

## Media

1. *The 2023 Rule of Law Report addressed a recommendation to Greece to 'Take forward the process of adopting non-legislative safeguards and start the legislative process in relation to the protection of journalists, building on the activities initiated by the Task Force, in particular as regards abusive lawsuits against journalists and their safety, in line with the adopted Memorandum of Understanding and taking into account European standards on the protection of journalists'. The written input mentions the progress in the work of the Task Force. Could you please provide more info on what concrete initiatives have been implemented in this regard since the last report, on both legislative and non-legislative safeguard?*

Following the Rule of Law call for input by the member-states on January 2024, and the recommendation to Greece to “take forward the process of adopting non-legislative safeguards and start the legislative process in relation to the protection of journalists”, we wish to mention **further concrete initiatives** that have taken place to extra support journalists protection, after Rule of Law National Report 2023. (See also part 8 with regard to SLAPPs).

### 1. New Legislative Measures in 2024 (not included in the written input of January)

- **New Law 5085/2024 on "Urgent Measures for the Prevention of Violence at Sporting Events"**, aiming among other things to combat impunity for crimes against journalists and to safeguard freedom of speech, has been taken. It includes provisions aimed at protecting journalists covering or commenting on sporting events in cases of violence against them. Law 5085/2024 Article 15, provides that anyone who issues public statements, announcements and publications, incites, urges, encourages or facilitates acts that may lead to violent offenses or threats of violence against journalists, who in the context of their capacity cover or comment on professional events sports, as well as related issues, shall be punished by imprisonment at least one (1) year and a fine.
- **Removal of Article 362 related to defamation from the penal Code**  
An effective step towards the protection of the freedom of expression was introduced with the recently adopted law number 5090/2024, article 362 concerning the act of simple defamation which was removed from the Greek Penal Code, reducing significantly the risk to be abused or misused. Now only the act of libel concerning the dissemination of knowingly false information that may harm the honor or reputation of another, foreseen in article 363, remains punishable.

#### **Additional level of protection against SLAPPs**

It is evident that Greece has taken utmost account the CoEs and CIONs guidelines and recommendations addressing the legal framework for defamation. Furthermore in Greece, an additional level of protection already exists, as the filing of a lawsuit against an offensive publication is subject to a compulsory prior written out-of-court request by the aggrieved person to the printed medium, which must proceed to its correction within ten days. **Lawsuits filed without following the stated procedure are not admissible**, as provided for in Article 37 of Law 4356/2015. That is also an important additional measure to discourage SLAPPs.

- **Press spokesperson of the Court or the Prosecutor's office.** In addition, we wish to also, stress the importance of the establishment of the institution of the press spokesperson in each Court and Prosecutors office, including the three Supreme Courts of Greece, with amendments to art. 15 & 16 of law 4938/2022. The press spokesperson of the Court or the Prosecutor's office informs the public about its actions as well as about matters of special social interest concerning Justice through the issuance of press releases or the live briefing of media representatives. The information is valid and accurate and is made in compliance with the principles of the public interest, the presumption of innocence, the protection of minors and the right to protect privacy and personal data.

## 2. Non-legislative Initiatives to Safeguard the protection of journalists and media professionals

- **The Task Force on ensuring the protection, safety and empowerment of journalists and other media professionals**, that was launched in July 2022, following the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding by the Secretariat General for Communication and Media, on May 23rd, 2022, was **renewed** on September 2023 (Government Gazette 5598, B/23-09-2023) and continues its work in 2024 through regular meetings and with new members (Government Gazette 1575, B/08-03/2024), with 18 meetings so far. The Task Force serves as an innovation stakeholder hub and constitutes an important point of consultation and a decision-making body on issues covering almost all general and specific recommendations of the C(2021) 6650 Recommendation to all EU member states.

