While balanced or pluralistic media reporting is not an issue regulated currently by EU media law and in particular the Audiovisual Media Services Directive\(^1\), the Commission is committed to safeguarding free and independent media, which is central for any democracy and an essential part of the rule of law system.

As part of its annual Rule of Law Report, the Commission is assessing the situation regarding media freedom and pluralism in the Member States\(^2\). While the situation regarding media freedom and pluralism diverges, EU citizens generally enjoy a comparatively high level of access to diverse sources of information, including in the context of the current Ukraine-Russia conflict.

With the European Media Freedom Act, the Commission will advance the internal market in the media sector, thereby strengthening also media freedom and pluralism.

The Commission would like to stress that Russia’s unjustified military aggression against Ukraine grossly violates international law and the principles of the United Nations Charter and undermines European and global security and stability. Russia bears full responsibility for this act of aggression. Russia should immediately cease its military action and fully respect Ukraine’s territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence within its internationally recognised borders.

Within that context, EU sanctions temporarily restrict the distribution of Russian state-controlled media which have been instrumental in Russia’s systematic, international campaign of information manipulation and distortion of facts, which poses a significant and direct threat to the EU’s public order and security\(^3\).

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1 Directives 2010/13/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 March 2010 on the coordination of certain provisions laid down by law, regulation or administrative action in Member States concerning the provision of audiovisual media services (Audiovisual Media Services Directive).
2 The 2022 Rule of Law Report, including its 27 country chapters, was published on 13 July 2022.