

(English version)

**Priority question for written answer P-000293/26
to the Commission
Sandro Gozi (Renew)
(26 January 2026)**

Subject: Systematic distortion of the Hungarian media market

In April 2025, a formal state aid complaint was lodged with the Commission concerning the systematic distortion of the Hungarian media market. The complaint states that since 2015, approximately EUR 1.1 billion in state advertising funds has been channelled to government-aligned outlets.

This acts as an economic life support for unprofitable entities, creating a landscape tailor-made to benefit government-aligned outlets by protecting them from market realities. This practice starves independent competitors of revenue, forcing them into exile or market exit.

The Mérték complaint filed in 2019 also remains unanswered. Recent Hungarian court rulings against KESMA concerning the unlawful funding of pre-election publications add to the need for urgency.

1. What is the current status of the complaint made in April 2025, and when does the Commission intend to reach a preliminary decision?
2. How does the Commission justify the delay in handling the Mérték complaint, and will it provide a definitive timeline for its resolution?
3. Does the Commission agree that the scale of this state-sponsored advertising constitutes a structural distortion of the EU internal market, requiring immediate recovery action to restore the ‘market economy operator’ principle?

Submitted: 26.1.2026

**Answer given by Ms Ribera on behalf of the European Commission
(27 February 2026)**

Since the submission of the complaint in April 2025, the Commission has been carefully examining allegations contained in it, following up with the Hungarian authorities and the complainant.

The timing of the Commission’s assessment depends on various elements, such as the type of the allegations and the completeness of the information submitted to the Commission.

The Commission assesses state aid complaints based on objective criteria, as enshrined in the EU Treaties, State aid-related legislation as well as the case-law of the EU courts.

The Commission will inform the Hungarian authorities and the complainant of the developments of the case in due course, in compliance with the applicable procedural and substantive rules.

In relation to state advertising rules more generally, the Commission’s 2025 Rule of Law Report⁽¹⁾ reiterated a recommendation addressed to Hungary calling on it to ‘adopt measures to ensure fair and transparent distribution of advertising expenditure by the state and state-owned companies’.

Furthermore, on 11 December 2025 the Commission opened an infringement procedure against Hungary for failure to comply with several provisions under the European Media Freedom Act⁽²⁾, including provisions relating to the allocation of public funds for state advertising and supply or service contracts.

⁽¹⁾ https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/upholding-rule-law/rule-law/annual-rule-law-cycle/2025-rule-law-report_en.

⁽²⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1083/oj/eng> ; <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2018/1808/oj/eng>.