Among important deliverables of the Task Force during the two years of operation are (see also written input as of 01/24 for additional initiatives and information):

- **International Training Centre for the Safety of Journalists and Media Professionals<sup>1</sup>** in January 2023 as an initiative of the Secretariat General for Communication and Media with bodies from the journalistic unions, public and local authorities on media, and under the scientific responsibility of the Peace Journalism Laboratory of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. Initiatives carried out until present are:
  - a) Conducting research on the needs of Greek journalists.
  - b) Organizing two-day Workshop on the importance of the Safety of Journalists in Situations of War Conflicts and Demonstrations, with support by the European Federation of Journalists - EFJ (April 2023).
  - c) Organizing «Safety for Journalists (SfJ)-Training School» in Kilis (Multinational Training Center for Peace Support Operations) (May 2023).
  - d) Participation of the staff to the UNESCO Training Center on Freedom of Speech and Law Enforcement (April 2023).
  - e) Webinar on women journalist's protection against sexual harassment online (July 2023).
- **Academic course on Safety of Journalists and other Media Professionals.** The new academic course launched by the Task Force, on the Safety of Journalists and other Media Professionals, starts from spring semester of academic year 2023-2024. After the completion of the procedural issues, the new course will be included in the university curricula, in the 4th year of the Journalism Departments.

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1 <http://icsj.net/index.php/el/>

- During one of the Task Force meetings, the representative of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs presented the **Guidelines for the drafting of the annual reports of journalistic associations considering a gender dimension**, given that the media are obliged to include in their policies a gender-based dimension and to draw up annual reports where all activities are reported with statistical evidence.
- **Annual Seminar by NATO RAPID DEPLOYMENT CORPS - GREECE (NRDC-GR) on Journalists' Safety in War Zones (30th and 31st of January 2024)**. During a period of international turmoil, a pioneering initiative was launched in Greece in 2024 regarding the safety of journalists in war zones. On 30th and 31st of January 2024, the first "Journalists' Safety in War Zones" annual Seminar was conducted by the NATO RAPID DEPLOYMENT CORPS - GREECE (NRDC-GR) at its premises at the 3rd Army Corps in Thessaloniki, emphasizing the importance of broadening the knowledge on the safety of journalists in war zones, sharing best practices, and enhancing the capability to address critical challenges effectively. The two-day seminar brought together military representatives from the Alliance member countries, academics and journalists - war correspondents, fostering a dialogue on journalists' safety, under the commitment of the military to its core values as well as its respective obligations under the international legal framework. Its aim was to bring together military representatives from the Alliance member countries, armed forces personnel involved in decision-making and its implementation at the operational level, with experts, specialists, academics and journalists, in order to create a platform for dialogue and exchange of views on the issue of the safety of journalists and media professionals during crisis management or the conduct of combat operations. The discussions aimed to enhance the mutual understanding and establish a foundation for trust and collaboration between the military and the press with the aim to develop effective strategies for journalists' safety in conflict zones. The representative of the General Secretariat for Communication and Media was in the first panel presenting the legal framework, the duties and rights of all involved stakeholders, the 2022 European Parliament Resolution and the dedication of the authorities to abide to all the prerequisites for ensuring safety of journalism and all the values of free journalism, through a series of tangible actions that it has undertaken. This action is part of our country's initiatives to strengthen the safety of journalists, and can be a good practice on how Greece responds to the provisions of the Recommendation on the safety of journalists by involving all actors, including the Armed Forces.

### Conclusions:

Significant progress on the recommendation has been evident, not just compared to last year's developments but overall. This progress is palpable, particularly since last report, and highlights important legislative strides made by Greece. Key advancements in 2024 include the removal of defamation law and the implementation of measures to address fan violence, which are crucial steps in combating impunity.

Importantly, the initiatives recorded last year (Task Force, International Training Center etc) are not mere one-time efforts; they continue to yield results and will persist in the future. The Task Force is widely acclaimed among Greece's positive policy actions towards ensuring journalist's and media professional's safety (SEE ANNEX I). It is considered among others as an innovative Think Tank that puts forward new ideas and national initiatives to support governmental policies and media professional's community. Its 22 members come from 6 Ministries, 2 public service media, 4 universities, 8 journalists' associations, 2 associations

of other media professionals and form 6 sub-groups. This unique initiative enables journalists to actively engage in the policy-making process, leveraging their unique ability to offer insights and perspectives often inaccessible to government officials. It is the first time all relevant stakeholders are speaking about these issues at the same table. Their participation ensures policies are rooted in a profound understanding of the relevant issues. Additionally, involving journalists and other media professionals contributes to heightened transparency and accountability within the policy-making process.

