

EUROPEAN POLICY BRIEF



European Media Policies Revisited: Valuing and Reclaiming Free and Independent Media in Contemporary Democratic Systems

Policy implications of MEDIADEM, an EU-funded research project investigating media policies in 14 countries for media freedom and independence

Ongoing project

September 2012

INTRODUCTION

This is the second policy brief in the MEDIADEM policy brief series. The EU-funded MEDIADEM project investigates the complex array of policy approaches and regulatory instruments that govern the media in fourteen countries - Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Italy, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Turkey and the UK - in order to assess how media freedom and independence can best be protected and enhanced. The project is wide-ranging and timely: recent developments in Hungary and the UK aptly demonstrate the fragility of media freedom in Europe.

This policy brief draws on research completed during the first two years of the project, in particular, a series of case study reports published in December 2011 and short policy papers published in September 2012, in which the project partners identify key trends and concerns relating to the media sector in their own countries. It provides an overview of the main constraints or threats to the operation of free and independent media identified in those reports and makes specific recommendations as to how these concerns might be addressed in practice by the various stakeholders involved. Although the brief focuses on domestic law and policy, it also identifies a number of action points that states may wish to take forward at the European level. A third MEDIADEM policy brief, specifically on the role of the European Union and Council of Europe in supporting media freedom, will be published in 2013. All Mediadem reports are available on the project website at: www.mediadem.eliamep.gr.

In the first part of this brief we offer an overview of the countries covered and summarise the key priority areas identified. We then consider each area in turn, highlighting, where relevant, specific patterns across the various countries and indicating a number of more

detailed recommendations. Not all of these recommendations will be relevant for every country, but all are worthy of careful consideration. The policy brief concludes with a consolidated list of recommendations for the various stakeholders involved.

The views expressed in this document are the sole responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Commission.

KEY OBSERVATIONS

Countries and areas of concern

The Mediadem project covers a diverse range of countries, including West European countries with established media policies and institutional structures, alongside Eastern European countries, which have experienced considerable volatility in the development of their media markets and institutions during their transition to democracy. Constitutional structures, political practices and social and cultural expectations thus vary widely, though all countries are signatories to the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and all save Croatia and Turkey are currently members of the EU. The countries studied also differ significantly in terms of size, with five countries - Italy, Germany, Spain, Turkey and the United Kingdom (UK) - having, in comparative terms, large media markets. Romania sits rather between the two camps, while Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Greece and Slovakia all have relatively small media markets.

Review of the country policy papers indicates that seven broad areas are regarded as requiring attention in all, or nearly all, of the fourteen countries under study. These are:

- the policy-making process;
- compliance with international standards and access to justice;
- inappropriate state or political influence;
- the need to re-align regulatory structures and rules to accommodate convergence;
- maintaining a fair balance between public service and commercial media;
- undue private power and influence; and
- support for quality journalism and media literacy.

The exact nature of the concerns in these areas and the steps needed to address them vary from country to country. We seek to reflect this variation in reviewing each area in turn below. Inevitably, this is greatest in those fields most heavily influenced by constitutional and political practices, such as compliance with international standards or levels of censorship, where the national frameworks are most varied. It is less pronounced in those areas where technological or economic pressures are having a more general impact, for instance in destabilising traditional income streams with consequent pressures on quality journalism, where similar concerns are voiced pretty much across the board.

Priority concerns in the 14 countries under study



Source: MEDIADEM's collective policy report (2012). Numbers on the horizontal indicate the number of country reports identifying need for action in the field.

The policy-making process

Policy-making in the media field is particularly complex not just because of the technical and rapidly evolving nature of the sector but also because of the range of political, social and economic interests at stake. In addition, human rights and fundamental values need to be fully taken into account. All the country reports identify failings in the policy-making process that call for further attention. For certain countries, such as Romania, the importance of developing a sustainable long-term strategy for the media is noted, and even in countries such as Denmark, where a significant political consensus has existed concerning the principal policy goals that media policy should attain, there is a tendency to develop policy on an ad hoc basis. Particularly where there are close links between the media and political parties, media policy can fall victim to the vagaries of changing governments. For example, in Romania between 2007-2011, the Broadcast Law was subject to 14 attempts at modifications. This lack of stability renders planning difficult, creating uncertainty for industry and deterring innovation and new investment.

