58th EPRA meeting
Bucharest: 18 – 20 October 2023

Plenary thematic session Media & information for the public good
A trustworthy media market for the public good
Background paper (post-meeting version)¹

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¹ Disclaimer: this document has been produced for an internal meeting by EPRA, an informal network of 56 regulatory authorities in the field of audiovisual media services. It is not a fully comprehensive overview of the issues, nor does it represent the views or the official position of EPRA or of any member within the EPRA network.
I. Introduction

Public interest media content at risk

During the 57th EPRA meeting, Deniz Wagner conveyed the call of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media for a new framework to promote ‘public interest’ media content and reduce the noise of information disorder. This new framework intends to respond to a growing trend of violations, distrust and anti-media sentiment that “silence critical voices and dismantle media pluralism”.

“Distrust towards the media is like putting a loaded gun in the hands of authoritarian regimes.” – Maria Ressa, journalist

In recent years, media have been facing increasing pressures from political bodies and a continuing erosion of public trust. The pandemic crisis, the war in Ukraine and the inflation have been aggravating factors.

The lack of advertising revenues generated by the digital transition and the new role played by online intermediaries in access to content have also weakened traditional media outlets, and especially the local media sector with many local media outlets shutting down or facing a higher exposure to capture and attacks. Online intermediaries, the new gateways to media content, have built a system based on clicks where sensationalism and attention-grabbing headlines outweigh quality and public interest content. Consequently, in this increasingly arduous battle for attention, “polarisation strategies are unfortunately financially profitable” and it represents a danger for society itself as it sows the “seeds of division” as highlighted by Christophe Deloire.

The watchdog role of media is more than ever crucial in a context of political instability and against the major challenge of global warming. There is a need to secure the ties with citizens and this cannot be achieved without demonstrating and enabling a trustworthy and viable media environment.

A trustworthy media market to protect public interest media content

Trust: firm belief in the reliability, truth, or ability of someone or something.

Source: Oxford Languages

Trust appears as a core pillar of the media ecosystem: it is a prerequisite to attract and maintain audience but also to find commercial partners. To succeed in gaining this trust, the system and the stakeholders need to demonstrate trustworthiness, accountability and reliability.

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2 See the speech of Deniz Wagner, Adviser to the OSCE RfOM, during the 57 EPRA meeting
3 OSCE RfOM report “Can there be security without media freedom?”, November 2022
4 #LOCALMEDIA4DEMOCRACY – News deserts in Europe, Assessing risks for local and community media in the 27 EU Member States - Preliminary report. July 2023
5 Digital Trust Initiatives: Seeking to Reward Journalistic Ethics Online, By Eleonora Mazzoli for the Center for International Media Assistance, 2023
6 Working group on the sustainability of journalism – A new deal for journalism, June 2021, Forum on Information & Democracy
I.1. Building trustworthiness

The notions of “trustworthiness” and “accountability” both convey the idea of transparency. Indeed, how can someone be trusted if he/she operates secretly and anonymously? Transparency is seen as essential to avoid conflicts of interest and abuses of power or undue media concentration or to alert on potential bias. It is thus needed to gain public trust and can help reduce levels of scepticism amongst audiences.7 Reliable information on a company can strengthen commercial opportunities and transactions as well.

Transparency goes hand in hand with the required legitimacy of public interest media to fulfil their watchdog function and to provide relevant and necessary information for the democratic debate. In this regard, reputation and competence of the media outlets are at stake and disclosure of key information about their company participate in the quality of the media.8

➢ How does national and international law deal with transparency in the media environment?

Both the Council of Europe and the European Union address the issue under the angle of media ownership transparency through, respectively, a recommendation to Member States9 and the Audiovisual Media Service Directive 2018/1808 (AVMSD).10 The recital 15 of the AVMSD directly links the transparency of media ownership to the freedom of expression and democracy as it “allows users to make an informed judgement about” a content.

