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Answer given by Ms Kos

on behalf of the European Commission

(17.2.2026)

The Commission welcomes the Parliament's continued focus on this important issue, as Belarus remains high on the political agenda. The EU is committed to supporting the people of Belarus in their path towards freedom and democracy and recognises the crucial role of independent media in this process. Since 2020, the Commission has mobilised over EUR 38 million in support of independent media in Belarus. The EU will continue to prioritise support for independent media as reaffirmed by the Commissioner for Enlargement and the High Representative/Vice-President in their joint statement¹ marking the fifth anniversary of the fraudulent 2020 elections.

In designing programmes to support Belarusian independent media, the Commission's priority is to reach people inside the country and identify Belarusian outlets with strong organic audiences. Support is delivered through experienced implementing partners who operate competitive sub-granting processes. These well-established organisations play a key role in supporting a diverse, healthy and competitive media ecosystem.

EU assistance has supported dozens of Belarusian outlets at national, regional and local level, as well as bloggers and investigative media. This has helped media professionals and journalists adapt to a changing repressive environment, including through more active engagement on social media and innovative communication methods. The Commission's assistance to independent media fosters innovation in the sector by supporting experimentation with content strategies that will help target different priority audiences, including young people.

¹ https://enlargement.ec.europa.eu/news/joint-statement-high-representativevice-president-kallas-and-commissioner-kos-fifth-anniversary-2025-08-09_en.