

## **STAND UP FOR JOURNALISM AS A PUBLIC GOOD**

Europe's information ecosystem is at a cross-road. Mis- and disinformation, click-bait, media capture, news deserts at local level, unprecedented attacks against journalists and precarious working conditions leading to brain drain in the industry have a potentially devastating impact on the quality of journalism and media pluralism. The use of generative artificial intelligence has much potential but also many risks.

The 2024 European Parliament elections will set the direction of where the EU goes. We will need a European Parliament and a Commission, which continues to be committed to work for a fair Europe respecting trade union and human rights, the rule of law, media freedom and media pluralism and overseeing the implementation of all crucial regulatory mechanisms accomplished in the last five years: the Copyright directive, the Digital Services Act, the Artificial Intelligence Act, the Anti-SLAPP directive and the European Media Freedom Act.

**In the run-up to the elections, the European Federation of Journalists calls for three action points that are crucial to the future of journalism, which must be viable, safe and ethical:**

### ***Foster viable journalism***

- Invest massively: public transparent funding at arms' length, philanthropic funding etc;
- Guarantee independence and sustainable funding for public service media;
- Tax Big Tech: guarantee platform remuneration (fair share) for journalistic content;
- Ensure fair remuneration and authors rights for (freelance) journalists;
- Allocate a permanent EU budget to independent journalism projects, media literacy, monitoring of violations and other assistance.

### ***Promote safety of journalists***

- Enable a safe environment for journalists to protect them from physical and online violence, in particular women and groups that are marginalised;
- Stop impunity;
- Recognise and prevent abusive legal proceedings intended to silence journalists;
- Prevent the unlawful deployment of spyware against journalists.

### ***Regulate Generative Artificial Intelligence***

- Prioritise maximum transparency on training data and artificially generated content;
- Enforce mandatory remuneration of authors for AI-generated content using journalistic work;
- Encourage development of guidelines for responsible use and development of journalistic AI;
- Ensure that AI is an integral part of journalists' and media workers' training also in light of preventing any misuse of generative AI to create mis- and disinformation.



*The European Federation of Journalists (EFJ) representing 73 journalists' trade unions and professional associations in 45 countries is calling upon EU policy makers to stand up for journalism and journalists in Europe.*

*We all witness an increase of mis- and disinformation, we see a withering business model for independent journalism and increased political control on journalists and the media. The new information gatekeepers, the large online platforms - Big Tech - and its attention driven business model erode the quality of content and the foundations of a healthy information ecosystem. All this has a potentially devastating impact on trust in journalism, the most important currency for the future of the profession. This obliges all of us, who defend democracy, to stand with journalists and support through a holistic approach journalism as a public good. There has never been a time when accurate and ethical reporting was more important, and more important to support and defend. We need all of you, a broad alliance, to improve the information system, not least to get the facts right.*

*The EU has done more than ever before to allow this to happen and to create a safer and more sustainable space for journalism as a public good, not least by adopting the European Media Freedom Act. The EU has supported many projects linked to journalistic self-regulation, press freedom, media deserts, the safety of journalists, investigative journalism at cross-border level, support for freelancers, social dialogue, skills and training. Altogether, around EUR 50 million per year has gone to media organisations.*

***This is not enough!*** *Independent professional journalism is expensive, but it is the best antidote to disinformation. Audience engagement, new journalistic formats, media literacy and the right use of AI are crucial to make journalism a tool to connect, to debate, to learn and to engage in public democratic discourses in today's polarised societies. But only if we have sustainable business models that guarantee decent working conditions and fair remunerations.*

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