Disclosure obligations can also be found in more general legal frameworks, which are not specific to media, such as the EU Anti-Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing Directive which defines what is the “ultimate beneficial owner” of a company.11

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7 Study on media pluralism and diversity online, written by Centre for Media Pluralism and Media Freedom (CMPF), European University Institute, CIMIT (Centre for Information Technology and Intellectual Property) of KU, Leuven Institute for Information Law of the University of Amsterdam (IViR/UvA) and Vrije Universiteit Brussels (Studies in Media, Innovation and Technology, VUB- SMIT) - 2022
8 Media ownership transparency in Europe: Closing the gap between European aspiration and domestic reality, Rachael Craufurd Smith, Beata Klimkiewicz and Alina Ostling - 2021
11 Article 3 Section (6) of Directive (EU) 2015/849
However, experts point out the limited extent of binding European rules on transparency and the gap between national legislation and international requirements. Relevant data when it comes to media outlets’ ownership and functioning remain difficult to access for the public and opaque.

Mapping of media transparency rules in the European Union countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Countries</th>
<th>Access to some information</th>
<th>For free</th>
<th>Publicly available and public authorities’ information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Media-specific measures</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General measures</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combination of both</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: CMPF

Similarly, according to the [Media Pluralism Monitor 2017](#), within the 31 European States examined, seven countries provide dispositions for disclosure of the ultimate owner and only five include sanctions in case of failure. Moreover, a theory-practice gap can be observed. Rules are not efficiently implemented and information might not be publicly available or if so, not always in a clear and easy-to-access manner.

Focus on some media transparency monitoring tools:

- **The European Media Ownership Monitor (EurOMo):** this pilot project co-funded by the EU Commission, monitors media ownership transparency in 15 countries (AT, BE, CZ, DE, DK, ES, FI, GR, HU, IT, LT, NL, PT, SI, SE). It provides inter alia a database with information on ownership and control of the most relevant news media in these countries, but also publishes country reports that assess the level of transparency of this information.

- **The Media Ownership Monitor:** a global research and advocacy initiative run by the Global Media Registry that creates transparency on “who owns the media?” - and ultimately answers the question “who controls the media?” through contextualization and analysis.

- **The Unique Media Identifiers (UMiD):** this initiative run by the Global Media Registry aims to develop a system of unique identifiers for media (on the model of ISO country codes).

12 See Supra 8
13 See Supra 7
14 See Supra 8
In reaction to the lack of enforceable and effective rules, experts call for a harmonised, coordinated and multi-actor approach to put in place an effective and wider transparency legal framework that would cover disclosure of information on the real beneficial owner but also on internal processes, and links with advertisers and sponsors, for instance.\footnote{See Supra 7 & 8}

**The European Media Freedom Act**

The provision agreement on EMFA acknowledges the importance of media ownership transparency for the public in its recital 19 and encourages the development of national media ownership databases. In addition, article 6 §1 extends the obligation to make accessible data on the beneficial owner and links with any public bodies to all media services providers.

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> How does the industry deal with transparency in the media environment?

**Spotlight on initiatives by the industry to strengthen trust**

**The Trust Project:** as of 2014, an international consortium of news organisations developed a set of eight Trust Indicators to encourage transparency about media outlets’ processes and ownership. Media companies which agree to go through these standardized disclosures about the news outlet, the journalists, and the commitments behind their work receive a Trust Mark logo. The Trust Project network represents around 300 news sites across the world today.

**NewsGuard:** a company founded in 2018, NewsGuard can be seen as a media literacy tool. Based on evaluation of the content produced, the project assesses the trustworthiness of media outlets and scores the media’s website to allow users to recognise trustworthy news. The service is subject to a monthly fee.

**Journalism Trust Initiative:** launched in 2019, this industry initiative has developed a self-regulatory mechanism to allow media outlets to verify their compliance with journalistic best practices through an independent audit that leads to a “JTI certificate”. JTI argues that transparency from media outlets may reinforce public attachment to high-quality news media and editorial independence. More than 850 media outlets in 80 countries are involved in the initiative.