A major concern, highlighted in many reports, is a lack of co-ordination within government and the various competent ministries when developing media policy. The importance of understanding and respecting the division of powers among regional, national and international bodies was also underlined by federal countries such as Belgium and Germany. The Belgian report suggests that all state actors operative in the media field should meet regularly in an institutionalised context to discuss current policy issues. The Romanian report further observes that better information on, and understanding of, EU policies at the domestic level can both enhance proper implementation of EU law and enable Romanians to play a more meaningful role in shaping the development of media policy at the EU level.

A consistent theme in the reports is that policy-making should be evidence-based and properly grounded in up-to-date research. Sufficient resources consequently need to be invested in ensuring that those involved in the policy-making process are adequately informed. The Spanish report recommends, for instance, the appointment of a 'Chief Technology Officer', able to offer a long-term perspective and advise on major market trends.

In addition, the reports for Croatia, Greece, Italy and Turkey underline the importance of broad participation in the policy-making process, not only of politicians and industry, but also of civil society organisations, academics, journalists, trade unions and citizens. Addressing this concern may require not only modifications to the legislative process but also greater engagement and co-ordination among the various interest groups themselves.

For participation to be effective, the policy process also needs to be transparent, with key questions and documents published wherever possible online. Once a policy line has been agreed, it should be consistently applied and enforced by all state and regulatory bodies.

Compliance with international standards and access to justice

All Mediadem countries are signatories to the ECHR, which establishes not only the right to freedom of expression and to receive information but also competing rights and interests, notably the right to a private and family life, that place certain responsibilities on the media. Increasingly, too, freedom of expression and media pluralism are recognised as important values within the EU legal order, explicitly identified in Article 11 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.

The country reports indicate that compliance with the ECHR is variable. For internal political reasons states such as Turkey routinely disregard European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) judgements concerning freedom of the press. Over-broad or ambiguously worded offences have been used to prosecute, fine or imprison many journalists. Censorship has also been extended to the Internet, which has not proven to be as free from state control as many had hoped. But non-compliance is not limited to Turkey and even countries with a strong tradition of respect for the rule of law, such as Finland, have been reluctant to bring certain aspects of domestic law into line with European requirements. In the Finnish case this stems from a cultural preference for protecting privacy and individual dignity over press freedom. Similar problems are noted in relation to Greece, where defamation remains a criminal offence, but are also evident more widely.

In light of these failings, the central importance of freedom of expression and the role of the press in democratic societies should be expressly affirmed in all relevant legislation and formally recognised as governing judicial and regulatory practice. All countries should systematically review their laws, regulations and administrative practices to ensure that they are in line with both ECHR and EU requirements. Civil society organisations and academics can play a

central role in identifying potential failings and supporting the state in this exercise. In addition, the state should provide appropriate training for regulators and the judiciary to ensure that they are kept up-to-date with evolving international standards.

Inconsistency and uncertainty in the law can also chill legitimate reporting. In Slovakia, although the Constitutional Court has shown a long term commitment to protection of freedom of speech, the approach of lower courts has been more variable. For this reason the Slovakian report recommends the introduction of a specialist court or judges to deal with media issues. Although courts in countries such as Estonia have tended to impose relatively light penalties on the media, in other countries such as the UK damages have often been high and the costs of litigation are prohibitive. For this reason, various proposals have been put forward for resolving media disputes in a speedy and cost effective manner, ranging from a separate media tribunal to arbitration and adjudication.

Inappropriate state or political influence

The level of political influence varies significantly in intensity and type across the Mediadem countries. In countries such as Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Slovakia and the UK the media enjoy a considerable degree of insulation from political influence. In Italy, Greece and Spain, political interests have had a more pronounced influence, with significant pressures also evident in Bulgaria, Croatia and Romania. In Turkey powerful private operators, both susceptible to and capable of exerting political pressure, combine with regulatory agencies that operate to enforce restrictive state measures.

State or political influence is particularly targeted at public service broadcasters (now in most instances more appropriately termed 'public service media' (PSM) in light of their online and on-demand activities) and regulatory bodies with competence in the media field more generally. But it can also extend into the private sector through the selective provision of government aid and other commercial advantages or through close links between certain media organisations and specific political parties or politicians, as has been the case in Bulgaria and Italy for instance.

