



## Work Programme 2026

*This document was drawn up under the responsibility of the Vice-Chair, as the incoming Chair of the Media Board in 2026. This final version of the Work Programme is adopted by the Media Board in accordance with the Rules of Procedure.*

### Introduction

The European Commission's 2025 Rule of Law Report<sup>1</sup> paints a clear picture: across the European Union, the core public value of free and independent media is under increasing pressure. Monitoring developments across Member States, the report documents issues relating to media market concentrations, political influences, and declining safeguards for journalists. This clearly demonstrates the urgent necessity to safeguard public values in the media landscape with a clear strategic vision. As an independent advisory body at European Union level, the Media Board finds itself in a dynamic playing field. Developments in technology and regulation present us with new challenges but also offer opportunities for strategic discussions. The Media Board is committed to safeguarding the core public values that form the foundation of a resilient and democratic media landscape. These values include **media freedom** and **pluralism**, as well as the **cultural** and **social diversity**, and the protection of **individual fundamental rights**, most notably the **freedom of expression**. This right is balanced with the need to ensure safety of citizens, for example **to protect minors** from harmful content. In an age where media companies are increasingly operating cross-border and online, the role of the Media Board in safeguarding these public values is more critical than ever. Democracy depends on an informed public, for which free and pluralistic media is essential.

This strategic Work Programme clarifies the priorities of the Media Board for 2026. The **Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD)**<sup>2</sup> is the cornerstone of audiovisual media regulation in the EU, providing the foundational legal framework. This framework is now strengthened by **the European Media Freedom Act (EMFA)**<sup>3</sup>, which has also formally established the Media Board. In 2025, the effective establishment of the Media Board has been a priority. The Media Board 2025-2027 Multiannual Strategy<sup>4</sup> as well as the 2025

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<sup>1</sup> [2025 Rule of Law Report - European Commission](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Consolidated Audiovisual Media Services Directive 2018](#)

<sup>3</sup> [European Media Freedom Act](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Media Board 2025-2027 Multiannual Strategy](#)

Work Programme<sup>5</sup> played a fundamental role, with the Spanish Presidency taking on the challenging task of steering the Media Board through this transitional year. The work carried out during this period, including both the internal processes of the Media Board and its efforts to prepare for its competences under EMFA, has set the solid foundations for the Work Programme 2026. The Work Programme 2026 builds on the Media Board 2025-2027 Multiannual Strategy but also draws from the results of both an internal and public consultation on the Media Board's priorities for 2026<sup>6</sup>, the tasks granted in the EMFA and AVMSD.

With the evaluation and review of the AVMSD, due to be carried out by the European Commission this year, 2026 will be a significant year for media policy in the EU. Taking into account the new competences under EMFA and developments in Member States, the Media Board has the opportunity to provide valuable contributions across a wide range of topics. It's important to recognize that not every topic can be addressed in this Work Programme and that **prioritization** is essential to ensure focus and impact. Therefore, the activities presented in this Work Programme will be delivered through four Working Groups, based on the four strategic priorities identified in the Multiannual Strategy: Media Board, Media Regulators, Media Markets, and People & Citizens. Together, we are creating a Media Board which acts as a strategic partner in ensuring legal frameworks that safeguard public values in a rapidly evolving digital media landscape.

### Developing additional expertise

With this year's focus on prioritisation, the Media Board won't be able to directly address every topic. In the spirit of the former ERGA Academy, high level thematic meetings will be organised to discuss additional relevant subjects. However, it should also be noted there is a dedicated budget for studies and substantive support from members of the Secretariat. These resources can be used to support the Work Programme or to address topics outside of the Work Programme. Studies can be procured on behalf of the Board and procured by the Commission in line with the EU Financial Regulation within the framework of the Creative Europe Work Programme 2026.

When considering matters beyond the audiovisual media sector, the Media Board will consult representatives from other relevant media sectors (Article 12 EMFA). This consultation mechanism has been set up under the responsibility of WG6 of the Media Board's 2025 Work Programme. Where needed, the Chair and the Steering Group, and especially WG chairs, can coordinate the use of this consultation mechanism.

