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# Greens/EFA launch plan to improve media freedom and journalist protection

## World Press Freedom Day

To mark World Press Freedom Day tomorrow (May 3rd), the **Greens/EFA** group in the European Parliament will launch plans to improve media freedom and journalist protection in the European Union together with a petition directed at the European Commission. The Greens/EFA group are calling for financial support for investigative journalism and for the European Commission to contribute to the safety of journalists by strengthening the ability of Europol to support national investigations into serious attacks against journalists. The plan also includes calls for the next Commission to act on: market concentration in the media sector; for obligations on the media to proactively publish information about their ownership structures as well as potential conflicts of interest; and for EU legislation to prevent strategic litigation (SLAPP) against journalists.

**Philippe Lamberts**, President of the Greens/EFA group in the European Parliament, comments:

*"A free and independent media landscape, where journalists are safe from persecution and threats, is the backbone of our democracies. Every time a media outlet is threatened, each time a journalist is attacked, all of our freedoms are at stake. Unfortunately, we have seen too many people killed on European soil for speaking truth to power.*

*"Journalists must be protected from legal and physical attacks. The media must be free from the political influence of oligarchs and politicians alike and investigative journalists must be supported in the vital work they do. Protecting the press is too important to be lost between the cracks in the corridors of the Berlaymont, which is why the Commission must come out with a strong coherent strategy for guaranteeing media freedom."*

**Benedek Jávor**, Greens/EFA group spokesperson on transparency and democracy, comments:

*"Only a handful of beleaguered outlets and brave journalists have survived Viktor Orbán's onslaught against the press in Hungary; the Maltese government continue to persecute the family of murdered journalist Daphne Caruana Galizia; and oligarchs like Andrej Babiš are buying up titles to promote their own propaganda as a route to power.*

*"When the concentration of media ownership in a country is too closely aligned to one individual, party or organisation it can have devastating effects for democracy. The European Commission must act on ensuring the independence of media, that a plurality of different voices can be heard, and that conflicts of interest cannot be allowed to blur the lines between politics and press. It's essential that the EU uses all the possible tools at its disposal to protect media freedom, which is why we're launching this petition."*

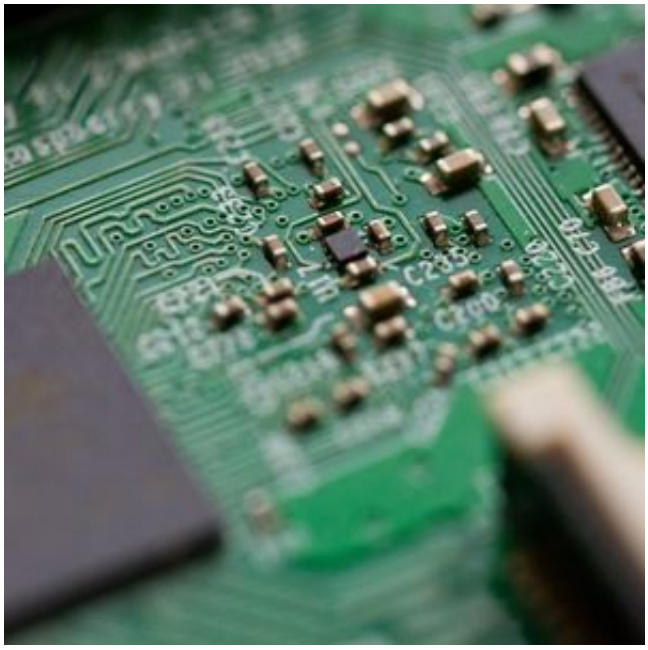
The Greens/EFA group plan for media freedom can be found here: https://www.greens-efa.eu/en/article/document/greens-efa-proposals-on-media-freedom-in-the-eu/

The '**Defend press freedom now!**' petition can be found here: https://www.change.org/p/european-commission-defend-press-freedom-now

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