PACE: Resolution and recommendation on growing threats to media pluralism and independence

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On 30 September 2026, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) adopted a resolution and a recommendation on the basis of a report by Valentina Grippo (Italy, Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe – ALDE). The report expressed serious concern about the growing threats to media pluralism and independence across Europe. These threats stem from the growing influence of political and economic actors over editorial decisions, as well as from mounting pressure on public service media, the emergence of "news deserts" and the market dominance of online platforms.

The resolution emphasises the importance of safeguarding editorial independence and the regulation and monitoring of the governance and financing of public service media to prevent any form of political interference.

The resolution also states that media outlets face severe threats to their survival, especially when it comes to local, investigative and cross-border journalism. Journalists are susceptible to pressures from influential news sources and their employers; this fosters an environment conducive to censorship and self-censorship. Concerns have also been raised regarding legal harassment, online threats and the disproportionate targeting of female journalists.

Furthermore, the Assembly emphasises the specific risks associated with Russia's war against Ukraine, which has led to the killing, wounding or unlawful detention of journalists; it strongly criticises the systematic dismantling of independent media in Ukrainian territories occupied by Russia.

The Assembly calls on Council of Europe member states to introduce a legal requirement for national media regulatory authorities to regulate and monitor media pluralism in the audiovisual sector. Furthermore, the Assembly has proposed repealing or amending laws used to intimidate journalists, including criminal defamation and overly broad "fake news" or state secrets provisions. Further measures to be implemented include the following:

strengthening transparency when it comes to media ownership supporting sustainable funding models for local and non-profit media ensuring the independence of national media regulatory authorities protecting journalists' safety.

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The growing influence of artificial intelligence and online platforms over media content and distribution is a key concern that must be addressed. In order to achieve this, services of general interest, especially public service media, must be given appropriate prominence across all platforms and the integrity of media services must be safeguarded against unfair manipulation by online platforms.

The recommendation invites the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to collaborate with member states and the EU to create a pan-European database of media ownership in Europe.

Resolution 2675 (2026) of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, "Growing threats to media pluralism and the independence of the media"

https://pace.coe.int/en/files/36398/html

Recommendation 2313 (2026) of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, "Growing threats to media pluralism and the independence of the media"

https://pace.coe.int/en/files/36399/html

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