

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002177/26
to the Commission
Jorge Martín Frías (Pfe)
(28 May 2026)**

Subject: Use of European public funds for institutional campaigns on the ‘free press’

The Commission has launched a campaign under the slogan ‘Free press. Protect what matters’. A corresponding institutional advertising campaign on street furniture has been launched in the Member States.

On the campaign's official page, the Commission states that ‘in the EU, the press is free to ask tough questions, hold those in power accountable and provide reliable information sources’.

However, Eurobarometer data shows that only 56% of Europeans are satisfied with the state of media freedom, independence and pluralism in the EU. In addition, a significant proportion of citizens do not consider the media to provide fully reliable information or a sufficient diversity of perspectives.

1. What is the total cost of this campaign and what other activities have been financed under this umbrella?
2. Has funding been earmarked for media? If so, what mechanisms is the Commission using to ensure that the media receiving funding is independent?
3. Does the Commission consider it satisfactory that only 56% of Europeans say they are satisfied with the state of media freedom, independence and pluralism in the EU?

Submitted: 28.5.2026

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

1. The campaign ‘Protect What Matters: Democracy’ aims to highlight how democracy is reflected in society, with a focus on press freedom, freedom of expression, academic and creative freedom. The total budget for the campaign amounted to approximately EUR 33 million. This includes the creative process and production, media buying, translation into all official EU languages and placement across 27 Member States for the full campaign, across online and offline channels.
2. As part of this campaign, the Commission purchased advertising space. Out of the total budget, the share devoted to dissemination was about EUR 30 million. The selection of channels and media outlets was carried out to achieve the best possible coverage at national level, taking into account the campaign’s objectives and available resources, in full respect of editorial independence.
3. The findings of Eurobarometer surveys inform the Commission’s policy work. The Commission remains vigilant as regards possible threats to media freedom and pluralism in the European Union and has made defending these principles a priority, as is evidenced, *inter alia*, through the enforcement of the European Media Freedom Act ⁽¹⁾ and its annual Rule of Law Report.

⁽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 (European Media Freedom Act), OJ L, 2024/1083, 17.04.2024, available at <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1083/oj>.