(English version)

Question for written answer E-001047/25
to the Commission
Barbara Bonte (PfE)
(11 March 2025)

Subject: US influencing of media in the EU through USAID

Following US President Trump's decision last February to suspend USAID's activities, it came to light that said organisation, which is tasked with providing funds for development and emergency aid, has also paid out considerable sums of money to the media in Europe in recent years.

1. Has the Commission launched an investigation into this unacceptable US influence on European media?

2. Which EU media outlets, independent or otherwise, have received funds from USAID?

3. What measures does the Commission envisage to prevent the funding of European media by third countries?

Submitted: 11.3.2025

Answer given by Executive Vice-President Virkkunen on behalf of the European Commission
(5 May 2025)

The EU has taken several measures to safeguard media independence and prevent undue influence from third countries. The provisions of European Media Freedom Act ([1]), generally applicable from 8 August 2025, establish transparency requirements for media ownership and state advertising revenues, including those received from third-country public authorities or entities.

They also mandate that public funds for state advertising in media or supply or service contracts with media be allocated through transparent, proportionate, and non-discriminatory criteria.

The Commission also co-finances the Media Pluralism Monitor and a media ownership monitoring project. However, these measures do not include monitoring of external donations or measures to prevent external donations.

The Commission does not have an overview of the media outlets that have received funds from USAID.

([1]) https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32024R1083