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The role of media for democracy

Motion for a resolution
presented by Mr Wodarg and others

This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only the members who have signed it

1. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe recalls the importance of freedom of expression and information in a democratic society. Any genuine democracy depends on the conscious political participation of its people through elections, referenda, political initiatives and political debates. Without fair access to pluralist information, ideas and opinions, generally provided by free media, people cannot take fully conscious political decisions as part of the democratic decision-making process.
2. Several instruments of the Council of Europe therefore take account of, and protect, this democratic necessity. Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights guarantees freedom of expression and information through free and pluralist media. The guidelines on election observation co-developed by the Venice Commission also relate to the functioning of the media. In its election observation reports on member states, the Assembly often noted shortcomings with regard to the media.
3. These mechanisms function, however, retroactively. Violations and shortcomings must have happened, or at least have been expected, and thus have had an impact on democratic decisions before they might be noted through these mechanisms.
4. The Assembly therefore resolves to develop, in co-operation with the Venice Commission, a catalogue of indicators for an appropriate legal and policy framework for well functioning media in a democracy, which will allow an objective analysis to be made of the media situation in all member states.

Signed (see overleaf)

*Signed*¹:

WODARG, Wolfgang, Germany, SOC
DÄUBLER-GMELIN, Herta, Germany, SOC
de PUIG, Lluís Maria, Spain, SOC
DROMBERG, Kaarina, Finland, EPP/CD
DUESUND, Åse Gunhild Woie, Norway, EPP/CD
DZEMBRITZKI, Detlef, Germany, SOC
HÖRSTER, Joachim, Germany, EPP/CD
HUSEYNOV, Rafael, Azerbaijan, ALDE
JAŘAB, Josef, Czech Republic, ALDE
KOROBAYNIKOV, Anatoliy, Russian Federation, EDG
LENGAGNE, Guy, France, SOC
Lord, RUSSELL-JOHNSTON, Russel, United Kingdom, ALDE
O'HARA, Edward, United Kingdom, SOC
RANDEGGER, Johannes, Switzerland, ALDE
RIESTER, Walter, Germany, SOC
RUŽIĆ, Branko, Serbia and Montenegro, SOC
SAKS, Katrin, Estonia, SOC
SCHEER, Hermann, Germany, SOC
SHYBKO, Vitaliy, Ukraine, SOC
STRÄSSER, Christoph, Germany, SOC
TEKELİOĞLU, Mehmet, Turkey, EPP/CD

¹ SOC: Socialist Group
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
EDG: European Democratic Group
UEL: Group of the Unified European Left
NR: not registered in a group