

2026 Rule of Law Report - targeted stakeholder consultation

Fields marked with * are mandatory.

Introduction

The annual Rule of Law Report lies at the centre of the Annual Rule of Law Cycle, which acts as a preventive tool, deepening multilateral dialogue and joint awareness of rule of law issues. So far, six editions of the Rule of Law Report have been published since 2020.

As every year, the Commission would like to invite the stakeholders to provide contributions to the 2026 Rule of Law Report. On the basis of these contributions and on-going developments, further targeted questions may be shared at a later stage of preparation of the 2026 Rule of Law Report, in particular in the context of country visits, or bilateral contacts.

The Commission invites stakeholders to provide contributions which include:

**(1) developments and measures taken in relation to the recommendations in the 2025 report,
(2) developments related to topics covered in the 2025 country chapters, as well as any other new developments related to the rule of law.**

The input should consist of a short summary, if possible in English, covering the areas referred to below. Legislation or other documents may be referenced with a link. Contributions should focus on significant developments since the last Rule of Law Report both as regards the legal framework and its implementation in practice.

This questionnaire also integrates the separate questionnaire on the single market from last year. In addition to these specific questions, respondents to the questionnaire are invited to consider the Single Market dimension, including any relevant cross-border issues, in all their answers.

Where questions of particular relevance under the single market dimension, this is indicated before the relevant question.

[1] Unless the information was already submitted in the input for the previous Rule of Law Reports.

Type of information to be included:

Under each of the four pillars, the replies should include references to the following types of information:

A) Legislative developments

- Newly adopted legislation
- legislative drafts currently discussed in Parliament
- legislative plans envisaged by the Government

B) Policy developments

- Implementation and enforcement of legislation
- evaluations, impact assessment, surveys
- white papers/strategies/actions plans/consultation processes
- follow-up to reports/recommendations of Council of Europe bodies or other international organisations
- important administrative measures
- generalised practices

C) Developments related to the judiciary / independent authorities

- important case law by national courts
- important decision/opinions from independent bodies/authorities
- state of play on terms, nominations and expired mandates for high-level positions (e.g. Supreme Court, Constitutional Court, Council for the Judiciary, Prosecutor General, heads of independent authorities included in the scope of the request for input[2])

D) Any other relevant developments

- National authorities are free to add any further information, which they deem relevant; however, this should be short and to the point.

Where relevant, please also indicate whether the developments reported are linked to the implementation of reforms and investments under the national Recovery Resilience Plan. To simplify your answers to the questionnaire, if there are no developments, it is sufficient to indicate this and the information covered in the contributions for the previous Rule of Law Reports does not need not be repeated.

[2] Such as: media regulatory authorities and bodies, national human rights institutions, equality bodies, ombudsman institutions, supreme audit institutions and, where they exist, transparency authorities.

* I am giving my contribution as

- ☐ Academic/research institution
- ☐ Business association
- ☐ Civil society organisation/NGO
- ☐ International organisation
- ☐ Judicial association or network
- ☐ Media organisation or association
- ☐ Public authority or network of public authorities
- ☒ Other

If "Other", please specify

Bar Association (legal person governed by public law)

* Organisation name

250 character(s) maximum

Estonian Bar Association

Main Areas of Work

- ☒ Justice System
- ☐ Anti-corruption
- ☐ Media Pluralism and Freedom
- ☐ Checks and Balances
- ☐ Other

Please insert an URL towards your organisation's main online presence or describe your organisation briefly:

500 character(s) maximum

www.advokatuur.ee; Estonian Bar Association is a self-governing professional association acting on local government administration principles established on 14 June 1919 for the organization of the provision of legal service in private and public interest and defending of the professional rights of the attorneys.

