

Procedure file

Basic information		
INI - Own-initiative procedure	2021/2017(INI)	Procedure completed
Europe's Media in the Digital Decade: An Action Plan to Support Recovery and Transformation		
Subject		
3.30.01 Audiovisual industry and services		
3.30.06 Information and communication technologies, digital technologies		
3.30.25 International information networks and society, internet		
3.40.06 Electronics, electrotechnical industries, ICT, robotics		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	 Culture and Education	 MELBÄRDE Dace	18/01/2021
		Shadow rapporteur	
		 ZOVKO Željana	
		 SMERIGLIO Massimiliano	
		 FARRENG Laurence	
		 NIENASS Niklas	
		 DA RE Gianantonio	
		 MICHELS Martina	
European Commission	Commission DG Communications Networks, Content and Technology	Commissioner BRETON Thierry	

Key events			
11/03/2021	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
27/09/2021	Vote in committee		
06/10/2021	Committee report tabled for plenary	A9-0278/2021	Summary
18/10/2021	Debate in Parliament		

19/10/2021	Results of vote in Parliament		
20/10/2021	Decision by Parliament	T9-0428/2021	Summary

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2021/2017(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 54
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 159
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	CULT/9/05508

Documentation gateway					
Committee draft report		PE692.618	18/05/2021	EP	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE693.773	08/06/2021	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A9-0278/2021	06/10/2021	EP	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T9-0428/2021	20/10/2021	EP	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary		SP(2022)67	08/04/2022	EC	

Europe's Media in the Digital Decade: An Action Plan to Support Recovery and Transformation

The Committee on Culture and Education adopted an own-initiative report by Dace MELB?RDE (ECR, LV) on Europe's Media in the Digital Decade: an Action Plan to Support Recovery and Transformation.

European media in the digital decade: an action plan to support recovery and transformation

Members recalled that a pluralistic, independent and well-funded news media sector is critical to the smooth functioning of our democracies and societies, while a competitive and resilient European audiovisual sector helps promote European cultural and linguistic diversity. The media sector plays a significant role in the economy, contributing to job creation and growth and accounting for around 3% of the EU's GDP. The media ecosystem was already in a fragile state prior to the COVID-19 epidemic as evidenced by the decline in media plurality. The pandemic has exacerbated existing problems and generated new ones.

This report calls on the Commission to elaborate comprehensive industrial strategies for both the news media sector and the audiovisual sector.

Recovery and support

Members urged the Commission and Member States to increase support for the news media and audiovisual sectors and for the cultural and creative sectors more generally, with particular attention to SMEs. They called for an increase in funding for the news media and audiovisual sectors under the various programmes of the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) and invited the Commission to encourage Member States to increase support for these sectors by making use of the funds made available through their national recovery plans.

The report specifically called for the creation of a permanent EU News Media Fund to empower independent news coverage, safeguard the independence of European journalists and their profession, and guarantee the freedom of the press.

The Commission should consider the introduction of tailor-made support schemes for the news media and consider the introduction of insurance guarantees for audiovisual co-productions. Members believe that special attention should be paid to all support measures for Member States with low audiovisual production capacity.

The report encouraged Member States with adequate fiscal scope to help boost media production, distribution and consumption of news media and audiovisual works, including cinema admissions, through fiscal and financial incentives that meet these needs, while taking into account the differences between physical venues and the online domain.

Ensuring a level playing field

The report draws attention to the fact that the current crisis risks speeding up news media consolidation, especially within Member States, which may undermine media pluralism and the quality and impartiality of information, especially in smaller markets. It therefore called on competition authorities to remain vigilant and to examine the long-term impact of mergers and acquisitions not only on market shares, but also on linguistic and cultural diversity.

Members are concerned that global online platforms are having a considerable disruptive effect on the media sector as they dominate the data and advertising market and have radically changed the public's consumption patterns. Existing legislation does not fully provide a fair framework on key issues in the online ecosystem, such as data access, data transparency, platforms and algorithmic accountability, and advertising rules, especially regarding online political advertising.

Members considered the timely adoption of legislation, through relevant provisions, to help address these shortcomings to be a matter of urgency, notably the future Digital Services Act and Digital Markets Act, and a significantly reinforced code of practice on disinformation.

In view of the additional challenges facing news media operating in smaller markets, Members considered that the EU should foster cross-border cooperation and enhance diversity in markets, thus addressing challenges of fragmentation and national focus. Members called on Member States to provide a stable and adequate financial envelope for public service media on a multi-annual basis to preserve their independence from governmental, political and market pressures, and thus preserve the diversity of the European media landscape.

Towards the transformation and promotion of the European media and audiovisual sectors

The report highlighted the need to transform the news media sector, including through increased support for journalism training, building individual and collective skills for innovation and cooperation.

The report stressed, inter alia, the importance of:

- developing a general strategy for media and information literacy;
- ensuring that strengthened media independence and media and information literacy form an integral part of the Union's foreign policy;
- promoting the creation and growth of digital media start-ups by facilitating access to finance and providing a supportive framework;
- significantly expanding the European audience by making content legally available across EU borders while safeguarding the principle of contractual freedom and using existing opportunities available across the EU, such as the portability regulation;
- increasing the visibility of EU programmes and initiatives to promote the production and circulation of high-quality European works with international potential, across the EU and beyond;
- reducing the audiovisual sectors carbon footprint, especially at the production stage, which accounts for most CO2 emissions.