These initiatives face the challenge of reaching a global scale and being implemented by key stakeholders and advertisers in order to be impactful. Moreover, there is no common definition of what is “trustworthy” and “public interest content”. Such initiatives from the industry should also demonstrate transparency and independence to gain legitimacy and avoid being wrongly used as a means to threaten freedom of expression and pluralism.\footnote{See Supra 5}
While trust and transparency of media outlets are fundamental to earn respect from the public and audience, it does not per se guarantee financial incomes and a viable economic situation for the media outlet. The link between online traffic and revenue is still uncertain and more factors have to be taken into account to ensure a sustainable and attractive market.

I.2. Enabling trustworthiness

As mentioned above, to trust a system, you need to be able to rely on it. Media outlets need to have the capacity to endure. Building trustworthiness also requires long-term sustainability and capacities.

➢ What is sustainability in the media environment?

The authors of the “Study on media plurality and diversity online” define media sustainability as “both the ability to sustain existence in the long term, and the ability to continue to provide sufficient scale and variety of quality content, especially of news and informative content, and communication spaces”.17 The Deutsche Welle Akademie favours the word “viability” defined as “the ability of media outlets and media landscapes to produce high-quality journalism in a sustainable way”.18

Both definitions emphasise the production of quality content and invite to look beyond the sole business model and revenues of a media outlet and to take a wider picture.

If access to information is difficult or the market too concentrated due to a restrictive legal environment, news and stories that are key for the democratic debate may not be publicly revealed. If media are not legally and financially protected against political and commercial pressures, they will not be able to serve as a watchdog in society. If media cannot embrace technological innovations, they will be left behind and will not reach the audience.

In this regard, the DW Akademie suggests taking a holistic approach, based on five dimensions. These dimensions look at the economics, politics, content, technology and the community aspects of the local environment at three different levels (within the media organisation itself, the broader network and the

17 See Supra 7
18 “Weathering crisis. Ensuring Media Viability, continuity and resilience”. DW Akademie; Authors: Ann Hollifield, Petra Aldenrath, Enrique Naveda, 2022
The goal of such an approach is to assess the health of a region’s media ecosystem and to identify where efforts should be made to establish an enabling environment for media.

**Focus on Media viability indicators:**

**UNESCO’s Media Development Indicators (MDI):** developed within the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC), the MDI provide a framework of five categories of indicators that can be used to analyse the media environment of a country.

**DW Akademie Media Viability Indicators (MVI):** a practical tool for media managers, media development experts, and academics to gather data and evidence to evaluate individual media outlets or entire information ecosystems. The framework considers a range of aspects covering politics, economics, communities, technology, and content.

**Internews - the media viability accelerator:** this web-based platform helps independent media become more financially sustainable by accessing solutions and market insights to inform effective business strategies. The project is a partnership between Microsoft, USAID and Internews and includes two components: MVA Insights and MVA Solutions. MVA Insights is a data-based platform collecting market intelligence to help newsrooms with their business models while MVA Solutions is a marketplace that media can use to find investors, funders, advertisers, technology solutions and advisors.

Among the key factors for a healthy ecosystem, the DW Akademie identifies for instance: a supportive legal environment, collaborative networks, an equitable advertising market, the existence of professional associations, a reliable Internet infrastructure or also trust from the community.

Other research and analyses of the media sector point out the need for a stronger regulation for competition and platform policies, a better access to high-quality industry data, real and transparent resources (especially public subsidies), structural support to the knowledge infrastructure (training, access to innovation and information) and a better enforcement of the private data protection for consumers to lessen the role played by data in advertising and reducing the dependence to AdTech.

Indeed, the digital transition and the shift to an individual data-driven ad system have generated a serious decline of advertising revenues for media outlets, for the benefit of a few major platform companies. More than 50% of worldwide digital ad revenues go to Google and Meta.

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19 More than money – Rethinking Media Viability in the digital age – DW Akademie: Authors: Peter Deselaers, Kyle James, Roula Mikhael & Laura Schneider, 2019
20 Working group on the sustainability of journalism – A new deal for journalism, June 2021, Forum on Information & Democracy
21 See Supra 7
22 eMarketer, Worldwide Digital Ad Spending Year-End Update (23 Nov 2021)
In response, some new strategies have emerged within media outlets, such as mixed revenue models putting the audience at the centre, recruitment of business and tech profiles or new external collaborations.