Transparency register number

Check if your organisation is in the transparency register. It's a voluntary database for organisations seeking to influence EU decision-making

***Country of origin**

Please indicate the country of origin of your organisation

- ☐ Austria
- ☐ Belgium
- ☐ Bulgaria
- ☐ Croatia
- ☐ Cyprus
- ☐ Czechia
- ☐ Denmark
- ☒ Estonia
- ☐ Finland
- ☐ France
- ☐ Germany
- ☐ Greece
- ☐ Hungary
- ☐ Ireland
- ☐ Italy
- ☐ Latvia
- ☐ Lithuania
- ☐ Luxembourg
- ☐ Malta
- ☐ Netherlands
- ☐ Poland
- ☐ Portugal
- ☐ Romania
- ☐ Slovak Republic
- ☐ Slovenia
- ☐ Spain
- ☐ Sweden

☐ Other - please specify

First name

Surname

Email Address of the organisation

advokatuur@advokatuur.ee

* Publication of your contribution and privacy settings

You can choose whether you wish for your contribution to be published and whether you wish your details to be made public or to remain anonymous.

- ☐ Anonymous - Only your type of respondent, country of origin and contribution will be published. Organisation name, URL, transparency register number, first name and surname given above will not be published. **To maintain anonymity, please refrain from mentioning the name of your organisation and any details from which your organisation can be identified in the rest of your contribution as we will not be able to guarantee anonymisation of these elements.**
- ☒ Public - Your personal details (name, organisation name, transparency register number, country of origin will be published with your contribution).
- ☐ No publication - Your contribution will not be published. Elements of your contribution may be referred to anonymously in documents produced by the Commission based on this consultation.

☒ I agree with the personal data protection provisions.

[Specific privacy statement targeted stakeholder consultation 2026 rule of law report.pdf](#)

Questions on horizontal developments

In this section, you are invited to provide information on general horizontal developments or trends, both positive and negative, covering all or several Member States. In particular, you could mention issues that are common to several Member States, as well as best practices identified in one Member State that could be replicated. Moreover, you could refer to your activities in the area of the four pillars and sub-topics (an

overview of all sub-topics can be found below), and, if you represent a Network of national organisations, to the support you might have provided to one of your national members.

Overview topics for contribution

[List of topics for contribution.docx](#)

Please provide any relevant information on horizontal developments here

5000 character(s) maximum

Questions for contribution

Under each pillar, you are invited to provide information on measures taken to implement the recommendations addressed to the Member State in the 2025 Rule of Law report, as well as developments with regard to the points raised in the respective country chapter of the 2025 Rule of Law Report and any other significant developments since January 2025 and up to the date of submission[3]. Please always include a link to and reference relevant legislation/documents (in the national language and/or where available, in English). **Significant developments** can include challenges, positive developments and best practices, covering both legislative developments or implementation and practices.

Information provided in reply to the first question under each pillar, related to the follow-up to the recommendations, does not need to be repeated in subsequent parts of the questionnaire, but can be cross-referenced in the subsequent questions, where relevant. All other questions are not limited to the recommendations, but as in previous years, cover the entire scope of the Report.

[3] Unless already covered in the input for the previous Rule of Law Reports.

Member State/enlargement country covered in contribution [only one choice possible]

If you wish to submit information concerning several Member States/enlargement countries, please fill in the questionnaire separately for each country. There is no limit to the number of contributions submitted by a single participant.

- ☐ Albania
- ☐ Austria
- ☐ Belgium
- ☐ Bulgaria
- ☐ Croatia
- ☐ Cyprus

- ☐ Czechia
- ☐ Denmark
- ☒ Estonia
- ☐ Finland
- ☐ France
- ☐ Germany
- ☐ Greece
- ☐ Hungary
- ☐ Ireland
- ☐ Italy
- ☐ Latvia
- ☐ Lithuania
- ☐ Luxembourg
- ☐ Malta
- ☐ Montenegro
- ☐ Netherlands
- ☐ North Macedonia
- ☐ Poland
- ☐ Portugal
- ☐ Romania
- ☐ Serbia
- ☐ Slovakia
- ☐ Slovenia
- ☐ Spain
- ☐ Sweden

I. Justice System

Please provide information on measures taken to follow-up on the recommendations received in the 2025 Report regarding the justice system (if applicable)

5000 character(s) maximum

No specific recommendations were addressed to the Bar or to attorneys in the 2025 Report; however, one recommendation of broader relevance to the work of attorney's merits attention.

