



BRUSSELS, 17 - 18 November 2016

## Annual Colloquium on Fundamental Rights 2016 "Media pluralism and democracy"

A free media and a plurality of voices in society and in the media are indispensable preconditions of and essential safeguards for a healthy democracy. Freedom of expression and media freedom and pluralism are enshrined in Article 11 of the Charter of Fundamental rights of the European Union and are at the core of the basic democratic values on which the Union is founded.

The purpose of the 2016 Annual Colloquium is to explore, from a fundamental rights perspective, the multiple links between a free and pluralistic media space, on the one hand, and democracy, on the other. Particular attention is paid to challenges and opportunities arising in the converged media environment, where for example opinion-shaping is increasingly done on internet platforms and social media.

The wide range of topics for discussion will include protecting and promoting media freedom, and independence from state intervention and political or commercial pressures; empowering journalists and protecting them from pressure, threats, physical violence and hate speech; the role of the media and ethical journalism in promoting fundamental rights; and how a pluralistic media environment can foster political debate on crucial issues for democratic societies.

The Commission's objective with this Annual Colloquium is to improve mutual cooperation and greater political engagement for the promotion and protection of media pluralism and democracy in the EU. The Colloquium offers an open space for debate allowing for the harvesting of ideas on possible actions in the area, without prejudice to any action by the European Union and without affecting the remit of its competences.

This Colloquium meets in the form of a roundtable which will allow key stakeholders to discuss on an equal footing and in an interactive manner the role of EU institutions, Member States, NGOs, journalists, media representatives, companies, academics and international organisations.

Each session will be introduced by short keynote addresses and a testimony to trigger the discussion. The floor will then immediately be opened to the roundtable participants.

**Meeting venue:** Palais d'Egmont, 8 bis Rue des Petits Carmes, Brussels

**Website:** [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/fundamental-rights/events/161117\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/fundamental-rights/events/161117_en.htm)

**Twitter:** [#media4democracy](https://twitter.com/media4democracy)

## Thursday 17 November 2016

**13:00 – 14:30**

**Registration and coffee**

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**14:30 – 15:00**

**Welcome and introduction** (*Europe room*):

- **Frans Timmermans**, First Vice-President of the European Commission
  - **Koen Lenaerts**, President of the Court of Justice of the European Union
  - **Marek Mad'arič**, Minister of Culture, Slovak Presidency of the Council of the EU
  - **Ulrike Lunacek**, Vice-President of the European Parliament
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**15:00 – 18:30**

**Afternoon opening plenary session** (*Europe room*):

*Through the prism of fundamental rights, the opening session on Day 1 will look at the main challenges media pluralism and independence face in today's political and economic contexts, from the perspective of the media sector as such, but also of journalists and citizens. The topic will be addressed from three different angles: the freedom and independence of the media from political and commercial pressures, the protection of journalists from threats and hatred and the role they can play in promoting ethical journalism, and the impact of media convergence in democratic societies. Discussions will lay the groundwork for setting out on Day 2 concrete avenues for action to foster freedom of speech, media freedom and media pluralism as essential pre-conditions and components of democracy.*

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**15:00 - 16:00**

**A. An independent media, free from political and commercial pressures**

- **Keynote address by Thorbjørn Jagland**, Secretary General of the Council of Europe
  - **Testimony by Jean Paul Philippot**, President of the European Broadcasting Union (EBU)
  - **Scene-setting by Miguel Poiares Maduro**, Founding Director of the Global Governance Programme, European University Institute of Florence
  - **Roundtable discussion**
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**16:00 – 16:30**

**Coffee Break** (*Atrium Europe*)

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16:30 – 17:30

## B. Journalists in the EU: addressing the threats and hatred they are confronted with and promoting ethical journalism

- **Keynote address by Katharine Viner**, Editor-in-chief, The Guardian
- **Testimony by Alexandra Pascalidou**, Journalist, TV and radio-presenter/producer and author
- **Scene-setting by Melody Patry**, Senior Advocacy Officer, Index on Censorship
- **Roundtable discussion**

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17:30 – 18:30

## C. A converged media environment: challenges and opportunities for our democratic societies

- **Keynote addresses by Michael Roth**, Minister of State for Europe, German Federal Foreign Office and **Dunja Mijatovic**, OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media
- **Testimony by Xavier Vidal-Folch**, Journalist and Columnist, El País
- **Scene-setting by Sally Broughton Micova**, Lecturer in Communications Policy and Politics, University of East Anglia
- **Roundtable discussion**

Moderator of the plenary session: **Jacki Davis**, Journalist, television and radio broadcaster and Senior Adviser to the European Policy Centre think tank

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18:30 – 19:30

## Networking reception (*Atrium Europe*)

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19:30

## Dinner (*Hall of Mirrors*)

- **Speech by Michael Ignatieff**, President and Rector of Central European University, Budapest, writer and former politician
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## Friday 18 November 2016

