

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

* Organisation name

250 character(s) maximum

Asociácia rádii Slovenska (ARS) - Association of Slovak Radio Stations

Main Areas of Work

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

If "Other", please specify

Media regulation and broadcasting market

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

500 character(s) maximum

<https://asociaciaradii.sk/>

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

office@asociaciiradii.sk

* 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

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

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

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

5000 character(s) maximum

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

5000 character(s) maximum

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

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

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

5000 character(s) maximum

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

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

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

[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

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

In this regard, Act. no. 264/2022 Coll. Media Services Act as amended ("Media Services Act"), provides measures to ensure the independence of the main media regulatory authority - the Council for Media Services (in Slovak Rada pre mediálne služby). ("the regulator")

The Media Services Act defines the regulator as a state budgetary organisation and a nationwide state

administration authority competent for areas such as broadcasting, retransmission, on-demand audiovisual media services and video-sharing platforms. The regulator is organisationally composed of the Council and its Office (secretariat), and the Media Service Act expressly requires the regulator to perform its tasks independently and transparently, with objectives including media pluralism, cultural and linguistic diversity, consumer protection and non-discrimination.

Independence is supported through governance safeguards: members are appointed for fixed terms through a process that includes public hearings, and the Media Services Act contains strict incompatibility and conflict-of-interest rules (including bans on holding certain public offices, bans on political party activity, and prohibitions on links to regulated market players, extending also to close persons). The Chair's position is designed as a full-time public function (with only limited exceptions). Transparency safeguards include public meetings and generally public voting, plus mandatory publication of minutes (including voting records) and final decisions (subject to protected information).

The regulator's enforcement powers include decision-making on authorisations, registrations and licences, and a procedural structure where the Council decides (notably) in panels/senates in first-instance administrative proceedings on compliance and sanctions. The framework also covers enforcement relating to illegal content on platforms and associated objections. Sanctioning powers are designed to be effective and dissuasive, ranging from monetary fines for on-demand audiovisual service providers to turnover-based fines for certain platforms (including up to 4% of total turnover) and, for relevant intermediary services, fines aligned with DSA-type obligations (up to 6% of annual worldwide turnover).

Adequacy of resources is addressed through a dedicated budgetary framework and operational structure. As a budgetary organisation, the regulator operates with its own budget; its expenditures are financed from the state budget, and its revenues are state-budget revenues. The regulator submits its budget proposal to the Ministry of Finance, while Parliament approves the budget after review by the competent committee; internally, the Council approves the draft budget and the financial statements. Human and technical capacity is ensured through the regulator's Office, which provides organisational, HR, administrative and technical support and carries out oversight tasks under Council authorisation; the Director manages staff relations. Accountability mechanisms further support resource adequacy: the regulator must publish an annual report including financial statements and a review of its administrative activity, including an overview of sanctions imposed.

Current consolidated texts of the Acts:

- Act No. 264/2022 Coll. (Media Services Act): <https://www.slov-lex.sk/ezbierky/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/2022/264/>

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

In Slovakia, the collegiate body of the media regulator has nine members. Regulator members are elected and dismissed by the National Council of the Slovak Republic (Parliament). Appointment takes place after a public hearing organised by the competent parliamentary committee and broadcast live; candidates may be nominated by specified professional and civil-society organisations (including media/culture/science/education/sport bodies, registered churches, and disability organisations).

Key eligibility safeguards include full legal capacity, adulthood, integrity (no final conviction for an intentional offence), and strict impartiality/conflict-of-interest rules (no political party roles/activities and no ownership or management links to regulated media/service providers). The term is six years, renewable once.

Membership ends by expiry, resignation, dismissal, or ex lege termination. Parliament must dismiss a member (on a reasoned proposal of the competent committee) if the member breaches conflict-of-interest prohibitions or acts contrary to the regulator's statute; it may dismiss a member for non-performance of duties for more than six consecutive months. The dismissal proposal must be justified, published, and notified to the member at least seven days in advance. Office also ends automatically if an incompatible public function is taken up, the member is finally convicted of certain crimes, or legal capacity is restricted.

The Chair (head of the collegiate body) is elected by the Council from among its members by secret ballot; loss of Council membership necessarily ends the Chair's mandate.

However, in 2025 members of parliament proposed a draft of the amendment of the Media Services Act with significant governance change: the regulator would be renamed to the "National Media Office" and the regulator's organs would be reshaped into (i) a Chair, (ii) a Vice-Chair, and (iii) a Council, with the Chair becoming the statutory head of the regulator. Crucially, the draft shifts the "head" appointment model: the Chair would be elected and dismissed directly by Parliament, again after a public hearing with nominations coming from the same categories of stakeholders. The Chair's term would be 6 years (max. two terms), with continuity until a successor is elected. The draft also codifies explicit grounds and procedure for dismissing the Chair: Parliament must dismiss the Chair if the Chair breaches specified restrictions (including conflict-of-interest bans) or acts contrary to the regulator's statute; Parliament may dismiss for non-performance exceeding six months; and the motion must be reasoned, published, and notified at least 7 days in advance.