Estonia received a recommendation to continue efforts to reform the Council for the Administration of Courts, considering European standards on councils for the judiciary.

In December 2024, the Ministry of Justice and Digital Affairs introduced a draft bill aimed at reforming the court administration model for first- and second-instance courts. The draft bill was submitted to Parliament in April 2025; however, the legislative process has since been suspended due to concerns regarding its constitutionality and opposition from the judiciary to certain proposed solutions. The Ministry of Justice and Digital Affairs introduced significant amendments to the draft bill in November 2025, and the bill received very strong criticism from the judiciary as well as other stakeholders. It was even said that the reform divided the judiciary and created immense tension within the system (https://www.riigikohus.ee/sites/default/files/elfinder/dokumendid/Taiskogu/RKE_taiskogu_ettekanne_2025.pdf).

On the 15th of January 2026, the Ministry has introduced a new, quite significantly modified version of the draft bill, which is currently in the coordination round.

A. Independence

Appointment and selection of judges, prosecutors and court presidents (incl. judicial review)

(The reference to 'judges' concerns judges at all level and types of courts as well as judges at constitutional courts)

5000 character(s) maximum

Irremovability of judges, including transfers, (incl. as part of judicial map reform), dismissal and retirement regime of judges, court presidents and prosecutors (incl. judicial review)

5000 character(s) maximum

Promotion of judges and prosecutors (incl. judicial review)

5000 character(s) maximum

Allocation of cases in courts

5000 character(s) maximum

Independence (including composition and nomination and dismissal of its members), and powers of the body tasked with safeguarding the independence of the judiciary (e.g. Council for the Judiciary)

5000 character(s) maximum

No such amendments have been made; at present, they exist only at the level of the above-mentioned draft bill (see question 1).

Accountability of judges and prosecutors, including disciplinary regime and bodies and ethical rules, judicial immunity and criminal/civil (where applicable) liability of judges (incl. judicial review)

5000 character(s) maximum

Independence/autonomy of the prosecution service

5000 character(s) maximum

In late 2025, Estonian media coverage and public discourse focused on the independence of the Prosecutor's Office, its mandate, and the scope of prosecutorial discretion.

Former State Prosecutor has argued that the Estonian Prosecutor's Office should be dissolved, citing a lack of public trust, excessive discretion, and limited accountability. He has criticised the handling of politically sensitive cases and contends that the current structure creates unpredictability and instils fear. He proposes alternative models in which prosecutorial functions would be subject to more direct accountability, effectively calling for major structural reform (<https://news.err.ee/1609874040/margus-kurm-the-prosecutor-s-office-should-be-dissolved>).

Estonia's Prosecutor General Astrid Asi strongly disagreed with the claim that the Prosecutor's Office should be dissolved, describing it as a provocative statement. She argues that the office fulfils its mandate by bringing thousands of cases to court each year and by protecting the interests of victims and rejects the idea that it instils fear in society. Asi acknowledges certain challenges, including difficulties in recruiting a diverse range of legal professionals, and supports reforms aimed at improving staffing and quality oversight. She also addressed ongoing investigations, including allegations of illegal party donations related to the Isamaa party, and drew comparisons with other cases, emphasising the Prosecutor's Office's legal obligations and the complexity of legal interpretation in prosecutorial decision-making (<https://www.err.ee/1609883296/asi-ma-pole-kindlasti-nous-vaitega-et-prokuratuur-tuleks-laiali-saata>).

Independence of the Bar (chamber/association of lawyers) and of lawyers

5000 character(s) maximum

As of 2025, no cases have been reported that directly threaten the independence of the Bar or attorneys; the Bar's independence remains protected under Estonian law.

On 15 October 2025, the Supreme Court published a significant ruling clarifying how authorities must act when

police intercept communications between a lawyer and a client during telephone surveillance.

The case arose from a complaint filed by three attorneys whose phone calls with a client were recorded during surveillance of the client. The attorneys learned of the interception only by chance and argued that both the interception and the failure to notify them violated their right to privacy and the protection of legal professional privilege.

All three court instances found the complaint well founded, holding that the attorneys should have been directly notified of the interception.

