

# ***Steering Committee on Media and Information Society***



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## **Comments of the Steering Committee on Media and Information Society on the Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 2074(2015) "Increasing transparency of media ownership"**

1. The Steering Committee on Media and Information Society (CDMSI) welcomes the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) Recommendation on increasing transparency of media ownership. It tackles a complex problem of fundamental significance for media freedom in Europe.

2. Media pluralism and the transparency of media ownership represent basic requirements for the establishment of a viable media system and a healthy media environment. The CDMSI agrees with the conclusion of the PACE that knowledge about ownership relationships in the media field enables the public to critically evaluate information and opinions circulated. Transparency of media ownership is necessary for the appropriate regulation of media concentration, which, if excessive, may have a detrimental effect on media diversity and pluralism and generally on the quality of democracy. Increasing transparency of media ownership is all the more desirable in a rapidly changing media environment where traditional media compete with new media services, intermediaries, aggregators, search engines and telecommunications operators.

3. In its last plenary meeting (16-19 June 2015), the CDMSI discussed the themes that should be present in its future work and agreed that media pluralism and transparency of media ownership deserve priority. Therefore, the Committee fully supports the PACE recommendation to further update and develop Council of Europe standards in this field, taking fully into account the Recommendation No. R (94) 13 on measures to promote media transparency and Recommendation CM/Rec(2007)2 on media pluralism and diversity of media content. The CDMSI stands ready to contribute to develop strengthened standards in this field in next biennium of its work.

4. The CDMSI considers it important to cooperate with other organisations, such as the European Union, in the field of media pluralism and transparency of media ownership. Noting the important work of the European Platform for Regulatory Authorities (EPRA), the CDMSI considers it a very good forum for the exchange of information, cases and best practices. Therefore, it supports further co-operation following the call for it made by the PACE in the particular topic of transparency of media ownership.

5. The CDMSI also supports the recommendation of the PACE to invite the European Audiovisual Observatory to consider extending its action on this topic. The MAVISE database is an invaluable source of information about the European media landscape. An extension on the information provided by the database should be linked to a reflection on its feasibility, means and scope.

6. Finally, the CDMSI recalls that the Council of Europe is promoting media pluralism and the transparency of media ownership through its co-operation activities. For example, several regional conferences on transparency on media ownership and preventing media concentration were organised, notably in South East-Europe (2014), Ukraine (2015) as well as in the context of other technical assistance activities.