However, such strategies need to be supported by an enabling environment allowing media to play their role in democratic societies and supporting investment in media. This is a complex challenge, involving multiple factors and actors at various levels and in remarkably diverse media ecosystems across Europe.

The Committee of Ministers from the Council of Europe calls for a favourable environment to promote quality journalism as a public good and encourage States to take proactive or corrective measures to secure sufficient funding, implementation of ethics and quality standards to rebuild trust - such as transparency - and education and training for both citizens and media professionals.23

This thematic plenary session of the 58th EPRA meeting will provide food for thought and insights on how to support a strong and effective media market.

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23 Recommendation CM/Rec(2022)4 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on promoting a favourable environment for quality journalism in the digital age, March 2022
Focus on the role of Public Service Media: an ally or an enemy in the media market?

At a time when information disorders and polarisation threaten democracies, strong Public Service Media (PSM) can play a crucial role of bridge between society and the media and limit audience fragmentation. In a crisis, the audience tends to turn to PSM, which can then become a reliable national partner for other media outlets. Moreover, as subscription models emerge, it is essential to avoid gaps among the audience and restrict quality information only to those who can afford it.

PSM, provided that they are effectively independent and trustworthy, can be a conduit for building trust and giving prominence to quality content, for the benefit of a more sustainable media ecosystem. Supporting this idea, recent studies show that there is indeed little evidence that PSM “crowd out” commercial media and distort the market.

In a democratic society, supporting and enabling strong, independent and viable PSM might be in the public interest.

II. Issues covered and structure of the EPRA plenary session

II. 1. Past EPRA outputs of relevance for the discussion

The sustainability of media in the digital age and the issue of trust and transparency in the media environment have already been addressed under different angles in the past by EPRA.

In 2015, the sustainability of the media ecosystem was discussed, with a focus on “content funding in Europe” and financing models for local and regional TV.

More recently, the issue of trust, plurality and the future of Public Service Media were also addressed. Two podcasts, produced in 2020, invited experts to share their views on the impact of algorithms on transparency and trust - highlighting the role of regulators, journalists and the tech industry - and on the concept of media plurality at the digital age.

24 (Humprecht, Esser, and Van Aelst. ‘Resilience to online disinformation’, 493-516.), 2020
25 Working group on the sustainability of journalism – A new deal for journalism, June 2021, Forum on Information & Democracy
27 Background paper EPRA/2015/09 prepared by Maria Donde, Ofcom (UK) for the Plenary session 1: “How to ensure a sustainable ecosystem for media content in Europe; Focus on Content Funding” which took place during the 42nd EPRA meeting in Nuremberg in autumn 2015
28 Background Comparative Document (EPRA/2015/12) prepared for the Working Group 3 by Oliver Gerber, OFCOM (CH) for the ad hoc Working group “Local/Regional TV: Financing Models” that took place during the 42nd EPRA meeting in Nuremberg in autumn 2015
29 EPRA Podcast on Transparency and trust: The user’s perspective in online content navigation, produced for the 52nd EPRA meeting, autumn 2020
30 EPRA Podcast on “Media plurality in the age of algorithms”, produced for the 51st EPRA meeting, spring 2020
Building on the question of media plurality, in autumn 2020 EPRA organised a teach-in online session introducing to Competition Law and ex ante economic regulation and underlying the potential of synergy between media and competition authorities.\textsuperscript{31}

The plenary session on “Media and information for the public good” in spring 2023 focused on Public Service Media and invited the audiovisual regulators to discuss the challenges faced by PSM and how to strengthen their independence, sustainability and performance from a regulatory and policy perspective.\textsuperscript{32}

II. 2. Aim and structure of the session

As a continuation of the roundtable discussions on the sustainability of PSM in spring in Oslo, the autumn session in Bucharest, will take a bird’s view at the media environment in 2023: how can media become more viable in the digital age? How can the environment and legal framework positively impact on media viability? And how can regulators support a trustworthy media market?