The Supreme Court held that protection of fundamental rights can be ensured through interpretation of existing legislation, while emphasising that legal provisions governing the protection of client confidentiality in surveillance activities should be more detailed.

The Court noted that, according to ECtHR case law, private life encompasses professional activities, and that any interception of attorney-client communication constitutes a significant interference with fundamental rights—regardless of the specific content, as even the mere fact of contacting an attorney is confidential.

Because communication between an attorney and a client is subject to special protection by the state, the Supreme Court held that any interception of such communication always constitutes a significant interference with fundamental rights. The specific content of the calls is not decisive, as even the mere fact of contacting an attorney is confidential.

The Court emphasised that confidentiality protects not only the client but also the relationship of trust essential for comprehensive legal services and the fair administration of justice.

The ruling established that attorneys must be notified of surveillance if the intercepted call clearly involves legal services and the attorney's identity can be established with reasonable effort.

The Court also held that recordings containing privileged information must be retained until the attorney has had the opportunity to review and decide whether they should be preserved or destroyed.

The Bar Association has asked the Ministry of Justice and Digital Affairs about plans to amend the relevant regulations; however, no information has been provided.

Ruling available at: <https://www.riigikohus.ee/et/laheidid/?asjaNr=1-24-7248/21>

The Bar Association has observed a growing trend of systematic attacks against attorneys, particularly on social media and other online platforms, in which attorneys are increasingly equated with the actions or views of their clients. Such attacks are aimed at undermining both individual attorneys and the legal profession as a whole and, in certain cases, extend to the family members of attorneys.

The principle that an attorney must not be equated with a client constitutes a fundamental professional safeguard, essential for ensuring access to justice, safeguarding the independence of the legal profession, and upholding the proper functioning of the rule of law. The Bar Association has also expressed concern that, in certain instances, members of the profession have themselves contributed to amplifying such attacks.

The Bar Association emphasises the importance of collegiality and respectful professional conduct. Where necessary, it is taking steps to support affected attorneys, assess possible legal and regulatory responses, and encourage the reporting of such attacks, with a view to maintaining trust in the legal profession and in the administration of justice

The Bar has initiated a working group representing attorneys, judges, and prosecutors to address attacks against members of the judicial system in a coordinated way, to share best practices and support the members of the legal profession. The first meeting of the working group will be held in January 2026.

Significant developments capable of affecting the perception that the general public has of the independence of the judiciary

5000 character(s) maximum

In 2025, there were no significant events that would have substantially altered public perceptions of the independence of attorneys.

B. Quality of justice

(Under this topic, you are not required to give statistical information but should provide input on the type of information outlined in the introduction)

[single market relevance] Accessibility of courts (e.g. court/legal fees, legal aid, language)

5000 character(s) maximum

State legal aid fees for attorneys have not increased since February 2023, and the state has made no commitment to raise them, although the Bar regularly highlights the necessity of doing so.

In June 2025, Parliament initiated proceedings on the Civil Crisis and National Defence Act, which is intended to strengthen crisis preparedness across the national defence system. The draft legislation would impose an obligation on the Bar Association to ensure the provision of state legal aid by its members during crisis situations. This would require the Bar Association to develop appropriate mechanisms, provide training for attorneys, and undertake other related activities. The Bar Association has expressed concern regarding the increasing administrative burden and the financing of these measures, as no state funding is currently foreseen.

From 1st January 2026 the state fee doubled for submitting claims in public procurement cases being now the highest fees for administrative cases – 1280 and 2560 EUR depending on the value of the contract. The reasoning behind the increase of the fee was case overload in the review committee (and courts) and the doubling of fees was seen as an access to legal aid issue by professionals.

Resources of the judiciary (human/financial/material), remuneration/bonuses/rewards for judges and prosecutors, including observed changes (significant and targeted increase or decrease over the past year)

(Material resources refer e.g. to court buildings and other facilities. Financial resources include salaries of staff in courts and prosecution offices.)

