

**Question for written answer E-000738/2022/rev.1
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Dimitrios Papadimoulis (The Left)

Subject: Risk of suffocating government control over the Athens News Agency - Macedonian Press Agency (ANA-MPA)

Following the decision of the Greek Government to increase from seven to nine the board members of the ANA-MPA¹, its CEO has announced that the two extra members appointed by the Government will not be sitting on the board in any official capacity. As a result, government-appointed members will, for the first time, hold an absolute majority on the board. Those working for the ANA-MPA², the Pan-Hellenic Federation of Journalists' Unions³ and the Union of Athens Daily News Journalists⁴ are expressing concern at this new development on the ANA-MPA board, which is strengthening government control and undermining the independence of the agency.

It should be noted that, since 2019, the Athens-Macedonia News Agency has been supervised by the Prime Minister's office reporting directly to the Prime Minister himself⁵. In 2020, the Council of State placed radio and television broadcasting under direct state control, going beyond the notion of state oversight, under which responsibility for monitoring and imposing sanctions resides solely with the National Council for Radio and Television rather than central government⁶.

In the light of this:

1. Can the Commission give its views regarding this increased government hold over the ANA-MPA?
2. Does the Commission consider that it runs counter to the principles of media freedom and pluralism enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, principles that the European democracy action plan is seeking to underpin⁷?

¹ Ministerial Decision No 139344 ΕΞ 2021 (Government Gazette, Series II, No 5263/12.11.2021)

² <https://www.esiea.gr/psifisma-ton-ergazomenon-toy-ape-mpe/>

³ <https://www.poesy.gr/i-poesy-zita-na-min-allaksei-i-synthesi-to/>

⁴ <https://www.esiea.gr/adiapragmateyti-i-aneksartisia-kai-i-p/>

⁵ Articles 28(4) and 21(1) of Law 4622/2019 (Government Gazette series I 133/7.8.2019)

⁶ https://www.avgi.gr/politiki/369764_hastoyki-stin-kybernisi-gia-tin-epopteia-mitsotaki-se-ert-kai-ape,
<https://www.iefimerida.gr/ellada/enstaseis-apo-ste-gia-tis-armodiotites-kai-tin-stelehosi-tis-proedrias-tis-kybernis>

⁷ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM%3A2020%3A790%3AFIN>