For the members of the (new) Council, the draft proposes increasing the Council to 11 members, still elected and dismissed by Parliament after a public hearing.

Eligibility/incompatibility conditions for Council members are tied to the same baseline requirements used for the Chair (integrity and restrictions). Importantly, the draft provides that termination/dismissal of Council membership would follow the same framework "mutatis mutandis" as the Chair's dismissal/termination rules, effectively aligning procedures and safeguards. The draft states an intended effective date of 1 April 2026 and includes a transition requiring Parliament to elect the new Chair and complete the Council composition within set deadlines.

Link to the draft amendment (document preview): <https://www.nrsr.sk/web/Dynamic/DocumentPreview.aspx?DocID=577576>

The draft amendment introduces governance risks mainly by concentrating key decision-making and organisational powers in a single statutory head (the Chair), which may weaken internal collegiate checks and balances and make regulatory outcomes more dependent on one person. Because the Chair would be elected and dismissed directly by Parliament, the model may increase the perceived (and potentially actual) exposure of the regulator to political influence, compared to an internally elected chair of a collegiate body. The Council's role would be more clearly positioned as an appellate/second-instance body, which could further reduce collective oversight over first-instance regulatory enforcement. Finally, the transition timetable and the reallocation of pending proceedings to the new structure may create short-term continuity and procedural risks (e.g., competence disputes or litigation over the change in decision-maker).

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

5000 character(s) maximum

The media landscape in the Slovak Republic is governed by a dual system consisting of statutory regulation for audiovisual media and a robust framework of voluntary self-regulation for print, digital media, and advertising.

Statutory Regulation: The Council for Media Services

The primary regulatory body in Slovakia is the Council, which serves as the national regulatory authority for broadcasting, retransmission, and on-demand audiovisual media services. Its core functions include:

- Licensing and Registration: Granting licenses for television and radio broadcasting and maintaining the register of media service providers.
- Content Supervision: Monitoring compliance with legal requirements concerning the protection of minors, human dignity, and the objectivity and impartiality of news programs.
- Platform Regulation: Under the new legislative framework, the Council also oversees video-sharing platforms and acts as the Digital Services Coordinator in the context of the EU Digital Services Act (DSA).

Self-Regulation in Print media, digital media and broadcasting

For the press and digital news outlets, self-regulation is managed by the Press-Digital Council of the Slovak Republic (in Slovak Tlačovo-digitálna rada SR – TR SR), which is the executive arm of the Association for the Protection of Journalistic Ethics (AOPZE) (in Slovak Asociácia na ochranu novinárskej etiky (AONE)). The TR SR's primary function is to ensure compliance with the Journalist Code of Ethics (https://www.aonesr.sk/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/Etický_kodex.pdf). It acts as an independent tribunal that adjudicates complaints from the public regarding potential ethical breaches in news coverage. While it does not impose financial penalties, its moral authority is significant; outlets found in breach of the Code of Journalistic Ethics are generally expected to publish the Print-Digital Council's critical findings, thereby providing a form of public accountability.

In 2025, TRSR was registered as a self-regulatory body also in relation to the protection of human dignity, humanity, and minors (Optional Protocol to the Journalist Code of Ethics on the Protection of Human Dignity, Humanity and Minors) and in relation to ensuring the diversity of information, plurality of opinions, objectivity, and impartiality (Second Optional Protocol to the Journalist Code of Ethics on Public Access to Information, Diversity of Information, Plurality of Opinions, Objectivity, and Impartiality).

The regulator is now obliged to forward to the TR SR for investigation and resolution all complaints it receives concerning the above-mentioned areas.

Self-Regulation in Advertising

The Advertising Standards Council (Rada pre reklamu – RPR) is the self-regulatory body responsible for the ethical standards of marketing communications. The RPR oversees the Code of Advertising Practice (<https://rpr.sk/sk/eticky-kodex/>), ensuring that advertisements across all media (including social media and billboards) are truthful, decent, and honest. Its Arbitration Commission issues binding opinions on whether a specific advertisement violates ethical standards, often leading to the withdrawal or modification of non-compliant campaigns.

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

In response to the European Media Freedom Act (EMFA), Slovakia amended the Media Services Act (Act No. 264/2022 Coll.) and the Publications Act (Act No. 265/2022 Coll.) to make the allocation of state advertising more transparent, objective and non-discriminatory.