In relation to PSM, the main concerns are with the method of appointment to, and dismissal of, members of the PSM management and supervisory boards; allocation of funding and operating mandates. In some countries, such as Belgium, appointment procedures for the PSM management boards are under the responsibility of Parliament while in others, like Greece, under the responsibility of the government. Appointments to the PSM supervisory board are made by Parliament in Finland, while Germany, in turn, allows input from a more representative range of political and social groups. In the UK, where the BBC has a strong reputation for independent reporting, the government has considerable influence over the make-up of the BBC Trust and its Chair. The power of dismissal can also be a potent form of control: in Romania the board of the public service broadcaster TVR has repeatedly been dismissed consequent on the parliament's refusal

to approve TVR's annual report.

To address these concerns, appointments to PSM supervisory boards should become depoliticised, open and transparent, in line with Council of Europe recommendations. Professional requirements should be set, with a strong emphasis on media expertise; tenure should be staggered; and there should be protection against removal from office on political grounds. The supervisory board should not interfere in the day-to-day running of the PSM organisation by the board of management, the political independence of which should also be secured.

Funding for PSM should be adequate for their designated purposes and placed on a secure footing to minimise political leverage. Certain forms of assistance, such as direct state subsidies, as in Bulgaria, also afford more scope for political pressure. Financial instability has been particularly problematic in Romania where the subscription fee was reduced in 2003 and has not been increased since. Both the Danish and UK reports expressed concern at 'top-slicing' of financial support once allocated by the state, while the Greek and UK reports note the importance of transparency when fixing the level of the licence fee and recommend the introduction of an independent advisory commission, along German lines. Engagement with, and monitoring by, civil society organisations and citizens was also identified as important in the Belgian, Croatian, Greek, Romanian and Turkish reports in order to support the independence and accountability of PSM.

Political influence also extends to appointments to the boards of the main media and communications regulators. In line with international recommendations, the Belgian, Greek, Italian, Slovakian, Spanish, Turkish and UK reports all emphasise the importance of independent and operationally autonomous regulatory bodies, with well qualified, expert staff. As in the PSM context, this requires a transparent, depoliticised appointment process; protection from dismissal save in cases of misconduct; terms of office that are not tied to the legislative term; and appropriate professional experience, clearly specified in advance.

In terms of more covert forms of control, the Bulgarian, Greek, Romanian and Turkish reports all expressed concern at the way in which the state was able to selectively award public advertising contracts or other advantages. As the Turkish paper notes, this aid can be particularly important for local, minority and even dissident media. Political influence can also be exerted through the selective award of broadcasting licences, problematic in the past in Bulgaria and Italy and, as discussed further below, now also contentious in the context of digital terrestrial licences.

Adapting regulation in response to media convergence

All European countries need to adapt to the opportunities and challenges of the convergent media environment. High speed internet networks have been rolled out at varying rates across Europe and certain of the Mediadem reports, for instance the one from Belgium, call for further domestic efforts to enhance citizens' access. In

countries such as Finland, where networks are already well advanced, an integrated approach to regulation has developed that extends to online services. In other countries, such as the UK, the regulatory framework remains complex and confusing with similar online services currently regulated by different regulatory bodies according to different standards. This suggests that greater attention should be paid to promoting a platform neutral approach to regulation. In particular, the country reports for Romania and Germany call for consideration of how best press freedom and democratic needs can be met online, ensuring that innovation is promoted alongside ethical practices.

Two areas are identified as meriting more specific attention. The Belgian and Danish reports call for VAT rates for the online and printed press to be aligned, a concern that applies to the provision of press subsidies more generally. The allocation of digital terrestrial licences has been controversial in countries such as Bulgaria, Greece, and Romania, with concerns that existing incumbents have been protected or favoured for largely political reasons. Though not explicitly mentioned in the Italian report, allocation has here been subject to challenge both before the Court of Justice of the EU and the ECtHR.

Maintaining a fair balance between public service and private media

The Italian and German constitutional courts have recognised the central importance of the public service sector, alongside commercial operators, in supporting the democratic process. The various country reports endorse this 'dual system' along with procedures to ensure a fair and stable balance between the two sectors. In order to fulfil their various democratic and social functions, PSM require, as noted above, adequate and stable funding and protection from political interference both structurally and through appropriate working methods and internal practices.

