

Safeguarding media freedom in the EU – new rules

Submission by Creative Commons

March 18, 2022

Creative Commons (CC) welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on [Safeguarding media freedom in the EU – new rules](#).

CC fully supports the EU's initiative to enhance its legislative framework in order to further defend and protect media freedoms in the EU and globally.

We strongly believe journalism provides a crucial public service. Access to verifiable information and stories that question the underlying terrain of power is critical to all democratic societies. The EU is right to want to seek to defend, enhance and export these values.

The proliferation of digital services has exponentially changed the way in which we communicate, bringing both opportunities and challenges.

On the one hand, journalism as we know it faces existential new challenges. Sadly, the war in Ukraine is just one recent and shocking manifestation of the direct and indirect costs to society and the values which underpin it when media freedoms are discarded. Increasingly, journalists face work-halting financial and ethical challenges, as well as threats to their physical and digital safety, when sharing information online. Misinformation and disinformation campaigns in the media challenge collective notions of ground truth. They challenge the bedrock and meaning of the open internet and of the principles on which free and democratic societies are built.

On the other hand, journalism also faces newfound opportunities, as the tectonic plates of power shift in our shared digital landscape. We witness the rising role of nonprofit, independent, community-based media sources, filling gaps where traditional media organizations have shuttered; the rising power of crowdsourcing information and fact checking, and a powerful new role an open internet can play in sustaining the fundamental right to access to information and better knowledge sharing.

CC supports independent journalists and we know our licenses can play an impactful role. For example, the largest remaining independent news site in Russia [Meduza applied CC BY 4.0 licenses to more than 100 news articles](#) in a campaign to free journalist Ivan Golunov, who was arrested for his anti-corruption [investigations](#). Hundreds of Russian media outlets republished Golunov's pieces, helping put his work in the spotlight. According to Meduza, it may have been

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the first time in the history of Russian media that one journalist's articles were published at the same time in every outlet. It marked an unprecedented campaign of solidarity with Golunov, first among journalists and later with the general public. As a result: Ivan Golunov was released days later. With Meduza as well as independent news organizations [in Ukraine](#) now under threat, allies around the world are demonstrating a swell of support: more than 4M has been fundraised via crowdsourcing platforms GoFundMe and Patreon. And there are more open, collaborative ways in which we can support journalists.

CC encourages journalists to openly license their outputs, including coverage of the war in Ukraine, using CC licenses, giving them the skills to do so in our first [open journalism training](#). We at CC are eager to play an active role in the EU's policymaking process in order to ensure that our licenses and our community can make a significant, positive contribution to defending media freedoms at home and abroad in the public interest.

We look forward to providing practical input and advice to the European Commission and the EU legislators as they develop the EU media freedom act in order to ensure the public interest is mainstreamed into policymaking. This will enhance the sharing of knowledge, with open-access information providing the strongest collective bulwark against the societally corrosive effects of mis/disinformation in the public arena.

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