio-visual Action Plan, the Media Pluralism Monitor; the EU Guidelines on Freedom of Expression Online and Offline, the EU Protect Defenders Mechanism should be fully employed in the EU's external governance to provide targeted support to media and news organisations in non-EU countries notwithstanding the fulfilment by media organisations of their duty of care vis-à-vis their journalists, in particular, by complying with paragraph 16 of the Recommendations on the protection of journalism and safety of journalists and other media actors from the Council of Europe<sup>8</sup> as well as the 2021 Commission Recommendation on the protection, safety and empowerment of journalists;***
- 5 b (new) Calls on the Member States to join and actively participate in intergovernmental partnerships and international activities promoting media pluralism, advocating for and safeguarding media freedom online and offline, and the safety of journalists; In addition, believes that the EU should encourage measures aiming at ensuring more women, minorities and other underrepresented groups occupy creative and decision-making positions;***
- 5 c (new) Reiterates its repeated calls to establish a permanent news media fund with a cross-border component to support independent editorial coverage and safeguard the independence of journalist, guarantee the freedom of press and involve associated and partner countries outside the EU with a dedicated tool;***

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.coe.int/en/web/freedom-expression/-/decriminalisation-of-defamation-supported-by-the-council-of-europe-through-guidance-on-proportionality-of-laws-and-their-conformity-with-human-rights#>

<sup>7</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32019L1937>

<sup>8</sup> [https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result\\_details.aspx?ObjectId=09000016806415d9#\\_ftn1](https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectId=09000016806415d9#_ftn1)

## COMP 6

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- **Covering AMs:** 75 (Renew)77 (Left), 60 (EPP) , 71 S&D , 81 (The Left), 83 The Left
6. Calls on the Commission to include suspension mechanisms in the EU's multilateral and bilateral partnership or trade agreements; ***calls on*** the Commission to support, , ***strengthen*** and monitor media freedom ***outside of the EU*** and use targeted sanctions or suspend agreements in the event of persistent and systematic violation of media freedom; ***additionally, given the high rate of impunity for crimes and violence against journalists around the world<sup>9</sup>, calls on the newly established Observatory on the fight against impunity<sup>10</sup> to pay special attention to journalists in order to collect evidence and contribute to improve the situation;***

## COMP 7

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- **Covering AMs:** 7, 10, 48, 49 (ECR), 85 (S&D), 87 (S&D)
7. Recalls that the Russian disinformation campaign ***indoctrinating the public with a language of hatred and historical revisionism*** before and during the war on Ukraine has triggered urgent sanctions that are partially being evaded by state ***controlled*** media ***outlets***; calls therefore for an appropriate and sustainable legal framework establishing a free information space protection mechanism based on the reciprocity of openness requirements; believes that this mechanism should be built on two pillars: 1) equal treatment – for all audio-visual outlets broadcasting on EU territory; 2) reciprocity – openness of public space for EU broadcasters in third countries and territories;
- 7 a (new) In the context of the war of aggression from Russia against Ukraine and severe repressions in Belarus; calls the EU to keep supporting journalists fleeing censorship and state campaigns of propaganda in helping them to change territory, to continue operating from a safe place and to reinstall their independent media outside their country to continue providing freely reported and reliable information;***

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<sup>9</sup> <https://rsf.org/en/protect-journalists>

<sup>10</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/statement\\_22\\_6430](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/statement_22_6430)

