



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**

**PRESS RELEASE**

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## **Digital Agenda: Commission opens consultations on media freedom and pluralism and audiovisual media regulator independence**

The European Commission launches today two public consultations, open until 14<sup>th</sup> June 2013. The consultations formalise a debate started by [recommendations](#) made in January 2013 by an independent High Level Group (HLG) on Media Freedom and Pluralism convened by the Commission.

The [first and wider consultation](#) invites comments on issues such as the scope of the EU's competence to act in order to protect media freedom, the respective roles of public authorities and self-regulation or protection of journalistic sources in Europe. The consultation's findings will allow the Commission to identify if broad support exists for European or national action in areas covered by the EU Treaties.

The [second consultation](#) is specifically limited to the High Level Group's recommendation that audiovisual regulatory bodies should be independent. Audiovisual media are already subject to EU regulation. The consultation asks whether independence could be better ensured if Article 30 of the Audiovisual and Media Services (AVMS) Directive were revised.

Neelie Kroes, European Commission Vice-President said: "In the EU we face threats to our fundamental freedoms, such as media freedom and pluralism across Europe. The High Level Group sent a strong signal that we need to take decisive action to ensure the freedom and pluralism of our media services in the future. Media pluralism is an important part of democracy, I urge you to give your views to these consultations."

## Background

The AVMS Directive (AVMSD) aims at a Single Market for audiovisual media services and at legal certainty for Europe's TV and audiovisual industry. It creates a level playing field for both broadcast and on-demand audiovisual media services across frontiers; it aims at preserving cultural diversity, at protecting children and consumers, at safeguarding media pluralism and at combating hatred on grounds of race, gender, nationality and religion.

## Useful links

Digital Agenda [website](#)

Neelie Kroes' [website](#)

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