Furthermore, it is important to note that our other initiatives concerning transparency in media ownership and state advertising, independence of public service media, financial support for media outlets, the new media data center etc, also aim to protect and enhance the journalistic environment and should also be perceived as initiatives fulfilling the purpose of the recommendation. It is imperative to think “out of the boxes” and recognize how this specific recommendation aligns with broader initiatives aimed at protecting and enhancing the journalistic environment, as well as acknowledge the significant progress made by Greece.

This progress was also showcased at the recent European News Media Forum, where Greece demonstrated excellence. We would kindly suggest cooperating with your colleagues responsible for monitoring the CIONs Safety of Journalists Recommendation results to ascertain Greece's progress and standing among other Member States.

The initiatives mentioned in this document and those mentioned in the written input as of January 2024 represent a systemic, permanent, and forward-thinking approach to addressing the issue at hand. Examining all legislative and non-legislative initiatives, and assessing them qualitatively underscores one point clearly: progress is significant, and Greece has fully complied with the recommendation made last year. Therefore, there is truly no justification for maintaining it in the Rule of Law 2024 report.

2. *Could you provide an update on the functioning of the Registry for Print Media (MET) and the Registry for Electronic Media established by Law 5005/2022 to enhance transparency of media ownership? Following last year report, is there any update concerning possible measures taken to ensure the fair and transparent allocation of state advertising?*

**1. The new Law No. 5005/2022 (Official Government Gazette, A' 236) entitled "Strengthening of the publicity and transparency of print and electronic media sets as a prerequisite to be a certified publication or website in order to be eligible for state advertising**

- Article 110 of Law 4915/2022[1] already provided for the obligation to list the owner, legal representative, Director and Chief Editor, the obligation for the Director and Chief Editor to be members of a professional association of journalists, and the subsidiary liability of the owner of the publication for compensation to an affected citizen.

The new law No. 5005/2022 provides for the establishment of a Registry for Print Media (MET) as well as a Registry for Electronic Media (MHT) accessible through the Digital Portal of the Public Administration (gov.gr) by Secretariat General for Communication and Media”, with a focus, among others, on the transparency of the ownership of media and the allocation of state advertising, already in line with the provisions of EMFA.

The conditions that have been set for all print and electronic media to be included in the relevant Registries are such that they enhance the protection of journalists and the journalistic profession in general. **The first year of application of the Registry for Print Media showed a major acceptance on behalf of stakeholders both of Print and Electronic Media. Up to now, 499 applications of Print Media have been submitted to the Secretariat General for Communication and Media, the 364 of which, have been approved and relevant certification has been granted. These certifications have been granted to 60 newspapers of national coverage, 239 regional newspapers and 65 magazines. Respectively, 550 applications have been submitted to the Registry of Electronic Media, currently under review and the first certifications have already been granted<sup>2</sup>.**

## **2. License Renewal for media content providers**

Following art. 96 of Law 5079/23 (Official Government Gazette A' 215), the deadline for the licensing process for the content providers of free-to-air terrestrial digital television broadcasting of national non-informative content and regional scope, as well as of radio stations is set to the 31st.12.2024.

## **3. Other initiatives on transparency in media ownership and state advertising**

The Registers of Print (MET) and Electronic Media (MHT) databases are accessible through the Digital Portal of the Public Administration (gov.gr), in line with the provisions set in the EMFA. In particular, access to the following information is provided through the Portal: a) name, b) distinguishing title, c) legal form, d) registered office, e) address of organized office, f) VAT identification number and competent TAX Offices g) name and surname of publisher and/or website manager, manager, editorial director, h) details of ownership, i) periodicity, j) title of media and website name, k) circulation data, measurement or tracking of networking sites l) thematic units, m) public targeting to which they are addressed, n) geographical and circulation areas for the printed press and geographical targeting for the electronic press.

## **4. New Digital Media Center Platform**

- The new platform on the Digital Media Center was launched on October 23rd, 2024, to support journalists and media professionals in their information services. It is a modern, open software-based and fully extensible platform for the provision of personalized information services on current affairs, through de-editing services of many sources of information (Press, TV, Radio and Internet). Information services may be provided by the General Secretariat of Communication and Information, to Government bodies (Ministry) as well as to Independent Authorities and other public bodies<sup>3</sup>.

