

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003309/25
to the Commission
Catherine Griset (P/E)
(27 August 2025)

Subject: Non-discriminatory application of EU rules on ‘state advertising’

Article 25 of the Media Freedom Act entered into force on 8 August 2025: from now on, all Member States buying advertising from media service providers must in principle do so ‘in accordance with transparent, objective, proportionate and non-discriminatory criteria’.

In particular, this means that, in order to strengthen media pluralism, pro-government media outlets should not be given special preference.

In view of the above:

1. Can the Commission guarantee that this positive element in Article 25 will be extended to conservative opposition media outlets or those that are critical of the European Union, given that they currently do not benefit from this boon and are openly discriminated against?
2. Does Article 25 also apply to aid and to advertising bought by the Commission itself?
3. If so, does it not now find itself with a conflict of interests given that it provides the secretariat for the European Board for Media Services, which has the specific task of advising it on the application of the Media Freedom Act?

Submitted: 27.8.2025

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

The objective of Article 25 of the European Media Freedom Act (EMFA), applicable as of 8 August 2025 ⁽¹⁾, is to ensure undistorted competition between media service providers and online platforms and avoid the risk of covert subsidies and of undue political influence on the media.

Setting out the requirements for awarding any public funds, or benefits given by public authorities to media service providers or online platforms, whether for state advertising or for supply or service contracts, it aims to safeguard media pluralism, fairness and editorial independence and prevent favouring certain media outlets, especially in a political way.

These requirements must be made publicly available in advance by electronic and user-friendly means, and must be implemented by means of open, proportionate and non-discriminatory procedures to ensure their effectiveness.

According to the definitions provided by Article 2 of EMFA, ‘state advertising’ refers to the placement, publication or dissemination, in any media service, of a promotional or self-promotional message, normally in return for payment or for any other consideration, by, for or on behalf of any national or regional public authority, such as national, federal or regional governments, regulatory authorities or bodies as well as state-owned enterprises or other state-controlled entities at the national or regional level, or any local government of a territorial entity of more than 1 million inhabitant.

Advertising bought by EU institutions does not fall under this category.

⁽¹⁾ Regulation (EU) 2024/1083 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 April 2024 establishing a common framework for media services in the internal market and amending Directive 2010/13/EU.