- For the first part of the session, building on Oslo’s outputs, public broadcasters from Moldova and Romania will present their strategies to gain the audience’s trust and remain sustainable in the long-term. Taking a broader angle, experts will share their analyses on how to understand media viability and media transparency and their importance in nurturing the prominence of public interest media in the market.

- The second part will give speakers the opportunity to discuss together and exchange with EPRA members on how to support a trustworthy media market, for the public good.

\textsuperscript{31} Competition: teach-in online session, produced for the 52nd EPRA meeting in autumn 2020
\textsuperscript{32} Background paper and summary of the plenary session “Public Service Media for the public good” during the 57th EPRA meeting in spring 2023. Document produced by the EPRA Secretariat
Session Speakers:

Session Chair: Valentin Alexandru Jucan, EPRA Vice-Chair

- Dan Cristian Turturica, TVR Romania (RO)
- Vlad Țurcanu, Teleradio Moldova (MD)
- Rune Meissel, DW Akademie
- Beata Klimkiewicz, Jagiellonian University (PL)

➡ Discussion moderated by Maida Ćulahović, CRA (BA)
III. Summary of the plenary session in Bucharest

A challenging context

In recent years, political pressure, financial constraints, and the prominent role played by online intermediaries have significantly impacted the media landscape. Forced to adapt to the loss in advertising revenues and a news ecosystem built on clicks and sensationalism, media outlets need to explore new strategies to maintain visibility and earn public trust. Media regulators have an important role to play in contributing to an enabling environment for public interest content.

WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM EACH OTHER?

- Case study from the public service broadcaster Teleradio Moldova, by Vlad Turcanu
  ➢ Context & situation:
  - Moldova is an EU candidate country, currently going through the integration process.
  - The public service broadcaster is rebuilding – with new administrative procedures and new infrastructure after 40 years without capital investment - and faces the difficult task to promote truth and democratic values among a vulnerable audience accustomed to public media being controlled by State bodies and targeted by Russian propaganda.
  - Currently a country with some political stability, Moldova belongs to a region experiencing a lot of instability.
  ➢ Challenges:
  - Countering news manipulation
  - Specific constraints imposed on PSM
  ➢ Strategies put in place:
  - Strengthening professional editorial teams and modernising the tools.
  - Producing balanced news and programmes to stimulate creativity.
  - Launching of two new online platforms (in the top 10 in number of monthly visitors after two years).
  ➢ Lessons learnt:
  The most important thing is to have sufficient internal resources to be able to properly inform citizens and to prepare the editorial teams to be responsive and resilient to hybrid war and propaganda and for potentially bad times ahead.

- Case-study from the public service broadcaster TVR Romania, by Dan Cristian Turturica
  ➢ Context & situation:
  - Romania is part of the European Union, which helps promote democratic values.
  - Public TV and radio are perceived as the voice of the government and the audience is reluctant to believe PSM.
- Romanian PSM are funded by State resources, subject to approval by the Parliament.

➢ Challenges:
- Countering the erosion of trust, exacerbated by the new politicians’ tendency to discredit traditional media and the rise of disinformation.
- Combatting bias.

➢ Strategies put in place:
- Giving complete editorial independence to the news’ team with no interference from management. Since then, TVR Romania appears in opinion polls as the most balanced broadcaster for the first time.
- Demonstrating trustworthiness by reopening the 24h news channel. Even if resources are limited, the audience is increasing.
- Tackling directly non-fact-based news stories.
- Launching video news format on social media to reach the young audience (great level of engagement and reactions to content).
- Developing formats suitable for social media (e.g.: short explanatory videos on basic questions raised by the news).
- Reclaiming its role regarding social issues coverage, popular topics but left behind by other broadcasters (launch of six programmes on social issues under various formats).

➢ Lessons learnt:
- Media outlets need to embrace the challenges they face.
- Changing internal ways of working and asking the teams to adapt to new short and snappy formats demand efforts and time.

• Media viability in the digital age, presentation by Rune Meissel from the Deutsche Welle Akademie, rune.meissel@dw.com

Media outlets are under a growing political pressure and must face fast-evolving formats, the emergence of powerful tech giants and an erosion of trust from the audience. However, there is still a demand for quality journalism.