Additional expected direct benefits of the project include:

- the creation of a National Database with the recording of advertisements for better control and coordination of the media plans of Public Bodies according to Legislation.
- utilization and smart accessibility to the Electronic Press News Archive of the Exterior through Smart and Fast information retrieval.

For detailed information here: <https://mediacenter.gov.gr/πληροφορίες>

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<sup>2</sup> <https://mt.media.gov.gr/submissions/MHT/public/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://media.gov.gr/deltio-typou-imerida-dimosiotitas-tou-ergou-psifiako-kentro-enimerosis-digital-media-center/>.

<https://mediacenter.gov.gr/πληροφορίες>

**5. Initiatives ensuring accessibility to formal and effective social protection and other practical support measures. In particular:**

- **DeMinimis, Joint Ministerial Decision E297/21.4.2023 (Official Government Gazette B' 2670) as amended, started in 2023 and will be completed in 2024. The allocated budget for DeMinimis state-aid initiative is 1.000.000€ million.** The program establishes a regime aid in the form of a grant of the difference costs for the provision of digital transmission services (DIGEA) of program content of the year 2022 with the corresponding to the year 2023, for the support and development of regional TV stations in the year 2023. More specifically, beneficiaries of the state-aid are Greek, regional private broadcasting companies that are providers of digital terrestrial television broadband content, free-to-air of regional scope, based on certain criteria.

- **DeMinimis, Joint Ministerial Decision E/299/2023 (Official Government Gazette B' 2674) as amended, started in 2023 and has been already completed. The allocated budget for DeMinimis state-aid initiative is 6.000.000€ million.** The program establishes a regime aid in the form of a grant for the support and the respective development of regional and local print media, especially newspapers. More specifically, the beneficiaries of the state-aid are Greek, regional and local media printed companies that, under certain criteria, will be granted for the year 2023.

- **DeMinimis, Joint Ministerial Decision E/300/2023 (Official Government Gazette B' 2665) as amended, started in 2023 and has been already completed. The allocated budget for DeMinimis state-aid initiative is 5.000.000€ million.** The program establishes a regime aid in the form of a grant for the support and the respective development of national newspapers. More specifically, the beneficiaries of the state-aid are Greek, national media printed companies that, under certain criteria, will be granted for the year 2023.

- **DeMinimis, Joint Ministerial Decision E234/8.2.2024 (Official Government Gazette B' 938) will be completed in 2024.** The allocated budget for DeMinimis state-aid initiative is 1.500.000€ million. The program establishes a regime aid in the form of a grant of the transportation costs to agencies for distributing printed press to remote areas with population less than 20.000 inhabitants, which is considered essential for the promotion of pluralism and the protection of quality of information and directly and indirectly enhances the economic and social protection of journalists through strengthening access to secure employment conditions.

**Conclusions:**

**It is imperative to acknowledge that the new databases stand as a flagship initiative. It is not simply a registration process; it entails a comprehensive examination and adherence to strict transparency requirements, unique compared to other publicly available databases in Europe. A comparative analysis would show that Greece has taken a significant leap forward.**

**Moreover, this database undergoes continuous and periodic review to ensure its validity, transparency, and compliance with updated requirements. To facilitate this process, a Special Department is established within the Secretariat-General for Media, with new staff appointed to enhance administrative capacity and effectiveness.**

**Any amendment in the databases or new registrations are uploaded in the Transparency Portal DIAVGEIA, while the registration of new media entries continues to garner attention**



in media. Indeed, every new entry into the register becomes news in the blogs<sup>4</sup>, demonstrating the level of transparency and publicity. This underscores the level of transparency and public engagement inherent in our efforts.

According to the European Media Freedom Act, media ownership databases must be established within 18 months. However, Greece has already accomplished this feat two years ahead. This accomplishment highlights our excellence, leaving no room for doubt regarding the evident progress. The figures unequivocally attest to our success, rendering comments such as "results are waited to be seen" irrelevant in this context.

