

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-004863/25
to the Commission
Anna Maria Cisint (PFE)
(9 December 2025)**

Subject: Protecting press freedom and preventing intimidation of journalists in the EU

Freedom of the press, protected under Article 11 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and under the recently adopted European Media Freedom Act, is essential to the proper functioning of European democracies. On 26 November 2025, Italian journalist Constanța Tosi was held against her will in an Islamic butcher's shop in Roubaix (France), without her telephone, while carrying out investigations into Halal slaughter ⁽¹⁾. That event constitutes a serious crime, a clear breach of fundamental rights and an undue restriction on the freedom of the press.

In the light of the above:

1. With particular reference to attacks perpetrated on ideological-religious grounds, what further protection measures will the Commission promote with a view to ensuring that EU rules on media freedom and the physical protection of journalists are applied effectively?
2. Do new recommendations need to be published to encourage the Member States to adopt further legislative instruments to improve the security and independence of journalists in the EU?

Submitted: 9.12.2025

**Answer given by Executive Vice-President Virkkunen on behalf of the European Commission
(26 January 2026)**

The safety of journalists is a priority for the Commission, as is the protection of the freedom of the media, as enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU ⁽¹⁾.

The European Media Freedom Act ⁽²⁾ provides unprecedented safeguards for media and journalists against political interference and surveillance, editorial independence and protection of journalistic sources.

Provisions on editorial independence began applying since 8 February 2025, with those regarding safeguards for journalistic sources and against surveillance since 8 August 2025. The Commission is fully committed to ensuring its correct implementation.

Moreover, the Commission recently presented the European Democracy Shield ⁽³⁾, setting out a series of concrete measures to empower, protect and promote strong and resilient democracies across the EU.

As watchdogs of democracies, free, independent and pluralistic media are at the core of the Democracy Shield approach, which foresees an update of the recommendation on the Safety of Journalists ⁽⁴⁾ as well as stepping up action to support the EU's existing framework to combat abusive lawsuits against public participation (SLAPPs).

The recommendation, adopted in 2021, already encourages Member States to investigate and prosecute all criminal acts committed against journalists in an impartial independent, effective, transparent and timely manner, making full use of existing national and European legislation.

¹ https://www.tgcom24.mediaset.it/cronaca/francia-giornalista-di-fuori-dal-coro-trattenuta-contro-la-mia-volonta-in-una-macelleria-halal-_106563131-202502k.shtml.

⁽¹⁾ Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, OJ C 326, 26.10.2012, pp. 391-407.

⁽²⁾ European Media Freedom Act — <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1083/oj/eng>.

⁽³⁾ European Democracy Shield: Empowering Strong and Resilient Democracies — Joint Communication — <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52025JC0791>.

⁽⁴⁾ Commission Recommendation on ensuring the protection, safety and empowerment of journalists and other media professionals in the European Union <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reco/2021/1534/oj/eng>.