The remit of PSM is, however, controversial: the development by public service broadcasters of online news and text-based services poses a threat to the printed press, also diversifying online, while inclusion of popular sport and entertainment programming is seen as problematic by commercial broadcasters. European Commission state aid decisions and guidelines emphasise the importance of a clear PSM remit, in order to create certainty for industry, alongside the proper separation between commercial and public service activities. A number of Mediadem countries (Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Germany and the UK) have introduced more or less exacting public value tests for new public services.

The Belgian, Estonian, Finnish, German and Spanish reports all emphasise the importance of developing a clear policy for PSM in the light of convergence. The Danish report cautions, however, against micro-management, which could stifle innovation, and calls for more general guidance as to remit, with a focus on overall functions. The Finnish report observes that the PSM remit should no longer be tied to specific platforms but expressed in terms of functions and values. This is in line with the recommendation of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, which calls for public service broadcasters to be able to diversify their services 'through thematic channels, on-demand

media, recorded media and Internet-based media services in order to offer a comprehensive and competitive range of media services' (Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 1878 (2009) on the funding of public service broadcasting: para. 9). The German report emphasises the importance of traditional public service broadcasters being able to maintain and develop online news services alongside online versions of their existing services.

The Belgian, Croatian, Greek and Romanian reports also call for PSM to develop a culture of openness, one that encourages public participation, for instance through internet fora, and dialogue over the sector's future role and core values. PSM could also play a greater role in supporting community and other forms of local or minority media through further co-operation and technical assistance.

There is also widespread recognition that states may need to do more to support the provision of investigative journalism and public service programming across the media sector more generally. The German report notes a significant reduction in the airtime allocated to news and public affairs programming on commercial broadcasting stations. There are various ways of addressing this deficit, ranging from programme quotas to incentives such as 'pay or play' schemes, whereby firms can either provide certain services themselves or support provision by other companies, and state funding. The Bulgarian, Croatian and Romanian reports all support provision of a fund for public service content open to all, regardless of the nature of the organisation or author. The targeted extension of tax relief for online only media services could also assist in this context, as advocated by the Danish report.

Undue private power and influence

In almost all of the country reports there is concern over the level of concentration of ownership in the commercial media sector. This applies to countries with small markets, where a degree of concentration is to be expected, as well as relatively large countries, such as Turkey or the UK, where deregulation has led to a handful of powerful companies dominating the print and broadcasting markets, particularly in the provision of news.

In light of these concerns, we recommend that countries such as Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Romania, Slovakia and Turkey, which rely primarily on general competition law, consider introducing specific media ownership controls, based on an informed understanding of the regulatory options and market conditions. The Belgian report further suggests that understanding of the current risks to plurality would be assisted by systematic application of the EU Media Pluralism Monitor. Where specific controls are in place, these should be properly enforced by an independent body, free from political interference. As noted by the German, Greek and Italian reports, such rules should also be reviewed in the light of economic and technological developments, for instance, to ensure the continuing appropriateness of market definitions.

The Belgian and Croatian reports expressed concern at the potential impact of foreign ownership, though certain foreign investors, such as the WAZ group, have now withdrawn from the region. Although foreign ownership can bring money into the domestic system and foreign markets offer new opportunities for European companies to expand, as noted in the Spanish report, international services, in content terms, are unlikely to be a complete substitute for domestic ones. In Denmark the concern is rather with firms taking advantage of the European single market to broadcast services into Denmark from countries with less exacting regulations, thereby attracting revenue away from domestic services. This suggests that further consideration should be given to the impact of the jurisdictional rules in the EU Audiovisual Media Services Directive (2010/13/EC, the AVMS Directive).

Most country reports noted that there were new configurations of private power, marked by the rise of intermediaries such as search engines and news aggregators. Effective application of anti-trust rules was seen as necessary in this context but it may also be necessary to go further and consider whether additional measures, such as access or specific cross-ownership rules, are required. The need to strike a fair balance between content creators and distributors was emphasised.

The Croatian, Finnish, Greek, Romanian and UK reports further emphasised the importance of transparency of media ownership to enable citizens to make informed choices when accessing the media. In Bulgaria a public register is already in place but this is not thought to be adequate, particularly in relation to off-shore companies with interests in domestic media. The Italian and Bulgarian reports also underlined the dangers of combining media and political or commercial interests, advertising agencies, for example, that could undermine media independence and call for further rules designed to prevent conflicts of interest.