Finally, the integration of databases with state advertising guarantees that state advertising allocation will occur with utmost transparency, objectivity, proportionality, and impartiality. Furthermore, this information is readily accessible to the public, ensuring accountability and fairness in the process, fulfilling already principles set in the EMFA.

3. *In the written input you also mention the new law 5062/2023 which provides a 'New system for the selection of administrations of public sector entities'. Could you elaborate on this? How this new system will be applied in practice, in particular in the appointment of the PSM board members?*

In November 2023, the new law 5062/23 (A' 183) "New system for the selection of administrations of public sector entities, strengthening their efficiency and other provisions" was put entered into force, referring to fair conditions and procedures regarding the appointment of the head / members of public administration bodies. The Law forms a coherent and integrated framework for the selection of the administrations of legal of persons in the public sector in accordance with the constitutional principles of equality and meritocracy, with particular emphasis on the essential qualifications required and, at the same time, ensuring the speedy completion of the process. The new law comprehensively regulates the selection process of the administrations of legal entities of the public sector in a way that takes into account the particularities of these legal entities. More specifically, the new Law forms the selection process for the administrative bodies of legal entities in the public sector with more transparent and fair criteria such as, for example, issuing a call for interest with the approval of the Supreme Council for Civil Personnel Selection (ASEP), a written examination of the candidates, scoring of their formal qualifications and an interview of the first 7 eligible candidates). It introduces an additional framework for the annual evaluation of administrative bodies for their performance based on the Performance Contract they have signed with the supervising Minister upon assuming their duties. The Performance Contract is posted on the website of the supervising Ministry and includes annual goals and actions that are expected to be implemented during their term of office. Termination of the term of office without compensation may occur only in the event of non-achievement of the goals set in the Performance Contract, fulfilling already the provisions of the EMFA regarding the safeguards for appointment and dismissal at national level. The Performance Contract acts as an additional safeguard against dismissal decisions, as such decisions can only be made when the individuals no longer meet the predetermined criteria for fulfilling their duties.

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4 <https://typologies.gr/kai-alles-efimerides-sto-mitroo-entypoy-typoy-tis-ggee/>

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At the same time all previous provisions with safeguards regarding the independence of Board Members of PSM, as sent in previous written input, remain in force, e.g:

(Law 4173/2013) where the procedure of a Parliamentary hearing for obtaining the opinion of the Parliament's Committee on Institutions and Transparency is a prerequisite for the members selected

(Law 4972/2022) which regulates issues concerning the operation of the Public Limited Companies of the Greek State, including ERT SA, in accordance with the principles of corporate governance, transparency and the guidelines of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

Ongoing procedure: As early as January 2024, communication with the Supreme Council for Civil Personnel Selection (ASEP) has begun for the publication of the call of interest for the appointment of the Managing Director of the ERT SA. The same procedure is also for the President of the Board.

**Additional information concerning this question will be submitted by the Ministry of Interior.**

*4. Were there significant development since the publication of the last report, regarding Public service media in your country?*

In recent years, the Greek Public Service Broadcaster ERT has expanded its content to encompass a diverse range of interests, perspectives, and demographics, offering a rich and unique selection that benefits all viewers.

Among the most emblematic developments are:

ERTNEWS<sup>5</sup>: The newly launched 24-hour news channel of ERT airs every day of the week, delivering comprehensive journalism alongside daily political discourse and investigative programs. ERTNEWS, came to fill a gap in Greece for a public channel exclusively dedicated to informing citizens. ERTNEWS is the only exclusively informative channel in Greece and has the largest staff of journalists and correspondents. In total, ERTNEWS broadcasts 7,000 hours of news annually! It has a presence in 15 countries around the world, as well as correspondents in 19 regional stations. Also, there is continuous information with interpretation in Greek sign language. Seven days a week, ERTNEWS broadcasts five in-depth news bulletins, as well as short hourly bulletins. It also includes political broadcasts, but also investigative broadcasts, as well as special inserts on health, environment, accessibility, education, agriculture, tourism, social media, economy, sports.

ERTεCHO: ERT's latest digital platform offers uninterrupted access to all ERT radio stations, ensuring clear listening experiences for its audience.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://press.ert.gr/grafeio-typou-ert/ertnews-dyo-chronia-kleinei-to-24oro-enimerotiko-kanali-tis-ert/>



ERTFLIX: ERT's free digital VOD platform, operating for the last three years, has garnered a stable audience with millions of monthly views.

