

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002081/24
to the Commission
Łukasz Kohut (PPE), Krzysztof Brejza (PPE)
(15 October 2024)**

Subject: Threats to media freedom in Poland: concerns over PiS Party plans for TVN and Hungarian involvement

Media reports indicate that the Law and Justice (PiS) Party intends to take control of the private broadcaster TVN in Poland. According to information disseminated by the media, this action may involve Hungarian entrepreneurs associated with Orbán's regime, and it is suggested that this plan could be carried out by former Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki.

TVN plays a crucial role in Polish public discourse. It is essential to emphasise that the impartiality of this media outlet has led to several persistent attempts by PiS to undermine it, including the drafting of the 'Lex TVN' law and the deliberate withholding of its broadcasting licence.

In the light of the fact that media freedom and pluralism are enshrined in Article 11 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, is the Commission monitoring the situation regarding media freedom? Will it respond promptly and employ all available tools to prevent violations of media freedom by Orbán's regime?

Submitted: 15.10.2024

**Answer given by Executive Vice-President Virkkunen on behalf of the European Commission
(6 January 2025)**

A free and pluralistic media environment is essential for the rule of law, with free and independent media playing an important role as watchdogs of democracy and holding power to account.

The EU has put in place rules and standards in areas to uphold media freedom and media pluralism in the EU, starting with the safety and protection of journalists ⁽¹⁾ and measures to address the phenomenon of strategic litigation against public participation ⁽²⁾.

The European Media Freedom Act ⁽³⁾ (EMFA) introduces, among others, specific provisions on media ownership transparency, the transparent and fair allocation of state advertising, and the independent functioning of public service media and availability of financial resources for the fulfilment of their public service remit.

The Commission monitors developments in the area of media freedom and pluralism for all Member States in the framework of its annual Rule of Law Report and makes recommendations.

As regards Poland more specifically, the Commission recommended, amongst other, that Poland ensures that fair, transparent and non-discriminatory procedures are adhered to for the granting of operating licences to media outlets, reporting also on the situation of channels belonging to the TVN group.

In its 2024 Rule of Law Report ⁽⁴⁾, the Commission noted some progress in this regard given that the Ministry of Culture started work on a new regulatory framework on media pluralism and independence, which is expected to modernise the system of granting licences.

The Commission will continue to regularly monitor media freedom and pluralism in Poland, as in all Member States, in the context of its Rule of Law Report.

The Commission will also monitor the implementation of the EMFA including in relation to the independence of media service providers across Europe.

⁽¹⁾ Commission Recommendation (EU) 2021/1534 of 16 September 2021 on ensuring the protection, safety and empowerment of journalists and other media professionals in the European Union, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32021H1534>

⁽²⁾ Directive (EU) 2024/1069, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2024/1069/oj>

⁽³⁾ Regulation (EU) 2024/1083, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32024R1083>

⁽⁴⁾ https://commission.europa.eu/publications/2024-rule-law-report-communication-and-country-chapters_en