

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001095/25
to the Commission
Giuseppe Antoci (The Left)
(13 March 2025)**

Subject: Protecting investigative journalists and tackling organised crime in Europe

If we are to tackle organised crime in Europe, continued efforts need to be taken to raise awareness in society of mafia and criminal activities. Investigative journalism, in particular, plays a key role in informing the public and boosting the common awareness need to counter those phenomena effectively.

Despite the importance of press freedom, journalists working on organised crime are frequently subjected to intimidation and violence. Recently, a Sicilian journalist, Salvo Palazzolo, has been reporting on the activities of mafia bosses who have been released from prison and has therefore been placed under the protection of law enforcement officials, having received serious threats. His need for protection makes plain the dangers journalists face and the need to step up their protection at European level.

The Commission has published a recommendation on ensuring the protection, safety and empowerment of journalists and other media professionals in the European Union (C(2021) 6650 final) ⁽¹⁾, but the Member States have yet to properly and fully adopt those measures.

In view of the above, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. In the light, in particular, of the study of 3 May 2024 ⁽²⁾, what specific actions will it take to ensure that the recommendations on the protection of journalists are fully transposed?
2. What legislative measures will the Commission propose to bolster the implementation of existing measures and improve the protection of journalists working on organised crime?

Submitted: 13.3.2025

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

The Commission will continue monitoring Member States' actions to put in practice the recommendation ⁽¹⁾ on the protection, safety and empowerment of journalists to safeguard the independence of media and journalists as part of the wider rule of law context and will determine whether additional steps are required.

It will also ensure the effective application of the European Media Freedom Act ⁽²⁾. Member States have a primary responsibility to monitor the application of the European Media Freedom Act and to take the necessary steps for enforcement.

In its role as guardian of the Treaties, the Commission will monitor the situation on the independence of media and journalists and may decide to take appropriate action including, where appropriate, infringement proceedings.

The Commission will continue assessing all relevant developments related to media freedom and pluralism in all Member States, under the annual Rule of Law Report.

The Commission is committed to ensure the rights, support and protection of witnesses, including investigative journalists. The issue was identified as an area requiring improvement in a 2015 study ⁽³⁾ and recognised as a priority for intervention in the 2023 EU Roadmap to Fight Drug Trafficking and Organised Crime ⁽⁴⁾.

As part of its ongoing efforts to improve the European rules on organised crime, the Commission is also looking into this issue.

¹ <https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/redirection/document/79357>.

² <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2759/205635>.

⁽¹⁾ <https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/redirection/document/79357>

⁽²⁾ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:L_202401083

⁽³⁾ <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/a1183e4b-1164-4595-a742-fb4514ddd10d>

⁽⁴⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52023DC0641>