

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-005025/25
to the Commission
Catherine Griset (P/E)
(19 December 2025)**

Subject: Sleeping Giants' harassment of independent media

In November 2025, Sleeping Giants — a far-left activism organisation — pressured companies to remove their advertising inserts that were benefitting the independent media outlet *Frontières*. The advertisers targeted included Leroy Merlin, which gave in to the demands of Sleeping Giants ⁽¹⁾.

This new form of private censorship clearly aims to restrict editorial freedom and media pluralism by financially suffocating independent media.

The French authorities turn a blind eye to such practices, despite them being sanctionable under Article 225-2 of the French Criminal Code, which punishes, by three years' imprisonment and a fine of EUR 45 000, discrimination against a natural or legal person consisting of 'obstructing the normal exercise of any given economic activity'.

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

1. Is it aware of this new immunity from criminal prosecution that the French authorities have granted to far-left activists?
2. Why does the Media Freedom Act (Regulation (EU) 2024/1083) not provide the media with any protection from abuses committed against them by private actors such as Sleeping Giants?
3. Does Sleeping Giants receive EU funding?

Submitted: 19.12.2025

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

The Commission recalls that, in accordance with the principle of the rule of law and the division of competences between the EU and the Member States, it is for the competent national authorities, including the courts, to assess whether a given conduct falls within the scope of national criminal law and, where appropriate, to decide on the initiation of proceedings or the imposition of sanctions.

The Commission nevertheless underlines the fundamental importance of media freedom and media pluralism, which are core values protected by Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union and Article 11 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union ⁽¹⁾. The European Media Freedom Act (EMFA) ⁽²⁾ provides an EU-wide framework to safeguard media freedom, editorial independence and media pluralism.

In this context, Member States are required to ensure an environment conducive to the availability to citizens of a plurality of editorially independent media content. The Commission will continue to monitor the application of the EMFA and the state of media freedom in the Member States, including in the framework of its rule of law work.

As regards EU funding, the Commission is not aware of any information indicating that the organisation mentioned receives funding under EU programmes managed by the Commission.

¹ https://x.com/leroymerlinfr/status/1990422371191173472?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw

⁽¹⁾ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/treaty/char_2012/oj/eng.

⁽²⁾ 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 (European Media Freedom Act) (Text with EEA relevance).