# EMFA: Parliament adopts the regulation

**IRIS 2024-3:1/4**

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Following a previous article on the provisional agreement on the European Media Freedom Act (EMFA) at interinstitutional level (IRIS 2024-1:1/7), the co-legislative procedure to adopt the EMFA is reaching its end. On 13 March 2024, the European Members of the Parliament (MEPs) backed the EMFA by 462 votes in favour to 92 against, and 65 abstentions. The Council of the European Union will now adopt the EMFA after the Parliament's first reading.

The EMFA will enter into force twenty days after its publication in the official journal. As a regulation, the text is directly applicable to the legal order of member states of the European Union, taking into account the implementation period.

The EMFA aims to protect media independence and forms of intervention in editorial decisions should be banned.

This landmark text protects journalists against intrusive measures from authorities (e.g. office searches). Authorities may use spyware following judicial authorisation in the course of an investigation of serious crimes. A coalition of 21 media sector organisations (representing journalists, media freedom and civil society groups, and public service media) deplore this possible use of spyware.

The governance and independence of public service media are important: key appointments in the structure should go through transparent and non-discriminatory procedures, with safeguards against dismissals (e.g., it is impossible to dismiss a member before the end of the contract).

To ensure transparency of ownership, all news and current affairs outlets shall publish information about their owners in a national database.

State financial support and funds received from state advertising should be reported as well.

Finally, measures were introduced to prevent major online platforms from restricting/deleting independent media content. Media providers will be informed prior to content deletion or restriction, allowing 24 hours for a response. Only after the media provider's reply, or in its absence, can the platform take action if the content remains non-compliant.

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***European Parliament legislative resolution of 13 March 2024 on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a common framework for media services in the internal market (European Media Freedom Act)***

https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2024-0137_EN.html

***European Parliament's press release***

https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20240308IPR19014/media-freedom-act-a-new-bill-to-protect-eu-journalists-and-press-freedom

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