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<sup>5</sup> [2025 Media Board Work Programme](#)

<sup>6</sup> [The Media Board consults stakeholders on the draft Work Programme 2026 - European Union](#)

## Strategic Communication

Strategic communication is essential for the Media Board to deliver clear and consistent messages to stakeholders and to respond effectively to strategic issues. It also ensures engagement with diverse stakeholders in a transparent and inclusive manner. In 2026, the Chair will continue the work initiated by the Communications Group. To support strategic communication, the Chair will be responsible for drafting a comprehensive communication plan. Within the Communications Group, the guiding principles will be efficiency, transparency, and inclusiveness.

## Strategic collaboration with other EU regulatory networks

Collaboration with other EU regulatory networks is essential for the Media Board to strengthen the protection of public values underpinning a robust and democratic media environment. The Media Board should continue to collaborate with other regulatory networks, such as:

- European Board for Digital Services (EBDS);
- Network of National Contact Points for the TTPA Regulation;
- European Competition Network (ECN);
- Consumer Protection Cooperation Network;
- DMA High Level Expert Group.

With closer collaboration and coordination, the EU regulatory networks can maximize collective impact and ensure efficient use of resources. Sharing information about ongoing activities can help prevent duplication of efforts and promote transparency. This would allow each network to focus on their strengths, while also complementing each other where appropriate.

Beyond coordination, the Media Board could consider taking next steps to enhance cooperation by jointly addressing shared challenges and creating a structured framework for cooperation.

## Overview Work Programme 2026

### WG1: Audiovisual Media Regulation

*Providing expertise and guidance for a convergent European regulatory approach.*

AVMSD Evaluation

Media-related  
Legislative Initiatives

AVMSD in practice

### WG2: Media Freedom and Pluralism in the Internal Market

*Ensuring an effectively functioning internal media market in a constantly evolving environment.*

**The functioning of the internal market for media services**  
(opinions on Articles 21, 22 and 23 of EMFA)

Monitoring the internal market

Other EMFA related aspects

### WG3: Protection of Citizens in the Online Environment

*Ensuring European citizens are properly protected from illegal and harmful content, including online, and empowered in the informational space.*

**Very Large Online platforms**  
(opinions on Article 18 (6) of EMFA)

Protection of minors online

### WG4: Effective Cooperation

*Ensuring a smooth launch of the Media Board and an effective deployment of its activity.*

**Cross-border challenges**  
(opinions on Articles 14, 15 and 17 of EMFA)

Stakeholder cooperation

Internal cooperation

## WG1: Audiovisual Media Regulation

**Strategic priority:** *Providing expertise and guidance for a convergent European regulatory approach, specifically for evaluation of the AVMSD.*

The AVMSD is the foundation of audiovisual media regulation in the EU, making 2026 significant as the Directive will be evaluated. In continuation of the WG1 under the Media Board's 2025 Work Programme, the aim of WG1 is to facilitate a consistent and effective approach to the EU media regulatory framework, as applied and enforced by NRAs, and contribute to contribute to policymaking by offering expertise and guidance.

There are numerous areas of EU regulation where Media Board members will have the opportunity to contribute their expertise to the European Commission, but also to other Media Board members. WG1 is designated to prepare input on forthcoming legislative initiatives, with members encouraged to collaborate and feed into this input based on their national experiences.

1. **AVMSD Evaluation:** In 2026, the EC is expected to publish the results of the evaluation of the AVMSD. Considering the importance of the AVMSD, WG1 will specifically *prepare and provide input on the evaluation and the potential revision of the AVMSD* during the first semester. This work should build on existing reports and past efforts, making use of the knowledge and insights already gathered during previous years. In particular, WG1 will draw on the work carried out by WG1 and WG4 under the Media Board's 2025 Work Programme. Additionally, insights can be gathered from the work carried out by the Media Board's predecessor ERGA, which monitored the AVMSD and identified areas for potential revision. Other views will also be taken into account during these preparations, such as EPRA and the Council of Europe.
2. **Media-related legislative initiatives:** Media regulators have developed extensive expertise on audiovisual media matters. Staying up to date on relevant EU-legislative initiatives is essential for the Media Board to proactively contribute meaningful expertise to the policymaking process in a timely manner. This should not be limited to the AVMSD and EMFA, but also include other relevant media-related initiatives, such as the European Democracy Shield, the Digital Fairness Act (DFA) or the Transparency and Targeting of Political Ads (TTPA). Early awareness allows members to engage constructively, anticipate potential impacts, and contribute to shaping balanced and effective legislation. By being informed and actively involved, members can help ensure that emerging laws reflect the diversity of experiences across the EU. Therefore, WG1 will *coordinate updates on relevant legislative developments and where appropriate, coordinate input for consultations.*