Under Sec. 103a Media Services Act, broadcasters/AVMS providers must publish annually (by 31 January) the total amount of state advertising received and certain foreign public-sector advertising/propaganda income, and report the same to the media regulator, which publishes it in its evidence; at the same time, public authorities

(state advertisers) must notify the regulator and must pre-publish the intent to place state ads with transparent selection criteria, apply an open and non-discriminatory procedure, keep public access to this information for at least 3 years, and spread spending across a wide range of media providers.

Under Sec. 11a Publications Act, publishers/news portals have parallel duties to publish and report (by 31 January) the total state advertising funds received and certain foreign public-sector advertising income, with an exemption for scientific periodicals.

Current consolidated texts of the Acts:

- Act No. 264/2022 Coll. (Media Services Act): <https://www.slov-lex.sk/ezbierky/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/2022/264/>

- Act No. 265/2022 Coll. (Publications Act): <https://www.slov-lex.sk/ezbierky/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/2022/265/>

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

The Media Services Act (No. 264/2022 Coll.) sets a baseline safeguard for editorial independence by requiring that a content service be provided “freely and independently” and that interference with its content is allowed only on the basis of law and within its limits (Media Services Act, Sec. 16(1)). It also contains protection of journalistic sources and confidentiality of communications (Media Services Act, Sec. 16–17). In addition, transparency rules on state advertising reduce scope for political influence via selective spending (Media Services Act Sec. 103a; Publications Act Sec. 11a). The protection of sources is also granted under Sec. 6 of Publications Act.

Under the Act No. 157/2024 Coll. Act on Slovak Television and Radio, the Slovak Television and Radio Council has 9 members: 4 are appointed/dismissed by the Minister of Culture (via a selection procedure) and 5 are elected/dismissed by Parliament from candidates proposed through the parliamentary committee mechanism (Sec. 11); members serve 6-year terms (Sec. 13) and dismissal is tied to defined grounds (e.g., incompatibilities/absence), with judicial review available (Sec. 14(2), (7)). The Director General is elected by the Council after a public hearing (Sec. 19) for a 6-year term and can be dismissed only on enumerated grounds, also with judicial review (Sec. 20(3)–(5)). Financial/operational independence is supported by a defined financing model including a “claimable contribution” from the state budget and rules that funds may be used only for statutory activities (Sec. 26–27), plus annual reporting, audit, and publication duties (Sec. 25(13)–(15)).

From a single-market / provider-regulation angle, the Media Services Act sets out authorisation/licensing and registration frameworks (including rules on granting, changing, and termination/withdrawal of broadcasting licences), plus enforcement powers. In parallel, the Publications Act imposes operational transparency requirements on publishers/news portals (e.g., registration/evidence mechanisms), and it requires that advertising be clearly distinguishable from editorial content.

Plurality risks are addressed through (i) media concentration rules (Media Services Act Sec. 104), (ii) regulator reporting/analysis duties on plurality/ownership transparency (Media Services Act Sec. 124(1)(i)), and (iii) ownership transparency requirements: broadcasters and on-demand AVMS providers must disclose ownership /beneficial ownership information and relevant persons, including through linkage to the Register of Public Sector Partners (RPVS) where applicable. For press/news portals, similar transparency is ensured via the Publications Act register framework and RPVS linkage (Publications Act Sec. 12 and Sec. 11a). Provider entry /operation is structured via authorisations/registrations/licences administered by the media regulator (with rules on granting/changes/termination set in the relevant parts of the Media Services Act), and the regulator maintains an evidence/database as part of a register (Media Services Act Sec. 125).

Current consolidated texts of the Acts:

- Act No. 264/2022 Coll. (Media Services Act): <https://www.slov-lex.sk/ezbierky/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/2022/264/>
- Act No. 265/2022 Coll. (Publications Act): <https://www.slov-lex.sk/ezbierky/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/2022/265/>
- Act No. 157/2024 Coll. (Act on Slovak Television and Radio): <https://www.slov-lex.sk/ezbierky/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/2024/157/>

[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

In Slovakia, media ownership transparency is ensured mainly through (i) mandatory public disclosures by media service providers and (ii) public registers maintained by authorities. Under the Sec. 20 (1)(d) of the Media Services Act, broadcasters must ensure an easy, direct and permanent public access to information including their ownership structure and beneficial owner ("ultimate beneficial owner"), and under Sec. 28 (1)(d) the same applies to providers of audiovisual media services on demand (AVMS-on-demand).

In parallel, under Sec. 125 of the Media Services Act the regulator keeps an evidence/database that forms part of a register, which includes entries for broadcasters and AVMS-on-demand providers including the data required to be publicly available under those provisions.

For print/online news, the Publications Act requires ownership-related information to be filed for registration (including disclosure of shareholders/partners meeting a 25% threshold) under Sec. 3(7)(c) of the Publications Act, and the public register published by the Ministry of Culture explicitly publishes RPVS-based information on the beneficial owner where applicable.