Support for quality journalism and media literacy

The profession of journalism is facing pressures of both an economic and technological nature. The economic downturn in combination with declining advertising sales, and for newspapers, declining readership, has led to journalists being forced to publish more material in less time, often for multiple platforms. Several countries, such as Estonia, Finland, Belgium, Germany and the UK, have noted that the pressure to produce content has led, or is likely to lead, to a decline in quality journalism. For quality news provision it is essential that journalists are able to work under reasonable conditions with adequate pay and are given the chance to keep up-to-date with technological and legal changes that impact on their job. They should retain their independence from political and commercial pressures, something identified as being especially troublesome in the Bulgarian, Croatian, Romanian and Turkish reports. To foster public trust, it is essential to keep a clear distinction between political and commercial advertising and editorial content - a distinction that both the Estonian and Bulgarian reports point out, is not always clearly made. The UK and Bulgarian papers also note the importance of journalists themselves declaring any interests they may have in specific reports or ensuring

that a distinction is drawn between PR and journalistic activity.

Improving the standards of media literacy is an effective tool in strengthening freedom of expression and enhancing citizens' understanding of media communication by enabling them to comprehend the different political and economic influences on content production (Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 1466 (2000)). Media literacy has been afforded greater prominence in the European context, with the AVMS Directive now expressly requiring the Commission to keep media literacy levels in mind in its tri-annual report on the operation of the Directive (Art. 33). At the country level, media literacy is raised as a matter of particular importance in the Belgian, Croatian, Estonian, Greek, Spanish and Romanian reports but there are underlying concerns in almost all countries involved in the Mediadem project.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY-MAKERS

Media policy

Development of media policy should be co-ordinated, evidenced, forward-looking, open and transparent.

State actors should ensure that:

- co-ordination takes place across government, with a proper understanding of respective competences at devolved, national and European or international levels;
- sufficient resources are allocated to ensure that policy is well informed and up-to-date;
- consultation takes place with a representative range of interests, with questions published in advance to allow time for all interested parties, including civil society organisations and members of the public, to participate meaningfully in the policy process;
- the policy process is transparent, with submissions and evidence ideally published online.

Civil society organisations, academics and citizens should:

- regularly monitor policy developments and co-ordinate their activities to enhance their ability to influence the policy agenda and policy-making process.

International human rights standards

All actors should ensure timely and effective compliance with international guarantees of freedom of expression and information.

In particular, **states** should:

- formally recognise the central importance of freedom of expression and the role of the press in democratic societies in all relevant legislation and regulations;
- audit all domestic laws and regulations to ensure that they conform to international human rights standards;

- provide resources to ensure that the judiciary and regulators are well informed as to internationally recognised rights and freedoms relating to the media;
- consider the appropriateness of specialist courts, tribunals or judges in the media field and how legal costs might be reduced through, for example, arbitration or adjudication, while retaining adequate legal protection for both the press and individuals.

Regulatory bodies and the judiciary should:

- explicitly take into account and conform to relevant human rights and freedoms relating to the media in all aspects of their work.

Civil society organisations, academics and citizens should:

- co-ordinate their activities in order to monitor whether the law and regulations in the media field conform to international standards.

Political influence

Inappropriate political influence, overt and covert, on both public service and commercial media should be addressed.

In particular, **states** should ensure that:

- appointment processes for members of the management and supervisory boards of PSM and appointment processes for members of media regulatory bodies are depoliticised, open and transparent, with a strong emphasis on relevant media expertise and protection from removal from office on political grounds;
- funding for PSM is adequate, taking into account their designated purposes, and placed on a secure footing to minimise political leverage;
- public advertising contracts and other commercial advantages are awarded on an open, transparent and non-discriminatory basis.

Convergence

Regulatory rules and structures should be up-dated in the light of convergence.

In particular, **states** should ensure that:

- regulatory structures and rules are guided by the principle of technological neutrality and are as simple and coherent as possible in the interests of both industry and citizens;
- subsidies and tax benefits are similarly platform neutral;
- the award of digital terrestrial licences is completed in a timely, non-discriminatory and transparent manner.

Plural media environment

States should support the development of a plural media environment, with scope for public service and commercial operators to innovate and flourish both on and off-line.