5000 character(s) maximum

The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court has noted that judges in modern society face high, and in some respects even superhuman, expectations. Tensions arise both from excessive workloads and from criticism that is often perceived as unfair. Judicial burnout has become a matter of public discussion. It cannot be expected or considered as normal the constant performance of overtime work, which negatively affects judges, their personal lives and, ultimately, the quality of justice. Judges must also be afforded sufficient time for learning and professional development. At the same time, working time must be used in a meaningful and reasonable manner (<https://www.kohus.ee/ajakirjanikule/uudised/villu-kove-kohtute-too-vajab-pohimottelisi-muudatusi>).

There have been no positive changes regarding the freeze on the indexation of judges' salaries. The exemption from indexation of the salary rates of senior civil servants, including judges, remains in force until 31 March 2028, after which the previous method of calculating salaries is to be restored. According to information available to us, a group of judges has contested this exemption in administrative court, but there is no final judgment yet in this case. The government submitted a bill that would have restored indexation for judges' salaries only; however, the bill was withdrawn, and no further developments are known to us.

[single market relevance] Training of justice professionals (including judges, prosecutors, lawyers, court staff, clerks/trainees)

5000 character(s) maximum

In 2025, the Bar piloted short-format training sessions designed for the rapid exchange of information with members and the sharing of practical experience. These sessions, also referred to as information mornings, covered topics such as international sanctions, preparation for law firm inspections, and an overview of decisions of the Bar Association's Ethics Tribunal.

A positive development is the organisation of joint training sessions for judges, prosecutors, and attorneys, planned and financed jointly by the training departments of the courts, the Prosecutor's Office, and the Bar Association. The number of such joint trainings has increased significantly over the past few years. Joint training for legal professionals is particularly important in small countries like Estonia where the resources are very limited including the availability of highly qualified lecturers. Joint training also helps to align the various participants in the justice system within a common framework of knowledge and practice.

Digitalisation (e.g. use of digital technology, including electronic communication and AI tools, within the justice system and with court users, procedural rules, access to judgments online)

5000 character(s) maximum

Overall, the level of digitalisation in Estonia, including within the justice system, is very good, although room for improvement remains. Litigation is fully digitalised in civil and administrative cases.

The principal concern is the lag in the digitalisation of criminal proceedings compared with civil and administrative cases. In spring 2024, the police and the Prosecutor's Office launched a pilot project for the fully digitalised processing of selected criminal cases, with the aim of implementing digital case files in all criminal cases by 2025. To date, however, digital procedures have been applied only partially in criminal cases, and no further information regarding the project has been provided to the Bar.

As digitalisation also introduces information security challenges, attorneys and the Bar must continue to enhance information security standards. In 2025, the Bar introduced the Information Security Certificate, which confirms that a law firm has consciously implemented measures and invested in information security to ensure the protection of its data and information systems. By obtaining the certificate, a law firm demonstrates its commitment to data protection, thereby enhancing its reliability and reputation. The certificate is voluntary and open to all law firms, regardless of size and location.

According to the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, a new development plan for courts has been completed, which should ideally lead to faster and higher quality administration of justice for people. An ambitious task has been put together for the AI-based digitisation of courts, which would take the entire system to a whole new level (<https://www.kohus.ee/ajakirjanikule/uudised/villu-kove-kohtute-too-vajab-pohimottelisi-muudatusi>).

Use of assessment tools and standards (e.g. ICT systems, including AI-based systems, for case management, court statistics and their transparency, monitoring, evaluation, surveys among court users or legal professionals)

5000 character(s) maximum

The Bar is not aware of any new statistics tools besides the existing ones for all court instances, which are accessible <https://www.kohus.ee/en/node/48501>

Geographical distribution and number of courts/jurisdictions ("judicial map") and their specialisation, in particular specific courts or chambers within courts to deal with fraud and corruption cases.

5000 character(s) maximum

No specific changes have been made yet; changes may take place when the above-mentioned draft bill takes effect (see question 1).

[single market relevance] Specialisation (of judges/specific courts/chambers within courts) and training for the judiciary to deal with commercial cases, as well as alternative dispute resolution mechanisms and mediation as regards commercial cases.

