

**Priority question for written answer P-002757/2021
to the Commission**
Rule 138
Maria Spyraiki (PPE)

Subject: Evidence of ministerial interference in the Greek media in 2015-2016

A preliminary investigation committee in the Greek Parliament is hearing a very serious case concerning the supervision and operation of the media as part of its investigation into possible criminal wrongdoing by former Minister Nikos Pappas in connection with the granting of television licences.

In his testimony, witness Christos Kalogritsas refers to the orderly establishment of the Documento newspaper, which is sympathetic to the SYRIZA government. He also refers to the smear campaign led by that very newspaper against the wife of the then leader of the opposition, now Prime Minister. According to his testimony, Mr Kalogritsas says that he 'only took orders from Pappas'. He also accuses the former minister of having participated in the tender through a surrogate.

In view of the above, and following the Commission's reply P-014200/2015¹ to my question of 28 October 2015 concerning direct government interference in the press' independence by way of certain tailor-made changes to the national regulation whereby a new framework for the licensing of television channels is introduced, transferring the power of approval from the independent authority to the Minister in question:

1. What is the Commission's view of the alleged involvement of the then minister for media Nikos Pappas in the tender for awarding television licences?
2. What is its view of the alleged interference by the minister in the funding, establishment and operation of the Documento newspaper, which is carrying out a series of attacks against family members of both SYRIZA's political opponents and institutional stakeholders?

¹ https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/P-8-2015-014200_EN.html