Moreover the broadcasters, AVMS-on-demand providers, publishers and news portal operators must also be registered in the Register of Public Sector Partners (RPVS) where the information about ownership structure and beneficial owner is publicly available. The registration does not apply to publishers or news portal providers of scientific publications and community periodicals.

Current consolidated texts of the Acts:

- Act No. 264/2022 Coll. (Media Services Act): <https://www.slov-lex.sk/ezbierky/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/2022>

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

The Media Service Act provides source and communications protection: persons involved in obtaining /processing information from a confidential source must keep the source secret and may refuse disclosure to courts and public authorities, with explicit protection extending to location data, electronic communications (and their content), and remote/shared data storage to prevent source identification (Media Services Act, Sec. 17(1), (4)–(5)).

In parallel, the Publications Act (No. 265/2022 Coll.) contains an equivalent journalistic source protection regime for publishers of periodicals, operators of news web portals and press agencies, imposing confidentiality duties and related safeguards when a source's identity is to remain concealed (Publications Act, Sec. 6(1)–(3)).

Current consolidated texts of the Acts:

- Act No. 264/2022 Coll. (Media Services Act): <https://www.slov-lex.sk/ezbierky/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/2022/264/>

- Act No. 265/2022 Coll. (Publications Act): <https://www.slov-lex.sk/ezbierky/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/2022/265/>

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

5000 character(s) maximum

No additional measures were adopted.

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

In Slovakia, access to public information is governed mainly by the Freedom of Information Act (Act No. 211 /2000 Coll.). Anyone (including journalists) may file a request in writing, orally, by email, etc., and the request must identify the addressee authority, the applicant and the requested information (Sec. 14(1)–(3)); misdirected requests must be forwarded within 5 days (Sec. 15(1)). Authorities must respond without undue delay, at the latest within 12 working days (extendable by up to 8 working days for “serious reasons”) (Sec. 17(1)–(3)), and refusals are subject to an internal appeal within 15 days, decided by the superior body within 15 days (Sec. 19

(1)–(3)). As a rule, information is provided free of charge, with only material costs (copies/media/postage) recoverable (Sec.21(1)).

In 2024, Parliament adopted an amendment (Act No. 401/2024 Coll.) that introduced the possibility to charge “purposefully incurred costs” for “exceptionally extensive” searches and created related procedural steps, but the Constitutional Court annulled these provisions (PL. ÚS 6/2025-65, promulgated as No. 350/2025 Coll.) as unconstitutional. (The promulgated ruling is here: https://static.slov-lex.sk/pdf/SK/ZZ/2025/350/ZZ_2025_350.pdf)

Current consolidated text of the Acts:

-Act No. 211/2000 Coll. Freedom of Information Act: <https://www.slov-lex.sk/ezbierky/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/2000/211/>

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

The Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic has prepared a draft amendment to the Civil Dispute Code (Civilný sporový poriadok) and a related amendment to the Act on Private International Law and Procedure, with the aim of transposing Directive (EU) 2024/1069 (Anti-SLAPP) and limiting the abuse of court proceedings to intimidate critics (journalists, activists, NGOs).

The key proposed changes include: introducing a mechanism enabling courts, already at the outset of proceedings, to quickly identify and expedite the dismissal or termination of manifestly unfounded/abusive claims; shifting the burden of proof (the claimant must demonstrate good faith and a legitimate aim); allowing the court to require the claimant to provide security/advance payment for costs; and introducing sanctions for abuse (full reimbursement of costs, a fine, and potentially an obligation to publish the judgment).

The draft was in inter-ministerial consultation until 5 December 2025, and the Ministry of Justice proposed an effective date of 1 May 2026.

Current consolidated texts of the Civil Dispute Code (Act No. 160/2015 Coll.): https://www.slov-lex.sk/ezbierky/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/2015/160/vyhlasene_znenie

Draft legislative process (LP/2025/667): <https://www.slov-lex.sk/elegislativa/legislativne-procesy/SK/LP/2025/667>

On the other hand an increased incidence of verbal attacks, intimidation and rude or degrading behaviour towards journalists and non-governmental organisations can be observed, particularly during public appearances (e.g. press conferences) and on social media, with such conduct repeatedly occurring also on the part of public officials. In practice, this contributes to a more polarised public climate and worsens the conditions for the exercise of journalistic work.

As a result, journalists and some NGOs are increasingly compelled to use legal means of protection, in particular civil actions for the protection of personality rights and, in some cases, criminal-law submissions (criminal complaints), in order to respond to interferences with their reputation, dignity or safety. This trend has the potential to create a chilling effect on the exercise of freedom of expression and on public oversight of the

exercise of public power, especially where it is accompanied by systematic denigration of the work of the media or civil society.

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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