



# EU support to news media: a state-of-play

March 2022

## In short:

The European Union supports the news media sector primarily through:

- **The 'Multimedia Actions' line** to fund independent news media coverage of EU affairs.
- **Pilot projects and preparatory actions** proposed from one year to another by the European Parliament, on a variety of topics.
- And more recently, actions under its **Creative Europe** programme to support media pluralism and freedom, media collaborations and media literacy.

While additional investment and financing opportunities are being developed, demand exceeds the available budgets (€41 million in 2021).

## I- From a few strands of actions...

Mindful of the contribution of professional journalism to democracy, the European Commission has historically funded the news media sector and editorial activities through two channels:

First, a **Multimedia Actions line**, which has focused on funding independent news media coverage of EU affairs (projects such as a radio network, data-driven networks, Euronews or the European newsroom). This yearly budget amounts to around €20 million per year.

**...and second, pilot projects and preparatory actions** implemented on the basis of proposals of the European Parliament. These are decided from one year to another and may consist e.g. of research or projects around media freedom, media pluralism or media literacy. Such support amounted to €12 million in 2021.

## II- ...to a more holistic approach

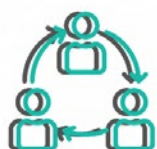
As the pandemic severely affected the news media sector, and in the face of the increasing challenges posed by disinformation and revenues shifts, the European Commission **launched the 'NEWS initiative' in December 2020**, as part of a wider plan to help the audiovisual and media sectors recover.

The '[NEWS' initiative](#) is bringing several funding instruments under a common banner and consists of the following steps:



**More regular dialogues with representatives of the European news media industry** in order to understand existing needs and help organisations thrive and fulfil their role in our democracies. Two such European News Media Forums took place in 2021, [on the safety of journalists](#) and [on industrial transformation](#).

**Greater access to finance under InvestEU**, the EU's investment programme. The [Cultural and Creative Sectors' Guarantee Facility](#), which has already helped 6000 organisations in 19 EU Member States, will operate under InvestEU. The Commission will also create an **equity pilot** to co-invest in news media with philanthropists, foundations, and private partners. Both initiatives will be complemented by training services designed to increase investors' knowledge of the news media market.



**Grants for media collaborations.** Yearly calls for proposals under the Creative Europe Programme are for example supporting partnerships between media organisations that wish to share good businesses practices or carry out joint journalistic projects. The first seven 'Journalism Partnerships' will start in early 2022.

Next to these 'Journalism Partnerships' grants, the Creative Europe programme 2021-2027 includes for the first time actions to support media pluralism, freedom and literacy.

Altogether, **EU support to the news media sector under the Creative Europe programme represents 3% of the total envelope for 2021-2027**. First available results suggest that the funding needs of the sector exceed the available resources, while the Creative Europe programmed budget for the years 2023 to 2027 will be lower than for 2022.

News media organisations are eligible under calls in other programmes (e.g. Horizon Europe), although such calls do not specifically target news media.

### Creative Europe budget 2021-2027



Support to news media (3% = €75 million)

### III- Examples of news projects and organisations supported by the EU in 2021

#### Pilot projects and preparatory actions to support media freedom and pluralism

Action/ project	Budget (approx.)	
<b>Media Pluralism Monitor</b>	€1 million	Direct grant: <a href="#">European University Institute (EUI), Florence</a>
<b>Media Ownership Monitor</b>	€500 000	Current beneficiary: <a href="#">Consortium led by the Paris-Lodron Universität Salzburg</a>
<b>Support to press councils</b>	€350 000	Current beneficiary: <a href="#">Consortium led by European Federation of Journalists</a> (Project: <a href="#">Media Councils in the Digital Age</a> )
<b>Rapid response mechanism to violations of press and media freedom</b>	€1.38 million	Current beneficiary: <a href="#">European Centre for Press and Media Freedom</a> (Project: <a href="#">Media Freedom Rapid Response</a> )
<b>Cross-border investigative journalism</b>	€1.5 million	Current beneficiary: Project " <a href="#">Investigative Journalism for Europe</a> " led by the International Press Institute
<b>Internship opportunities for minority language media</b>	€700 000	Beneficiary: International Press Institute (Project: <a href="#">NewsSpectrum Fellowship</a> )
<b>2020 media freedom projects</b>	€1.275 million	5 consortia selected ( <a href="#">Journalism Trust Initiative</a> , <a href="#">Media4change</a> , <a href="#">The European 4th Estate</a> , <a href="#">Exposing the invisible</a> , <a href="#">Audience-Supported Collaborations for Empowered Media and Societies</a> )

#### Calls to support media innovation

Action/ project	Budget (approx.)	
<b>Journalism Partnerships (Creative Europe)</b>	€8 million	Results of the first <a href="#">call</a> about to be announced
<b>Media Innovation (Horizon Europe)</b>	€26 million	The 2021 <a href="#">call</a> addresses both immersive media (€18 million) & virtual reality. Results about to be announced

## Calls to support citizen engagement, public sphere and media literacy

Programme	Action/ project	Budget (approx.)	
<b>Multimedia Actions</b>	<a href="#">Euronews</a>	€16 million	Framework Partnership Agreement with annual grants
	Coverage of EU affairs through a radio network	€2.2 million	Current beneficiary: <a href="#">Euranet Plus</a>
	Data-driven news on EU affairs	€700 000/year	Current projects: <a href="#">European Data Journalism Network</a> & <a href="#">EU Data News Hub</a>
	Multilingual content across European platforms	€900 000/year	Current beneficiary: <a href="#">the European newsroom (16 press agencies)</a>
<b>Preparatory Action</b>	<a href="#">European media platforms</a>	€6 million	Results about to be announced
<b>Pilot project</b>	<a href="#">Youth media</a>	€2 million	Results about to be announced

In addition to the above initiatives and calls in support of news media, the Commission has put in place a [wide variety of actions](#) to fight disinformation.

### Some current and upcoming opportunities in 2022

- Creative Europe [call](#) to support media literacy (€2.4 million, open until 4 April 2022).
- Horizon Europe [call](#) on media and democracy (€9 million, open until 20 April 2022).
- 2<sup>nd</sup> ‘Journalism Partnerships’ [call](#) (€7.5 million, open until 7 September 2022).
- Creative Europe call to support self-regulation & a rapid response mechanism to violations of media freedom (€4.1 million, to open mid-March 2022)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> ‘Youth media’ call (€9 million, call expected to open in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2022).
- Supporting local and regional news media (€2 million, to open in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2022).
- Call for the organisation of a European Festival of Journalism and Media Literacy (€1 million, to open in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2022)
- European media platforms call (€6 million, to open in the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2022).
- Call to improve the media representation and inclusion for refugees and migrants (€500 000, to open in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2022)
- [Digital Europe](#) call for a European [media data space](#) (€8 million, to open in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2022)

[Stay tuned for EU calls relevant for the news media sector](#)

Twitter: [@MediaEU](#)