5000 character(s) maximum

C. Efficiency of the justice system

(Under this topic, you are not required to give statistical information but should provide input on the type of information outlined in the introduction)

[single market relevance] Developments related to efforts to improve the efficiency of the justice system (e.g. as regards length of proceedings, to address backlogs)

5000 character(s) maximum

The length of court proceedings in Estonia has increased in recent years, and this trend continued in 2025, constituting a highly concerning issue for all parties to proceedings and a significant challenge for the Estonian judicial system. Interactive procedural statistics for county courts, administrative courts and courts of appeal are publicly available <https://app.fabric.microsoft.com/view?r=eyJrIjojOWVjNWMyY2ltMDgwMS00NzhiLWlzOTctMDM5NTFINjczNGE4IiwidCI6ImY2MzQyZDcwLWRhYzEtNDYxNC04ZTFhLTQ3YjkxYzE2YjhhZiIsImMiOiI9>.

These statistics show a rise in the average duration of resolved civil cases, while the most alarming development is observed in administrative cases before the courts of appeal, where the average length of proceedings increased markedly within one year, from 322 days to 399 days.

Any other developments related to the justice system - please specify

5000 character(s) maximum

II. Anti-Corruption Framework

Where previous specific reports, published in the framework of the review under the UN Convention against Corruption, of GRECO, and of the OECD address the issues below, please make a reference to the points you wish to bring to the Commission's attention in these documents, indicating any relevant updates, changes or measures introduced that have occurred since these documents were published.

Please provide information on measures taken to follow-up on the recommendations received in the 2025 Report regarding the anti-corruption framework (if applicable):

5000 character(s) maximum

A. The institutional framework capacity to fight against corruption (prevention and investigation / prosecution)

List any **changes** as regards relevant authorities (e.g. national agencies, bodies) in

charge of prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution of corruption and the resources allocated to each of these authorities (the human, financial, legal, and technical/specialised resources as relevant), including the cooperation among domestic and with foreign authorities. Indicate any relevant measures taken to effectively and timely cooperate with OLAF and EPPO

5000 character(s) maximum

Safeguards for the functional independence of the authorities tasked with the prevention and detection of corruption

5000 character(s) maximum

Information on the implementation of measures foreseen in the strategic anti-corruption framework (if applicable). If available, please provide relevant objectives and indicators

5000 character(s) maximum

B. Prevention

Measures to enhance integrity in the public sector in particular as regards high-level officials (including as regards incompatibility rules, revolving doors, codes of conduct, ethics)

5000 character(s) maximum

Measures to enhance general transparency of public decision-making (including rules on lobbying, asset and interest disclosure rules, gifts policy, transparency of political party, financing)

5000 character(s) maximum

Measures to prevent conflicts of interest in the public sector. Please specify the features and scope of their application (e.g. categories of officials concerned, types of checks and corrective measures depending on the category of officials concerned)

5000 character(s) maximum

--> For the three previous points, **please also provide information and figures on their application/enforcement if available to you**, such as number of detected breaches/irregularities of the various rules in place and the follow-up given (investigations, sanctions, etc.)

Measures to ensure whistleblower protection and encourage reporting of corruption, including their application (i.e. number of reports received, and the follow-up given)

5000 character(s) maximum

[single market relevance] Specific measures to enhance transparency, integrity and accountability in sectors with high risks of corruption, with a view to monitor and prevent corruption and conflict of interests, and where applicable measures to prevent and address corruption committed by organised crime groups.

- *Such high-risk sectors could include: public procurement, including construction, transport/infrastructure, defence, cohesion, agriculture, environment, healthcare, investor residence schemes, large-scale investments of national interest and the spending of EU funds, urban planning.*
- *In particular, measures to mitigate high risks of corruption in the area of public procurement, such as enhancing transparency and oversight (for example through digital technologies) and promoting fair competition and accountability in public procurement (e.g. targeted actions to address the high share of single bids) and measures to guarantee the effective and independent functioning of the public procurement review bodies.*

5000 character(s) maximum

[single market relevance] Measures for the prevention of corruption in relation to the issuing of official permits (e.g. related to environment, energy, service provision and various types of construction)