### MORNING PARALLEL SESSIONS I

**8:15 – 8:45**

**Welcome coffee** (*Atrium Europe and Tapestry room*)

**8:45 – 10:30**

**Session I.a: Media pluralism and independence from financial pressures and constraints** (*Europe room*)

*This session will look at how to protect the media sector from undue commercial influences which have a detrimental effect on media pluralism and independence, quality journalism and democracy. Transparency and concentration of media ownership will be discussed in this context as well as the role of advertising and of IT companies. Sustainability and the challenges arising for the financial viability of traditional media will also be explored as well as the issue of state subsidies and the specific situation of the public service media. The question of whether the current approach of applying different rules and standards to the different media (print, audiovisual, online) is still appropriate should also be addressed.*

- **Keynote address by Frank La Rue**, Assistant Director-General Communication and Information, UNESCO - Former UN Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of the Right to Freedom of Opinion and Expression
- **Testimonies by Kristina Hristova**, President of the Association of European Journalists and **Valdo Lehari**, Vice-President of the European Newspaper Publishers' Association (ENPA)
- **Round table discussion**

Moderator: **Helen Darbshire**, Executive Director, Access Info Europe

**8:45 – 10:30**

**Session I.b: Fostering democracy: media literacy, media ethics and an informed, multi-dimensional debate** (*Orange room*)

*This session will look at the expression of political views and access to political information in the digital environment from the perspective of fostering democracy. Two interlinked issues will be discussed in this context: the meaning of ethics online for political information and the responsibilities of media actors (e.g. journalists, bloggers, etc.) in promoting a fair and pluralist political debate; and the role of media literacy in fostering critical thought and approaches to information in citizens confronted by the polarised, heated and potentially overwhelming online political discourse. A related question will be how to translate the lively, thoughtful and passionate participation in social media, especially among young people, into long-term political engagement.*

- **Keynote address by Emily O'Reilly**, European Ombudsman
- **Testimony by Aidan White**, Director of the Ethical Journalism Network
- **Round table discussion**

Moderator: **Nataša Pirc Musar**, Director of the law firm Pirc Musar, Founder of Info House and former Slovenian Information Commissioner

**8:45 – 10:30**

**Session I.c: Protecting journalists and their freedom of expression**  
(Arenberg room)

*Media freedom and pluralism depend heavily on the journalists' freedom and safety. They should be protected from threats and undue pressure emanating from different public or private actors. This also means applying defamation laws proportionately.*

- **Keynote address by Michael O'Flaherty**, Director of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights
- **Testimony by Christophe Deloire**, Director General of Reporters Without Borders
- **Round table discussion**

Moderator: **William Horsley**, Independent Journalist and former BBC foreign correspondent

**10:30 – 11:00**

**Coffee break** (Atrium Europe and Tapestry room)

## MORNING PARALLEL SESSIONS II

**11:00 – 12:30**

**Session II.a: Protecting media freedom and independence from political pressures** (Europe room)

*This session will look at how to address the detrimental effects (such as self-censorship) on an open and informed debate of political pressures within and outside the EU. An aspect to be explored is the need to ensure that measures to constrain propaganda and media services legislation are not used for unwarranted restriction of cross border broadcasting. The independence of audiovisual regulators for limiting the risks of undue political interferences in the media sector will be central to the discussions.*

- **Keynote addresses by Damian Tambini**, Director of the Media Policy Project, London School of Economics
- **Testimony by Madeleine de Cock-Buning**, Chair of the European Regulators Group for Audiovisual Media Services
- **Round table discussion**

Moderator: **Tom Weingärtner**, Chairman of the International Press Association (IPA)

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**11:00 – 12:30**

**Session II.b: Whistleblowers and investigative journalism** (Arenberg room)

*Journalists should have broad access to public information whilst respecting applicable rules on protection of trade secrets and personal data. The protection of journalistic sources and of whistleblowers is a growing concern. This session will look at the role, practices, ethics, limits and consequences of whistleblowing for media freedom and democracy. This session will also look into the challenges arising from the financial constraints linked to investigative journalism.*

- **Keynote addresses by Anna Myers**, Director of the Whistleblowing International Network (WIN) and **Michel Benichou**, President of the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE)
- **Testimony by Stefania Maurizi**, Investigative Journalist, L'Espresso
- **Round table discussion**

Moderator: **Wim Vandekerckhove**, Academic, Greenwich University

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**11:00 – 12:30**

**Session II.c: Protecting journalists and new media actors from hate speech** (Orange room)

*Media freedom and pluralism depend heavily on the empowerment of journalists. A recent, new aspect of the protection of journalists concerns online hate speech directed at them and at other media actors, which has a chilling effect on freedom of expression.*

- **Keynote address by Stefan Kaltenbrunner**, Editor-in-chief, Kurier and **Françoise Tulkens**, Academic, former judge and Vice-President of the European Court of Human Rights
- **Testimony by Audrey Pulvar**, Journalist, television and radio host
- **Round table discussion**

Moderator: **Ryan Heath**, Journalist, Politico

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**12:30 – 13:30**

**Networking time** (Atrium Europe) – finger food will be served

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**13:30 – 14:30**

**Concluding plenary session** (Europe room)

- **Reporting from the parallel sessions** – Moderator: **Pawel Swieboda**, Deputy Head of the European Political Strategy Centre
- Concluding remarks by **Günther Oettinger**, Commissioner for Digital Economy and Society and **Věra Jourová**, Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality

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**14:30**

**End of the Colloquium**