On **March 27, 2024**, the **New Strategic and Operational Plan of ERT for the period 2024- 2027** was unveiled.<sup>6</sup> The President of ERT emphasized the revitalization of public broadcasting, unveiling the new management's plan, which encompasses investments in programming, technological upgrades, and institutional improvements, among other initiatives.

According to the Strategic and Operational Plan of ERT 2024-2027, the **BASIC PRINCIPLES-VALUES of ERT** are:

- Reliability: ERT's goal is to be the generally accepted reliable source of information and knowledge. Our mission is to inform and educate the public, promoting critical thinking and lifelong learning.

- Polyphony: The content reflects the diversity of audience expressions, different cultures, and experiences that make up society, ensuring that every person feels at the center. Through comprehensive news coverage and educational/cultural programs, we promote active civic participation.

- Equality and Inclusion: We are committed to integration in all aspects of our operation. This includes promoting equality and embracing diversity in the workplace, programming that caters to all demographics, and accessible content for all. We also support social justice and equality, emphasizing the promotion of diversity.

- Innovation: We embrace technological developments and media innovation. By leveraging new technologies, we improve audience content experiences.

- Ethics: The principles of journalistic ethics guide our every decision. We reflect the real facts, maintain editorial independence and act as guardians of the public interest.

- Sustainability: We respect the environment and natural resources, seeking to reduce our environmental footprint and protect biodiversity.

The Managing Director described further the New Strategic Plan, which is divided into **4 pillars**:

- Universal Service. No one should feel excluded or isolated. The modern ERT respects and utilizes its diversity. In this direction, regional information is being strengthened, as well as inclusion programs as well as actions for vulnerable social groups.

- Distinct Role. We place even greater emphasis on information, entertainment, education and culture. Linear channels maintain their distinct role, while at the same time we are proceeding with the launch of new live streaming channels and radio stations. We are progressing in parallel with the production of new series on ERTFLIX, the creation of content for websites and social networks, the further utilization of the ERT Archive.

- Technological upgrade. We continue to invest in technological upgrades with interventions in ERTFLIX, Ertecho, but also in the 24-hour news channel, ERTNEWS, as well as in the news site ertnews.gr, in order to better serve the public digitally.

- Functional Transformation. Configuration of a modern operational structure. It includes the digital transformation, the continuous internal improvement (expanded staff training), the

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<sup>6</sup> <https://press.ert.gr/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/ERT.pdf>

upgrading of the building infrastructure (construction of a new building in Thessaloniki, energy upgrading of the central facility) with a view to reducing energy consumption, as well as the adoption of green initiatives.

Regarding the news sector, as stated during the presentation, the public broadcaster is regaining lost ground with its main characteristics being pluralism, credibility, and immediacy in delivering information without bias or extremes. A turn that is confirmed by the international news agency Reuters, which ranks ERT first among all television networks in the index of citizens' trust. (The President of ERT emphasized that in a survey, 63% of citizens mentioned ERT as the most trustworthy Greek channel).<sup>7</sup>

The perception of citizens that ERT has regained its neutrality and impartiality in the way it presents events, becomes stronger every year. Moreover, in the minds of viewers, receiving information from public television is identified with the certainty that what is being broadcasted is what is true.<sup>8</sup>

Moreover, the President of ERT unveiled several innovations<sup>9</sup>, including plans for a news bulletin tailored specifically for social media platforms. This bulletin will be broadcasted on Instagram and TikTok, among others. This initiative is a proactive step towards combating disinformation on the Internet and promoting credible information. Additionally, the return of the English-language news bulletin to the ERTnews channel was announced.

Furthermore, the president of ERT revealed that a formal partnership has been established with Aegean Airlines. Starting April 1st, ERTNEWS, along with three news bulletins, will be available on Aegean flights, complementing the existing Ertflix offerings. Moreover, one of these bulletins will be presented in sign language.