5000 character(s) maximum

C. Repression

The legal framework on the criminalisation and sanctions for corruption and related offences, including foreign bribery

5000 character(s) maximum

Official data on the number of investigations, prosecutions, final judgments and the application of sanctions for corruption offences (differentiated by offence if possible). Please indicate whether the cases: involve legal persons; are related to the implementation of EU or national funds; involve high level corruption. Please indicate which data is publicly available and how policy-making is informed by the data

5000 character(s) maximum

Potential obstacles identified in law or in practice to the investigation and prosecution of high-level and complex corruption cases (e.g. political immunity regulation, procedural rules, statute of limitations, cross-border cooperation, pardoning)

5000 character(s) maximum

Information on effectiveness of criminal and non-criminal measures and of sanctions (e.g. recovery measures and administrative sanctions) on both public and private offenders

5000 character(s) maximum

Any other developments related to the anti-corruption framework - please specify

5000 character(s) maximum

III. Media pluralism and media freedom

Please provide information on measures taken to follow-up on the recommendations received in the 2025 Report regarding media pluralism and media freedom (if applicable)

5000 character(s) maximum

A. Media authorities and bodies

(Cf. Article 30 of Directive 2018/1808)

Measures taken to ensure the independence, enforcement powers and adequacy of resources (financial, human and technical) of media regulatory authorities and bodies

5000 character(s) maximum

Conditions and procedures for the appointment and dismissal of the head / members of the collegiate body of media regulatory authorities and bodies

5000 character(s) maximum

Existence and functions of media councils or other self-regulatory bodies

5000 character(s) maximum

B. Safeguards against government or political interference and transparency and concentration of media ownership

[single market relevance] Measures taken to ensure the fair and transparent allocation of state advertising

5000 character(s) maximum

Safeguards against state / political interference, in particular:

- safeguards to ensure editorial independence of media (private and public)
- specific safeguards for the independence of heads of management and members of the governing boards of public service media (e.g. related to appointment, dismissal), safeguards for their financial and operational independence (e.g. related to reporting obligations and the allocation of resources) and safeguards for plurality of information and opinions
- **[single market relevance]** information on specific legal provisions and procedures applying to media service providers, including as regards granting /renewal/termination of licenses, company operation, capital entry requirements, concentration and corporate governance

5000 character(s) maximum

[single market relevance] Transparency of media ownership and public availability of media ownership information, including on direct, indirect and beneficial owners

5000 character(s) maximum

C. Framework for journalists' protection, transparency and access to documents

Rules and practices guaranteeing journalists' independence and safety, including as regards protection of journalistic sources and communications, referring also, if applicable, to follow-up given to alerts lodged with the Council of Europe's Platform to promote the protection of journalism and safety of journalists

5000 character(s) maximum

Law enforcement capacity, including during protests and demonstrations, to ensure journalists' safety and to investigate attacks on journalists

5000 character(s) maximum

Access to information and public documents by public at large and journalists (incl. transparency authorities where they exist, procedures, costs/fees, timeframes, administrative/judicial review of decisions, execution of decisions by public authorities, possible obstacles related to the classification of information)

5000 character(s) maximum

Lawsuits (incl. SLAPPs - strategic lawsuits against public participation) and convictions against journalists (incl. defamation cases) and measures taken to safeguard against manifestly unfounded and abusive lawsuits

5000 character(s) maximum

Any other developments related to media pluralism and freedom - please specify

5000 character(s) maximum

IV. Other institutional issues related to checks and balances

Please provide information on measures taken to follow-up on the recommendations received in the 2025 Report regarding the system of checks and balances (if applicable)

5000 character(s) maximum

A. The process for preparing, enacting and implementing laws

[single market relevance] Framework, policy and use of impact assessments and evidence based policy-making, stakeholders*/public consultations (including rules and practices on the transparent participation of civil society to policy development and decision-making processes), and transparency and quality of the legislative process in the preparatory, the parliamentary and implementation phase (including guidance on how to implement legislation)

** This includes also the consultation of social partners*

5000 character(s) maximum

[single market relevance] Rules and use of fast-track procedures and emergency procedures (for example, the percentage of decisions adopted through emergency /urgent procedure compared to the total number of adopted decisions)

5000 character(s) maximum

[single market relevance] Safeguards to ensure legal certainty, the stability of the legal framework and non-discrimination.

