

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001921/26
to the Commission
Virginie Joron (Pfe)
(8 May 2026)**

Subject: How much did the Commission's pointless Europe-wide poster campaign cost?

The French Government has imposed an increase in daily hospital fees for visits to casualty. That increase has pushed up annual health insurance premiums by an average of EUR 106. Pensioners paid an average of EUR 1 451 for their health insurance in 2025 ⁽¹⁾.

The Commission, meanwhile, is wasting millions of euros on pointless poster campaigns. The 'You are EU' poster campaign — covering 1 200 cities over several weeks in 2022 and 2023 — cost around EUR 35 million ⁽²⁾.

Since 2021, the Commission has spent almost EUR 1 billion on communication.

In March 2026, it issued a call for media procurement tenders worth EUR 27 million. In May 2026, it launched a political campaign across the EU entitled 'Protect what matters: our democracy'. Most visibly, this involved posters being put up, including on bus shelters, lauding freedom of the press, freedom of speech and scientific freedom ⁽³⁾.

1. How much is this poster campaign costing?
2. Which media outlets that are critical of the Commission have received subsidies?
3. What instructions have sub-contractors working in Europe Direct centres received, given that they cannot take part in political activities ⁽⁴⁾?

Supporter ⁽⁵⁾

Submitted: 8.5.2026

**Answer given by President von der Leyen on behalf of the European Commission
(29 July 2026)**

1. The budget for the 'Protect What Matters: democracy' campaign amounted to approximately EUR 33 million in total. This includes the creative process and production, media buying, translation and placement in all EU languages in 27 Member States for the entire campaign across channels, both online and offline. The Commission has a responsibility to inform EU citizens and communicate about its activities.
2. No media outlets received subsidies in relation to this campaign.
3. The Commission regularly informs Europe Direct centres about current EU policy priorities, including campaigns. The centres may decide to promote such initiatives where they consider them relevant for citizens in their region and where their available resources allow it. No additional funding is provided to Europe Direct centres for the promotion of such communication campaigns.

¹ <https://www.quechoisir.org/action-que-choisir-ensemble-mutuelles-malgre-le-gel-des-tarifs-prevu-par-la-loi-les-hausses-de-cotisations-exploient-en-2026-n176018/>; <https://tinyurl.com/b53363s8>.

² <https://www.lopinion.fr/international/ce-que-signifie-la-campagne-de-com-leurope-cest-toi>; <https://europeanconservative.com/articles/news/brussels-accused-of-funneling-e130-million-to-media-to-influence-eu-election/>.

³ EUR 766 million (2021-2026). The Commission has earmarked EUR 116 million for communication in 2026: https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/eu-budget/performance-and-reporting/programme-performance-statements/communication-performance_en; https://commission.europa.eu/protect-what-matters-our-democracy_en; <https://tinyurl.com/yce7x67a>; https://commission.europa.eu/document/download/8116a83f-a91a-47bd-b1c9-c2b9481336a6_en?filename=C_2026_1_F1_ANNEX_EN_V2_P1_4460446.PDF.

⁴ The duties involved in holding political office are incompatible with those of a member of staff at a Europe Direct centre: <https://tinyurl.com/yc4ampp6>; point 2.4.2.

⁵ This question is supported by a Member other than the author: Jean-Paul Garraud (Pfe).