3. **AVMSD in practice:** Exchanging best practices and legal interpretations can help clarify complex legislation and support mutual understanding. At the same time, more structured discussions between members and subject matter experts on how to implement EU legislation would promote greater consistency and ensure that common challenges are addressed effectively across the EU. This WG will *facilitate quarterly thematic meetings between members on the implementation of the AVMSD*, to be further specified in the Terms of Reference. Topics to consider for these thematic meetings include: the prominence of services of general interest (Article 7a AVMSD); the financial contributions (Article 13(2) AVMSD); the development of media literacy skills (Article 33a(2) AVMSD); ‘appropriate measures’ taken by VSPs (Article 28b AVMSD). In this context, members should also be able to put forward specific cases for discussion.

### **WG1: Audiovisual Media Regulation**

1. **AVMSD Evaluation:** Prepare and provide input on the evaluation and the potential revision of the AVMSD.
2. **Media-related Legislative Initiatives:**
  - a. Coordinate updates on relevant legislative developments.
  - b. Coordinate input for consultations.
3. **AVMSD in practice:** Facilitate quarterly thematic meetings members on the implementation of the AVMSD.

## WG2: Media Freedom and Pluralism in the Internal Market

**Strategic priority:** *Ensuring an effectively functioning internal media market in a constantly evolving environment.*

As mentioned in the Multiannual Strategy, the viability of the media sector continues to be a priority for the Media Board for 2026. In order to ensure an efficiently functioning internal media market, the viability of the media sector must be taken into consideration and safeguarded. Special consideration should be given to the new topics introduced by EMFA such as the assessment of media market concentrations, national measures and the transparency of media-ownership. Building on the work of WG2 and WG3 of the Media Board's 2025 Work Programme, in 2026 the Media Board will actively contribute to the functioning of the internal market for media services and continue to monitor the relevant developments in the media sector.

- 1. The functioning of the internal market for media services:** WG2 will continue to *monitor the application of Articles 21, 22 and 23 of EMFA*. These articles safeguard media independence and pluralism for media services in the internal market. Now that the Media Board has adopted its internal guidance for the application of these Articles, continued monitoring is necessary to ensure effective application at national level and European level. The monitoring can be done for example by compiling relevant cases at national level, sharing relevant experiences of members, and identifying issues which arise in the application of the EMFA provisions. This work can provide relevant input for members and for the guidelines to be drafted by the Commission on Article 22(2) of EMFA. If relevant, the WG2 Chair will coordinate the Ad Hoc Expert Groups to draft opinions on Articles 21, 22 and 23 of EMFA.
- 2. Other EMFA related aspects:** This WG should also cover other EMFA related aspects, specifically by *organising quarterly thematic meetings and/or roundtables on the implementation of EMFA and new EMFA tasks* on which NRAs would need to discuss and exchange best practices. This would allow the Media Board members to look into national matters and promote cooperation and the effective exchange of information, experience and best practices. These meetings should serve as a forum where NRAs can exchange best practices and discuss challenges regarding other EMFA related aspects not covered by other Working Groups, and to be further specified in the Terms of Reference.
- 3. Monitoring the internal market:** In light of the rapidly evolving risks and technological developments in the internal market for media services, the prospective economic viability of the market should be monitored. as stipulated in EMFA art.26. This will help to identify vulnerabilities in media pluralism and editorial independence, and support efforts to improve governance, data quality, and risk management. In accordance with Article 26 of EMFA, the Commission shall ensure that the internal market for media services, including risks to and

progress in its functioning, is independently and continuously monitored. This WG will *be consulted by the Commission* in accordance with Art. 26 EMFA and will provide input for the definition of key performance indicators for methodological safeguards to protect the objectivity of and criteria for selecting the researchers for the monitoring exercise. Moreover, the results of the annual monitoring exercise shall be consulted with the Media Board.

## **WG2: Media Freedom and Pluralism in the Internal Market**

1. **The functioning of the internal market for media services:**
  - a. Monitor the application of Articles 21, 22 and 23 of EMFA.
  - b. Coordinate opinions on Articles 21, 22 and 23 of EMFA.
  - c. Provide input for guidelines on Article 22 of EMFA.
2. **Other EMFA related aspects:** Organise quarterly thematic meetings and/or roundtables on the implementation of EMFA and new EMFA tasks.
3. **Monitoring the internal market:** Consult with the Commission on the Article 26 of EMFA monitoring exercise.