5000 character(s) maximum

Rules and application of states of emergency (or analogous regimes), including judicial review and parliamentary oversight

5000 character(s) maximum

Regime for constitutional review of laws

5000 character(s) maximum

B. Independent authorities

Independence, resources, capacity and powers (including effective access to relevant data) of national human rights institutions ('NHRIs'), of ombudsman institutions if different from NHRIs, of equality bodies if different from NHRIs and of supreme audit institutions

(Cf. the website of the European Court of Auditors: <https://www.eca.europa.eu/en/Pages/SupremeAuditInstitutions.aspx#>)

5000 character(s) maximum

Statistics/reports concerning the follow-up to recommendations by National Human Rights Institutions, ombudsman institutions, equality bodies and supreme audit institutions in the past year

5000 character(s) maximum

[single market relevance] Safeguards to ensure the effective independence of supervisory and regulatory authorities with a direct impact on economic operators such as national economic oversight, enforcement and competition authorities

C. Accessibility and judicial review of administrative decisions

[single market relevance] Transparency of administrative decisions and sanctions (incl. their publication and rules on collection of related data) and respect of the good administration principle (including the obligation of the administration to give reasons for decisions)

5000 character(s) maximum

[single market relevance] Judicial review of administrative decisions: short description of the general regime (in particular competent court, scope, suspensive effect, interim measures, and any applicable specific rules or derogations from the general regime of judicial review)

5000 character(s) maximum

[single market relevance] Safeguards (other than judicial review) regarding decisions or inaction of administrative authorities, including remedies (e.g. administrative review)

5000 character(s) maximum

[single market relevance] Rules and practices related to the application by all courts, including constitutional jurisdictions, of the preliminary ruling procedure (Art. 267 TFEU)

5000 character(s) maximum

[single market relevance] Implementation of final judgments by the public administration and State institutions and follow-up given to supranational judgments, including decisions from the European Court of Human Rights, as well as available remedies in case of non-implementation

5000 character(s) maximum

Oversight, including by courts, of the use of intrusive surveillance software by national authorities

5000 character(s) maximum

D. The enabling framework for civil society

Measures regarding the framework for civil society organisations and human rights defenders (e.g. legal framework and its application in practice incl. registration, transparency and dissolution rules)

5000 character(s) maximum

Rules and practices having an impact on the effective operation and safety of civil society organisations and human rights defenders. This includes measures to protect them from attacks – verbal, physical or on-line –, intimidation, legal threats incl. SLAPPs, negative narratives or smear campaigns, measures capable of affecting the public perception of civil society organisations, etc. It also includes measures to monitor threats or attacks and dedicated support services, as well as available remedies

5000 character(s) maximum

Organisation of financial support for civil society organisations and human rights defenders (e.g. framework to ensure access to funding, and for financial viability, taxation/incentive/donation systems, measures to ensure a fair distribution of funding)

5000 character(s) maximum

E. Initiatives to foster a rule of law culture

If there have been developments related to initiatives to foster a rule of law culture, please specify, which (e.g. debates in national parliaments on the rule of law, public information campaigns on rule of law issues, contributions from civil society, education initiatives, etc.)

5000 character(s) maximum

Any other developments related to the system of checks and balances - please specify

5000 character(s) maximum

Cross-pillar elements: cross-border rule of law issues related to the Single Market

If there are any significant challenges concerning the Single Market you have been facing in a cross-border context relating to any of the four pillars of the report, including for example issues with market access and the conditions for economic activities, that you would like to highlight, please do so here.

Given the cross-cutting nature of this question, it is included as a separate section in the questionnaire. Information collected under this question will however be integrated under the relevant existing pillar(s) of the Report.

5000 character(s) maximum

Supporting document upload

If you would like to submit any supporting document(s) to your contribution, please upload your file(s) here

Contact

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