Europe's Media in the Digital Decade: An Action Plan to Support Recovery and Transformation

The European Parliament adopted by 577 votes to 47, with 76 abstentions, a resolution on Europe's Media in the Digital Decade: an Action Plan to Support Recovery and Transformation.

The audiovisual sectors have been hit hard by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. They have suffered a drop of almost 70 % in box office revenue for cinemas and distributors in 2020, resulting in a total decrease in revenues amounting to EUR 4 billion, and a 30 % drop in activity for productions and a total halt of co-productions. This situation threatens their ability to recover and challenges the financing and circulation of European films and culture.

Members stressed that high-quality, well-funded and independent news media and professional journalism are essential for media freedom and pluralism, and are therefore a pillar of democracy and the rule of law

The resolution called on the Commission to elaborate comprehensive industrial strategies for both the news media sector and the audiovisual sector.

Recovery and support

Parliament called for increased support for the news media and audiovisual sectors, and for the cultural and creative sectors more generally, with a particular focus on SMEs. It called for an increase in funding for the news media and audiovisual sectors under the various programmes of the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) and invited the Commission to encourage Member States to increase support for these sectors by making use of the funds made available through their national recovery plans.

The Commission is invited to develop the NEWS initiative with a view to creating a European News Media Forum to engage in discussions with the sectors on their ongoing transformations.

The resolution specifically called for the creation of a permanent EU news media fund to enhance independent news coverage, safeguard the independence of European journalists and their profession, and ensure the freedom of the press. It called for the introduction of tailor-made support schemes for the news media and to consider the introduction of insurance guarantees for audiovisual co-productions.

Members believe that particular attention should be paid to all measures supporting Member States with a low audiovisual production capacity. Creative Europe MEDIA should endeavour to balance funding between the Member States and between the different clusters and genres it supports.

The resolution stressed that tax policies are a vital instrument that can contribute to the recovery efforts. Parliament called on the Commission to support Member States by carrying out a study, coordinating the exchange of best practices on programmes and public funding mechanisms, and developing guidelines.

The report encouraged Member States with adequate fiscal scope to help boost media production, distribution and consumption of news media and audiovisual works, including cinema admissions, through fiscal and financial incentives that meet these needs, while taking into account the differences between physical venues and the online domain.

Ensuring a level playing field

The resolution draws attention to the fact that the current crisis risks speeding up news media consolidation, especially within Member States, which may undermine media pluralism and the quality and impartiality of information, especially in smaller markets. It therefore called on competition authorities to remain vigilant and to examine the long-term impact of mergers and acquisitions not only on market shares, but also

on linguistic and cultural diversity.

Existing legislation does not fully provide a fair framework on key issues in the online ecosystem, such as data access, data transparency, platforms and algorithmic accountability, and advertising rules, especially regarding online political advertising.

Given the disruptive effect of global online platforms on the media sector, Parliament considered the timely adoption of legislation, through relevant provisions, to help address these shortcomings to be a matter of urgency, notably the future Digital Services Act and Digital Markets Act, and a significantly reinforced code of practice on disinformation.

Members also stressed the need to ensure better conditions of competition that respect copyright and to put in place ambitious and legally binding measures to combat intellectual property infringements, including online piracy.

In view of the additional challenges facing news media operating in smaller markets, Members considered that the EU should foster cross-border cooperation and enhance diversity in markets, thus addressing challenges of fragmentation and national focus. Members called on Member States to provide a stable and adequate financial envelope for public service media on a multi-annual basis to preserve their independence from governmental, political and market pressures, and thus preserve the diversity of the European media landscape.

Towards the transformation and promotion of the European media and audiovisual sectors

Parliament stressed the need to transform the news media sector, including through increased support for journalism training, building individual and collective skills for innovation and cooperation and thus also through the promotion of diversity in media management positions, the digitisation of newsrooms, the adoption of artificial intelligence (AI).

The resolution stressed, inter alia, the importance of:

- developing a general strategy for media and information literacy;
- ensuring that strengthened media independence and media and information literacy form an integral part of the Union's foreign policy;
- promoting the creation and growth of digital media start-ups by facilitating access to finance and providing a supportive framework;
- significantly expanding the European audience by making content legally available across EU borders while safeguarding the principle of contractual freedom and using existing opportunities available across the EU, such as the portability regulation;
- reducing the audiovisual sectors carbon footprint, especially at the production stage, which accounts for most CO2 emissions.

Transparency				
MELB?RDE Dace	Rapporteur	CULT	28/04/2021	Audiovisual coalition
MELB?RDE Dace	Rapporteur	CULT	21/04/2021	Europeana
MELB?RDE Dace	Rapporteur	CULT	14/04/2021	AER
MELB?RDE Dace	Rapporteur	CULT	31/03/2021	Europeana
MELB?RDE Dace	Rapporteur	CULT	24/03/2021	Society of Audiovisual Authors
MELB?RDE Dace	Rapporteur	CULT	17/03/2021	Netflix International B.V.
MELB?RDE Dace	Rapporteur	CULT	05/03/2021	European Federation of Journalists
MELB?RDE Dace	Rapporteur	CULT	02/03/2021	EUROKINEMA, Association de producteurs de cinéma et de télévision
MELB?RDE Dace	Rapporteur	CULT	24/02/2021	ACT
MELB?RDE Dace	Rapporteur	CULT	10/02/2021	FIAD