## WG3: Protection of Citizens in the Online Environment

**Strategic priority:** *Ensuring European citizens are properly protected from illegal and harmful content, including online, and empowered in the information space.*

Ensuring European citizens are properly protected from illegal and harmful content, especially online, is a fundamental priority for safeguarding democracy. In particular, the spread of disinformation and the exposure of minors to harmful content present urgent and growing threats. As such, both the topics of disinformation (including through the Media Board participation in the Task Force of the Code of Conduct) and the protection of minors are strategic priorities for the Media Board in 2026. In addition, Media and Information Literacy (MIL) will be addressed as a cross-cutting theme across all WG3 activities. MIL is closely linked to combating disinformation and to strengthening the protection of minors through information and digital literacy.

1. **Very Large Online platforms:** Online platforms hold significant power to shape public opinion through content shared on their services. In line with Article 19 of EMFA, the Media Board will organise, at least on a yearly basis, *a structured dialogue between providers of very large online platforms, representatives of media service providers and representatives of civil society*. The focus of the dialogue should be to foster access to diverse offerings of independent media content on very large online platforms, and to monitor adherence to self-regulatory initiatives aiming to protect users from harmful content (including the Code of Conduct on Disinformation and Media Literacy initiatives). Additionally, this dialogue should foster the exchange of experiences and best practices in the application of Article 18 of EMFA. This WG will therefore also be responsible for coordinating the Ad Hoc Expert Group for opinions on Article 18(6) of EMFA. The Media Board will share the results of the structured dialogue with the EC and make the results publicly available. If needed, DMA and DSA related topics could be raised in this working group.
2. **Protection of minors online:** In 2026, the Media Board should investigate the possibility of organising and performing a *common supervisory action* by NRAs. A common supervisory action is a coordinated effort by several national regulators to monitor compliance with a specific harmonised rule and, where appropriate, issue a joint statement on its implementation. NRAs may contribute to this action, however not all Media Board members are automatically affiliated, and it is recognized that NRAs may not participate for various reasons. The protection of minors should be considered as a priority topic, for example in the context of influencer marketing. Several ERGA and Media Board reports have addressed the topic of influencers, as well as WG1 in 2025 Work Programme. These reports have identified challenges related to supervising vloggers and implementing rules, including those concerning commercial communication and the protection of minors. The common supervisory action shall focus on a topic to be further

determined by members within this WG. The results can serve as valuable input for discussions on legal developments and the ex-post evaluation of the AVMSD. To prevent thematic overlaps, the particular supervisory action topic will be excluded from the 'AVMSD in practice' section of WG1. The results should be shared with the Commission but also made publicly available.

### **WG3: Protection of Citizens in the Online Environment**

1. **Very Large Online platforms:**
  - a. Organise a structured dialogue between VLOPs, representatives of media service providers and representatives of civil society.
  - b. Share the results of the structured dialogue with the EC and publicly.
  - c. Coordinate opinions on Article 18(6) of EMFA.
2. **Protection of minors online:** Organise and perform a common supervisory action.

## WG4: Effective Cooperation

**Strategic priority:** *Ensuring continuation of the effective cooperation within the Media Board and an effective deployment of its activities.*

In 2026, a continued priority of the Work Programme is to support the establishment of the Media Board. The launch of the Media Board has been an opportunity to design and implement rules for internal governance and functioning of the Media Board. Under the Work Programme of 2025, many rules and procedures have already been established and implemented. To continue this work, in 2026 WG4 will focus on:

1. **Cross-border challenges:** Within the Media Board, cooperation is a cornerstone of effective supervision and addressing cross-border challenges. This cooperation should be facilitated through the system of single points of contact, ensuring clarity and efficiency in exchanges among NRAs. As such, the Media Board should continue to *monitor the implemented cooperation mechanisms* under Article 14 and 15 of EMFA. Moreover, special consideration should be given to the monitoring and coordination of measures under the application of Article 17 EMFA. WG4 will also continue to look into resources to support internal cooperation, such as IT systems and archives. When relevant, the WG Chair will also be responsible for coordinating the Ad Hoc Expert Groups to draft opinions for EMFA articles on cross border cooperation. Specifically, in the event of a disagreement between NRAs, as per Articles 14(5) and 15(3) of EMFA and on the coordination of national measures by NRAs as per Article 17(2) of EMFA.
2. **Stakeholder cooperation:** WG4 takes the lead in *coordinating engagement with non-EU and non-regulatory stakeholders*, building on the work of WG6 in 2025. This includes, for example, discussions with organisations as UNESCO or collaboration with EPRA. By engaging in collaboration with stakeholders we can harness their collective expertise, ensuring outcomes that are more efficient, well-informed, and impactful. This work furthermore provides a natural platform for further development of the framework of the consultation mechanism for Article 12 of EMFA, building on the foundations laid by WG6 in 2025.
3. **Internal cooperation:** At the end of 2026 the Rules of Procedure will have been in effect for over a year. Therefore, it would be appropriate to have *a short evaluation on the application of the Rules of Procedure*, as well as on the potential need for additional procedural guidelines. The end of the year would be a good moment for a discussion on any potential updates in 2027, in close collaboration with the Chair and the Steering Group.

## **WG4: Effective Cooperation**

1. **Cross-border challenges:**
  - a. Monitor the implemented cooperation mechanisms under Article 14 and 15 of the EMFA.
  - b. Look into resources to support the internal cooperation.
  - c. Coordinate opinions on Articles 14, 15 and 17 of EMFA.
2. **Stakeholder cooperation:** coordinate engagement with non-EU and non-regulatory stakeholders
3. **Internal cooperation:** Short evaluation on the application of the Rules of Procedure.

## **Conclusion**

In summary, the forthcoming year promises to be pivotal for the Media Board as it seeks to address key challenges such as fostering cultural and social diversity in audiovisual media, safeguarding media pluralism and editorial independence, tackling disinformation, protecting minors online, and strengthening effective cooperation across borders and with other EU networks. By fostering dialogue, promoting best practices, and enhancing collaboration, the Media Board aims to create a safer and more resilient media landscape, in full respect of freedom of expression and information. Looking ahead, we anticipate a dynamic and ambitious year, where, through collective effort, we strive to uphold the core values and strategic objectives that underpin the Media Board's mission. We are well positioned to make meaningful progress towards a robust, independent, and democratic media environment in Europe.

Together, let us lead the way in upholding a resilient, independent, and democratic media environment in Europe, making the Media Board a driving force for safeguarding public values in the digital age.

## Annex 1: Overview Deliverables Work Programme 2026

### WG1: Audiovisual Media Regulation

1. **AVMSD Evaluation:** Prepare and provide input on the evaluation and the potential revision of the AVMSD.
2. **Media-related Legislative Initiatives:**
  - a. Coordinate updates on relevant legislative developments.
  - b. Coordinate input for consultations.
3. **AVMSD in practice:** Facilitate quarterly thematic meetings members on the implementation of the AVMSD.

### WG2: Media Freedom and Pluralism in the Internal Market

1. **The functioning of the internal market for media services:**
  - a. Monitor the application of Articles 21, 22 and 23 of EMFA.
  - b. Coordinate **opinions** on Articles 21, 22 and 23 of EMFA.
2. **Other EMFA related aspects:** Organise quarterly thematic meetings and/or roundtables on the implementation of EMFA and new EMFA tasks.
3. **Monitoring the internal market:** Consult with the Commission on the Article 26 of EMFA monitoring exercise.

### WG3: Protection of Citizens in the Online Environment

1. **Very Large Online platforms:**
  - a. Organise a structured dialogue between VLOPs, representatives of media service providers and representatives of civil society.
  - b. Share the results of the structured dialogue with the EC and publicly.
  - c. Coordinate **opinions** on Article 18(6) of EMFA.
2. **Protection of minors online:** Organise and perform a common supervisory action.

### WG4: Effective Cooperation

1. **Cross-border challenges:**
  - a. Monitor the implemented cooperation mechanisms under Articles 14, 15 and 17 of EMFA.
  - b. Look into resources to support the internal cooperation.
  - c. Coordinate **opinions** on Articles 14, 15 and 17 of EMFA.
2. **Stakeholder cooperation:** coordinate engagement with non-EU and non-regulatory stakeholders
3. **Internal cooperation:** Short evaluation on the application of the Rules of Procedure.