➢ What is needed? New business models, different strategic approaches, a new set of skills and an enabling environment.

➢ The DW Akademie’s approach: This is not just about money

Debates around viability of media tend to focus only on financial models but media need much more to be able to produce high quality content and keep evolving.

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33 Scope of research/investigation: South America, Africa and Eastern Europe
Assessing the viability of media outlets requires also to look at (non-exhaustive list):

- The technology aspect: capacity to have up-to-date tools and to protect their data.
- The community aspect: capacity to connect with the viewers and to know how to serve them (which topics, which formats...)
- The economic and political aspect: an enabling legal framework and a supportive environment with strong partnerships and effective independence.

Additionally, media safety (psychological safety, safe working conditions, digital and physical safety) appears as a key factor in media viability.

These aspects should be analysed within the organisation itself but also at the networks and the broader environment levels.

➢ Outputs: the media viability indicators.

The DW Akademie has developed five key indicators (with a series of sub-indicators in each), at micro and macro levels, to help identify the areas where improvement and more appropriate measures are needed.

The aim is to develop a common understanding of media viability, help develop strategies and measure sustainability.

➢ Lessons learnt:

Media outlets cannot be sustainable without a suitable environment. Protecting media sustainability is a collective effort. It needs to involve all stakeholders and requires reliable legal frameworks fostering an independent and viable media ecosystem.

➢ The DW Akademie plans to publish a media viability manifesto with other leading media development organisations to develop a common understanding and shared vision of media viability.

- Trust and transparency: “State, Media and Transparency: a reciprocal relationship”, Presentation by Beata Klimkiewicz, from Jagiellonian University

➢ State of play:

- There is a wider understanding of transparency and a willingness to extend the concept further.
- However, as regards the media sector, transparency is usually addressed under the sole idea of media ownership transparency.
- The media plurality monitor\textsuperscript{34} shows a decrease of the level of transparency over the last years.

\begin{itemize}
  \item The obstacles/limits of transparency:
  \begin{itemize}
    \item Transparency can be used as a weapon by State bodies.
    \item Transparency can slow down decision-making process.
    \item Transparency can be used to replace actual regulation and run free of policies.
    \item Transparency of ownership does not tell the truth on how the news was produced.
    \item Transparency is likely to be eroded in times of crisis (\textit{increasing withholding of information from public bodies, for instance - Lessons learnt from the PANCOPPO Project\textsuperscript{35}}):
  \end{itemize}
\end{itemize}

\begin{itemize}
  \item Recommendations:
  \begin{itemize}
    \item A reciprocity between media, regulators and the State \textit{(requesting transparency from others requires oneself to be transparent}).
    \item A regulatory framework connecting internally and externally oriented transparency.
  \end{itemize}
\end{itemize}

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|}
\hline
\textbf{MEDIA} & \textbf{INTERNALLY-ORIENTED TRANSPARENCY} \\
\hline
\textbf{MEDIA AS AGENTS OF TRANSPARENCY} & \textbf{MEDIA AS OBJECTS OF TRANSPARENCY} \\
\hline
\textit{e.g.} media outlet as a watchdog & \textit{e.g.} media outlet discloses information about its ownership on a website \\
\hline
\textbf{STATE} & \textbf{STATE INSTITUTIONS AS AGENTS OF TRANSPARENCY} \\
\hline
\textbf{STATE INSTITUTIONS AS OBJECTS OF TRANSPARENCY} & \textbf{STATE INSTITUTIONS AS OBJECTS OF TRANSPARENCY} \\
\hline
\textit{e.g.} MRA monitors ownership of particular media outlets & \textit{e.g.} MRA discloses information on state advertising expenditures allocated to particular media outlets \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Source: Beata Klimkiewicz}
\end{table}

\begin{itemize}
  \item Conclusions\slash next steps:
\end{itemize}

The recent legal and policy initiatives\textsuperscript{36} tend to address this shift by addressing both external and internal transparency and considering media but also NRAs as objects of transparency \textit{(for more details on transparency provisions in the EMFA draft proposal, see slide 13 of the presentation)}.