On **March 14, 2024**, a Scientific Symposium titled "**Public Television in the 21st Century: The Era of ERTFLIX**" was held, initiated by the Laboratory of Visual and Cultural Studies of the Department of Journalism and Mass Media of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki.<sup>10</sup>

We highlight some interesting points of it:

In his introductory speech, the president of the Department of Journalism and Media of the Aristotle University, Professor Christos Fragonikolopoulos, preferred to focus not on the digital platform of ERT, but on the 24-hour news channel of public television, mentioning that *"ERTNEWS was what the country needed, namely journalists with knowledge, who have read extensively and whose library is rich, shows that are not only ethnocentric, but also deal with what is happening beyond the narrow borders of the country, with empathy, trying to give voice to people we usually don't 'see.' The country is changing, we are in a transitional period, we do not know where the successive crises we are experiencing will lead. It is optimistic, therefore, that we finally have a channel entrusted to provide information,"*.

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7 <https://www.iefimerida.gr/media/i-ert-prohora-se-anabathmisi-kai-kainotomies>  
<https://press.ert.gr/grafeio-typou-ert/deltia-eidiseon-tis-ert-kai-sto-tiktok-meta-to-ertflix-i-dimosia-tileorasi-kainotomei-kai-stin-enimerosi/>

8 <https://www.thetoc.gr/koinwnia/article/pos-i-ert-egine-apo-aoutsainter-fabori---to-ertnews-to-ertecho-kai-to-ertflix/>

9 <https://www.iefimerida.gr/media/i-ert-prohora-se-anabathmisi-kai-kainotomies>

10 <https://press.ert.gr/grafeio-typou-ert/to-ertflix-anevase-psila-ton-pichi-kai-allaxe-ton-tropo-theasis-imerida-toy-apth-gia-ti-psifiaki-platforma-tis-ert/>

A journalist from ERT Giorgos Kouvaras emphasized that *"In the years I have been working at ERT, I want to publicly state that I have never experienced any interference in the journalistic work we do daily, and this is fortunate for every journalist,"* emphasizing that *"we have set as a goal to play the role that befits us as public broadcasting, keeping the public policy debate open. There are two types of political discussions, those that cause noise, characterized by partisan disposition to attract viewership, and substantive political discussions that we strive to have at ERT,"* he added.

Closing the conference, Professor Vassilis Vamvakas pointed out: *"ERT is becoming public television again, in the sense that it is a channel that can make people meet again. Close by is ERTFLIX, which has the know-how and the intention to rebuild a public medium, in the logic of agreement and understanding, which is currently missing in the Greek public sphere".*

*"The role of ERT is to return the remunerative fee of 3 euros to the citizens who pay it every month, creating a quality informative, entertaining, cultural, educational, children's and sports program"* emphasized Mr. Zoulas and added that ERTFLIX is the new ERT's vehicle to fulfill its mission in the most convenient and modern way, as it allows citizens to watch their favorite shows at the time they want and not necessarily when they are shown on TV.

#### **Conclusions (regarding questions 4 & 5)**

**It's clear that Greece has established comprehensive and effective frameworks to ensure the independent operation of public service media providers, incorporating principles drawing from national administrative or corporate laws and there are no risks for political interference in the editorial line or the governance of PSM. These principles are applied in the appointment of individuals holding the decision-making authority within PSM entities, and they are established at national level. Greece has taken measures to guarantee that our public service media maintain editorial and functional independence, delivering also a diverse range of content, services, information and opinions impartially, in line with their public service remit as defined at national level and consistent with Protocol No 29.**

**Funding procedures are transparent and based on predefined, objective criteria. These procedures guarantee that public service media outlets have sufficient, sustainable, and predictable financial resources to fulfil their mandate and maintain editorial independence.**

**Additionally, monitoring and accountability mechanisms overseen by the Parliament are in place and accessible to the public (the process in the Parliamentary Committee is broadcasted live through "Vouli Channel").**

7. *Are there any developments concerning strategic litigation against public participation (SLAPP)? Which measures and actions do you take to prevent and address the SLAPP phenomenon? What actions are you taking to implement the different aspects of Anti-SLAPP Recommendation issued by the Commission? Among others, will you appoint an anti-SLAPP "focal point"? If yes, by when? When will you provide information to the Commission on its implementation of the Anti-SLAPP Recommendation in accordance with its Point 34, including data in listed in Point 31?*

The POESY - Panhellenic Association of Journalists' Union established a SLAPPs Observatory in Greece for monitoring corresponding incidents, an initiative launched within the Task Force.