In particular, **states** should:

- develop a clear policy for the development of public service media in the online environment;
- ensure that the remits for PSM are, wherever possible, technologically neutral, allowing for diversification in the online environment in line with Council of Europe recommendations;
- avoid attempts to micro-manage PSM that could stifle innovation;
- support the provision of investigative journalism and public service programming across the media sector as a whole, with consideration given to a fund to support the production of public service content, accessible to all and operated in a transparent and non-discriminatory manner.

PSM should:

- develop a culture of openness that encourages public participation and dialogue regarding their future role and core values.
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Media ownership

Media ownership configurations that afford private companies or individuals undue power and influence should be monitored and controlled.

In particular, **states** should ensure that:

- there are effective, up-to-date, media-specific ownership regulations, enforced by an independent regulator;
- media ownership is transparent, with ownership information published and made accessible to the public;
- ownership configurations that could give rise to conflicts of interest are prohibited;
- legislators and regulators have sufficient technical knowledge and administrative capacity to keep abreast of market developments;
- new forms of market power, particularly that of intermediaries, are kept under review: competition law may need to be supplemented in this context by media specific regulation;
- further consideration is given to the impact on domestic services of the jurisdictional rules in the EU AVMS Directive.

Civil society organisations, academics and citizens should:

- continue to monitor market developments and their impact on citizens' access to a plurality of independent media services;
 - play an active role in shaping the development of policies in this area.
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Quality journalism and media literacy

Further steps should be taken to maintain and develop quality journalism and to support media literacy.

In particular, **states** should:

- consider funding models that take into account new technological developments and provide support for quality/investigative journalism;
- incorporate media literacy education in the national curriculum for both primary and secondary schools, as well as offer lifelong media literacy education.

Regulatory bodies and the judiciary should:

- clarify the meaning of the term 'journalist' and 'journalism', in light of technological developments and diverse employment relationships.

Industry, professional organisations, trade unions and journalists should:

- ensure that employment contracts for both free-lance and contract journalists include provisions for ongoing training, provide reasonable working conditions, adequate pay and protect the safety, freedom and independence of journalists;
 - consider ways to insulate journalists from economic pressures which impact on the quality of journalism;
 - encourage the identification of potential conflicts of interest by journalists themselves;
 - ensure that editors are insulated from undue state, economic and societal influences;
 - consider the introduction of reader's ombudsmen/editors to improve the relationship between media organisations and citizens.
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RESEARCH PARAMETERS

Objectives of the research MEDIADEM is an EU-funded research project on media policies for free and independent media.

The project seeks to:

- understand the nature of media freedom and independence
- explore the formulation and implementation of media policies in 14 European states and identify the factors that exert an influence throughout the process
- identify the full array of the policy processes and regulatory models and instruments that support media freedom and independence
- evaluate and explain variable patterns of media policy-making from a cross-country and cross-media comparative perspective in order to identify best practices for the promotion of free and independent media
- engage directly with policy-makers, the media community and civil society in order to reflect on appropriate policy responses to the challenge of realising media freedom and independence
- develop concrete policy recommendations for policy-makers, the European Union and the Council of Europe regarding the development of policies that foster free and independent media.

Scientific approach/ methodology

To obtain meaningful research results regarding how media freedom and independence can be promoted in Europe, MEDIADEM adopts an interdisciplinary approach which lies at the crossroads of legal research, media studies and political science.

The project combines theoretical with empirical analysis and adopts a broad European perspective. Our country cases cover both EU Member States and EU candidate countries. They include: Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Italy, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Turkey and the UK. The selection of these countries testifies to the diversity of European media policy-making and reflects the multiplicity of regulatory, co-regulatory and self-regulatory approaches followed or in need to realise media freedom and independence.

The project's work plan consists of a compilation and in-depth analysis of legal documents, government reports, policy papers, case law, broader academic literature and semi-structured interviews with various state and non-state actors involved in media policy-making. The latter include state ministries, regulatory bodies and agencies, media operators, journalists and their representative associations, and civil society organisations, among others.

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Related websites	Cordis SSH: http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ssh/ Europa SSH: http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/ <hr/>
For more information	Evangelia Psychogiopoulou Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy 49 Vas. Sofias Ave., 10676 Athens, Greece T: 0030-210-7257110, F: 0030-210-7257114 Email: epsychoyiopoulou@eliamep.gr <hr/>
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