Transparency should be extended to secure reciprocity and a balanced relationship and avoid a superficial use of transparency that might legitimate inaction or abuses. Transparency measures are key to safeguard democracy.

\textsuperscript{34} The \textit{media pluralism monitor} in 2017 and 2022

\textsuperscript{35} Research project on \textit{“Pandemic Communication in Times of Populism”}, Loughborough University, 2022-2024, covering USA, BR, PL and RS

\textsuperscript{36} E.g.: \textit{Council of Europe’s Recommendation CM/Rec(2022)11} on Principles for Media and Communication Governance and the upcoming European Media Freedom Act.
Panel discussion - key ideas raised

**Quality journalism & audience: how to attract the audience?**

- Picturing your family as the audience to help structure the narratives and formats and be public interest focused.

- Safeguarding editorial independence.

- Adopting a proactive approach to collect the audience’s expectations and produce programmes focused on what is happening in their community.

- Including the voices of those you are talking about and real-life experiences to make them heard by the audience.

**Transparency beyond ownership: how to be efficiently transparent?**

- Being transparent on the standards of production *(a few initiatives among media outlets so far – current project mapping media democracy in ten countries, MeDeMAP)*

- Providing financial transparency by disclosing the sources of funding and advertising.

- Using media audience measurement, an important tool for transparency.

**The shift in audience’s habits: How to cope with news avoidance and news/screen fatigue?**

- Testing new formats to deliver content: media consumption is growing but the definition of media has changed. There is currently a lot of experimentation from media outlets to deliver content for the new generation under new formats *(e.g.: successful videos on sexual education in TikTok format by the Dutch broadcaster)*.

- Being consistent and trustworthy at any time.

- Implementing media literacy policies from primary schools to respond to the growing need to receive trustworthy information, especially in time of crises.
IV. Bibliography

European legal framework

Council of Europe:

- Recommendation CM/Rec(2022)4 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on promoting a favourable environment for quality journalism in the digital age, March 2022

- Declaration by the Committee of Ministers on the financial sustainability of quality journalism in the digital age, February 2019

- Recommendation CM/Rec (2018)1 on media pluralism and transparency of media ownership, 7 March 2018

European Union:


Studies and reports

- OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media: report “Can there be security without media freedom?”, November 2022

- Project “LOCALMEDIA4DEMOCRACY” – News desert in Europe, Assessing risks for local and community media in the 27 EU Member States - Preliminary report. July 2023. Authors: Tijana Blagojev, Danielle Borges, Elda Brogi, Jan Kermer, Matteo Trevisan, Sofia Verza (Centre for Media Pluralism and Media Freedom, European University Institute)

- Report “Digital Trust Initiatives: Seeking to Reward Journalistic Ethics Online”, by Eleonora Mazzoli for the Center for International Media Assistance, 2023


- Study on media pluralism and diversity online, Centre for Media Pluralism and Media Freedom (CMPF), European University Institute, CiTiP (Centre for Information Technology and Intellectual Property) of KU, Leuven Institute for Information Law of the University of Amsterdam (IViR/UvA) and Vrije Universiteit Brussels (Studies in Media, Innovation and Technology, VUB- SMIT) - 2022

- Media ownership transparency in Europe: Closing the gap between European aspiration and domestic reality, Rachael Craufurd Smith, Beata Klimkiewicz and Alina Ostling - 2021
- “Weathering crisis. Ensuring Media Viability, continuity and resilience” DW Akademie; Authors: Ann Hollifield, Petra Aldenrath, Enrique Naveda, 2022

- “More than money – Rethinking Media Viability in the digital age” – DW Akademie: Authors: Peter Deselaers, Kyle James, Roula Mikhael & Laura Schneider, 2019


Further documents from the Deutsche Welle Akademie on media viability:

- Analysis of Lebanon’s media ecosystem using DW Akademie’s Media Viability Indicators
- Media Resilience Scanner
- VAM360° (Viability Assessment Map for media outlets)
- Media Viability Explainer (video 4:00 min) by partner organization Media Innovation Center, Kenya
- DW Akademie’s “Survive and Thrive – The Media Viability Podcast”