Through the collection of data, the Observatory sets up a communication channel<sup>11</sup> with the persecuted and the monitoring of corresponding incidents, and is able to provide assistance and formulate positions, in cooperation with POESY's members, aiming to contribute to the overall treatment of the SLAPPs phenomenon. Journalists can report any SLAPPs on the platform and receive legal support from POESY. All personal data are being treated with confidentiality for research reasons. The POESY SLAPPs Observatory contributes to the main pillars of the Anti-SLAPPs Recommendation for training, awareness raising and establishment of support mechanisms.

Moreover, providing advice and consultancy to journalists, media professionals and media organizations on relevant issues as well as psychological support through preparation, assessment, management of trauma and post-traumatic stress and other related issues, are also among the actions of the International Training Centre.

Furthermore, the Task Force can be considered as an additional effective channel for supporting journalists and raising awareness when it comes to SLAPPs. Within the framework of the Task Force meetings, the representative of the Ministry of Justice gave a detailed presentation of the EU anti-SLAPP Directive and accompanying Recommendation, so that the members, and especially those representing Media Professionals' Federations and Unions are fully informed.

In that context, as the Ministry of Justice called upon all Federations and Unions to submit their proposals in view of the transposition of the Anti-SLAPPs Directive into Greek legislation, it was decided to form a special subgroup upon this matter, with the participation of the Ministry of Justice and the Panhellenic Association of Journalists' Union.

**Additional information concerning this question will be submitted by the Ministry of Justice, which will appoint the anti-SLAPP "focal point".**

## ANNEX I

Positive mentions of the Task Force:

### **- Joint mission by EU delegates to Athens to report on media freedom state of play in Greece.**

On September 2023, a joint mission with members from the EU bodies: the Media Freedom Rapid Response (MFRR), ARTICLE 19 Europe, the European Centre for Press and Media Freedom (ECPMF), the European Federation of Journalists (EFJ), Free Press Unlimited (FPU), the International Press Institute (IPI) and the Osservatorio Balcani e Caucaso Transeuropa (OBCT), joined by the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) and Reporters Without Borders (RSF), visited Greece to analyze and examine the possible opportunities for improvement of the state of play of media freedom in the country. In the same context, partners from journalist's unions in Europe (FPU, CPJ, EBU) joined the Task Force discussions on March 2024 to maintain an open channel for communication and empower public discourse on the protection of journalists.

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<sup>11</sup> <https://www.poesy.gr/forma-ypovolis-slapp/>  
<https://www.poesy.gr/category/paratiritirio-slapps/nomothesia/>

- **UN International Day to End Impunity of Crimes against Journalists (IDEI).** Every year since 2013, the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists (IDEI) has been observed on November 2nd to pay tribute to journalists killed in the line of duty, and to raise awareness of the dangers of impunity for crimes committed against journalists.

- **Extended Implementation Guide to selected topics under Prevention and Promotion Pillars of the Guidelines of Recommendation CM/Rec (2016)4 on the Protection of journalism and safety of journalists and other media actors, by the Council of Europe on “How to protect journalists and other media actors?”.**

- **Reference to the new OSCE Toolbox ‘Safety of Journalists’ / OSCE conference «Shaping the Future: Media Freedom and Security in a Changing World».**

- **Reference of Greece’s action at the updated list of initiatives for the safety of journalists in Europe by the journalist association Article 19.**

- **OSCE – ODIHR, Greece, Early Parliamentary Elections, 21 May 2023, Election Assessment Mission Final Report.**

- **Presentation of The Task Force to UNESCO.** The Task Force, and its output initiatives, the International Training Centre for the Safety of Journalists and Media Professionals (ICSJ) and the Academic course on Safety of Journalists and other Media Professionals were presented on March 14th, 2024 to UNESCO, Assistant Director--General for Communication and Information, Dr. Tawfik Jelassi, as widely acclaimed among Greece’s positive policy actions towards ensuring journalist’s and media professional’s safety.