European Media and Audiovisual Action Plan

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On 3 December 2020, the Commission adopted an Action Plan to support the recovery and transformation of the media and audiovisual sector. The Action Plan focuses on three areas of activity and 10 concrete actions, with the overall aim of helping the media sector recover from the crisis by facilitating and broadening access to financial support, transforming by stimulating investments to embrace the twin digital and green transitions while ensuring the sector's future resilience, and empowering European citizens and companies.

The three areas of activity are the following:

Recover: under the Recovery and Resilience Facility, each National Recovery and Resilience Plan will earmark a minimum level of 20% of expenditure for the digital sector. Measures to boost the production and distribution of digital content, such as digital media, will count towards this target. In addition, the Action Plan aims to:

- Facilitate access to EU support via a dedicated tool for media companies to find all relevant EU funding opportunities available to them. This will offer guidance on how to apply for relevant EU support, not only in the context of the 2021-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework, but also through national recovery and resilience plans;

- Boost investment in the audiovisual industry via the new MEDIA INVEST initiative, whose target is to leverage investments of EUR 400 million over a 7-year period;

- Launch a “NEWS” initiative to bundle actions and support for the news media sector. The initiative includes a pilot NEWS invest project with foundations and other private partners, access to loans to be backed by the InvestEU guarantee, grants, and a European News Media Forum with the sector. Particular attention will be paid to local media.

Transform: the Action Plan aims to support the green and digital transformation of the sector by:

- Encouraging European media data spaces for data sharing and innovation;

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- Fostering a European Virtual and Augmented Reality industrial coalition to help EU media benefit from these immersive technologies and launching a VR Media Lab on projects for new ways of storytelling and interacting;

- Facilitating discussions and actions for the industry to become climate neutral by 2050.

Enable and Empower citizens and companies: actions include:

- Launching a dialogue with the AV industry to improve access to and the availability of audiovisual content across the European Union; to help the industry scale up and reach new audiences; and to allow consumers to enjoy a wide diversity of content;

- Fostering European media talents, including by promoting diversity both in front of and behind the camera, and by scouting and supporting media startups;

- Empowering citizens, including by strengthening media literacy and supporting the creation of independent alternative news aggregation;

- Strengthening cooperation among regulators within the European Regulators Group for Audiovisual Media Services (ERGA) to ensure the proper functioning of the EU media market.

According to the Commission, this Media and Audiovisual Action Plan goes hand in hand with the European Democracy Action Plan, and it is also fully aligned with the Commission's proposals on the Digital Services Act and the Digital Markets Act. Most of the actions outlined in the Action Plan will already be launched in the first months of 2021, and consultations with stakeholders will be carried out on how best to implement the actions on the ground.

Europe's Media in the Digital Decade: An Action Plan to Support Recovery and Transformation, COM/2020/784 final

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