

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001622/25
to the Commission
Mariusz Kamiński (ECR)
(23 April 2025)

Subject: Violation of media freedom and pluralism in Tusk's 'militant democracy' and EU values

'Media freedom and pluralism are a vital part of democracy and of the fundamental rights of EU citizens. True democracy is not possible without a free media scrutinising those in power. The media is a key pillar in the checks and balances that underpin democratic rule. That's why the descent into authoritarian rule often starts with independent media being targeted. Over the last few decades, a number of states across the globe have taken this path, using coercion and often violence to persecute media outlets and individual journalists' ⁽¹⁾ — quoted from the European Council website. This quote perfectly reflects the situation in Poland under the government of Donald Tusk.

In light of the above:

1. Does the Commission's silence regarding the unlawful, forceful takeover of public service media using secret service methods, such as switching off the television signal ⁽²⁾, and the systemic destruction of opposition media through attempts to withdraw concessions ⁽³⁾, pressure advertisers ⁽⁴⁾, refuse admission to press conferences (including during life-threatening emergencies, such as flooding ⁽⁵⁾) and the use of aggression and violence against journalists ⁽⁶⁾ not constitute an authorisation to destroy democracy in a Member State?
2. Does the Commission consider that the system described by Donald Tusk as 'militant democracy', which includes the drastic examples of the destruction of media freedom and pluralism described above, to be in line with the values of the Union which the Commission is so eager to invoke?
3. Is the Commission aware that Civic Platform is violating the law, including electoral rules, by discriminating against candidates and using public television and its resources to organise electoral agitation, as happened on 11 April in Końskie ⁽⁷⁾?

Submitted: 23.4.2025

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

Public service media play a key role in upholding freedom of expression and information and contribute to an informed public debate by providing a plurality of information and opinions.

The Commission has no competence to intervene in the organisation and conduct of national elections. It supports the Member States in the promotion of democracy, of which free and fair elections are at the core, and the application of relevant rules, including the new EU rules on political advertising ⁽¹⁾.

The European Media Freedom Act (EMFA) puts in place a new set of rules and standards to uphold media pluralism and independence in the EU ⁽²⁾, while EU has also introduced new rules for the safety and protection of journalists and measures to address strategic litigation against public participation ⁽³⁾.

The Commission, in its annual Rule of Law Reports, examines rule of law developments in all MS on an equal basis, focusing on four pillars, including on media freedom and pluralism, and makes recommendations.

For Poland, the Commission took a notice in its 2024 Report of a dismissal of public service media's management. The 2024 Report also noted that authorities are working on a draft law that would provide a new regulatory framework for public service media aimed at ensuring full alignment with EMFA provisions.

The Commission made a recommendation to Poland to pursue efforts to ensure an effective legislative framework for the independent governance and editorial independence of public service media, taking into account European standards.

¹ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/media-freedom-eu/>

² <https://www.pap.pl/aktualnosci/wylaczono-nadawanie-kanalu-tvp-info-oraz-portalu-tvp-info-muller-nielegalne>

³ <https://sdp.pl/zamach-na-wolnosc-slowa-cmwp-sdp-w-obronie-koncesji-naziemnej-dla-telewizji-republika-i-w-polsce24/>

⁴ https://www.press.pl/tresc/80495,prawicowi-dziennikarze-protestuja-przeciw-zastraszaniu-reklamodawcow-telewizji-republika-_podpisal-sie-tez-tomasz-sakiewicz

⁵ https://www.press.pl/tresc/83971,prokuratura-wszczela-dochodzenie-ws-_niewpuszczania-dziennikarzy-republiki-na-konferencje-premiera
<https://biznesalert.pl/krrit-zlozyla-zawiadomienie-do-prokuratury-chodzi-o-informowanie-mediow-podczas-powodzi/>

⁶ <https://sdp.pl/sdp-zlozy-do-prokuratury-ws-poturbowania-dziennikarza-tv-republika-podczas-wiecu-wyborczego-rafala-trzaskowskiego/>

⁷ <https://wpolityce.pl/media/726640-szef-krrit-pisze-do-pkw-ws-udzialu-tvp-w-debacie-w-konskich>

⁽¹⁾ Regulation (EU) 2024/900.

⁽²⁾ Regulation (EU) 2024/1083.

⁽³⁾ Directive (EU) 2024/1069.

The Commission will report on developments in the forthcoming 2025 Rule of Law Report, and it monitors the implementation of EMFA in all Member States.
