

## **Accompanying the transitional process towards democracy in Tunisia with the promotion of freedom of expression, independence of the media and public access to information**

Country	Tunisia
Funding	Norway (voluntary contribution)
Implementation	Council of Europe
Duration	18 months (15 December 2014 – 30 June 2016)
Total project funds received	€ 238 019
Objectives	The overall objective of the project is to strengthen the legal and institutional framework for freedom of expression and freedom of the media in Tunisia.
Specific objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- A legal and institutional environment, which provides safeguards for freedom of expression, independence of the media and public access to information, which is more conducive for the work of journalists and which takes into account the significant differences between print, broadcast and online media, is in place;</li><li>- The independence and the effective functioning, including sufficient human and financial resources, of the audiovisual regulatory body are promoted; its members and staff receive training and technical advice in order to effectively implement the laws including through developing and enforcing secondary legislation; cooperation with relevant bodies of the Council of Europe (in particular the European Audiovisual Observatory) is strengthened;</li><li>- The transition to genuine public-service media, as required in a democratic society, is initiated; a governance system is put in place with a view to ensure independence, transparency, and accountability of the public-service media.</li></ul>
Expected results	<p><b>For specific objective 1:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- The media related legislative and regulatory framework comes closer to international and Council of Europe standards and is completed accordingly;</li><li>- The conclusions and recommendations included in the legal opinions are reflected in the legislation.</li></ul>

**For specific objective 2:**

- Formal and de facto independence of the regulatory body is ensured in line with the international and Council of Europe standards;
- Fair and transparent licensing procedures are put in place and implemented in line with international and European standards;
- A monitoring unit and a complaints mechanism are set up and cases of violations are handled effectively and fairly, especially during electoral periods;
- The members and the staff participate in relevant regional and international professional networks and discussion groups;
- Cooperation with/membership in the European Audiovisual Observatory is established;
- Increased diversity and pluralism in the broadcasting sector.

**For specific objective 3:**

- Legal safeguards to protect the independence of the public-service media are put in place;
- The statutory and governance framework of the public service media guarantees editorial and operational independence as well as appropriate funding;
- Internal guidelines and codes are elaborated and/or reviewed;
- Number of staff members and journalists trained on the specific culture of public service media, in particular transparency and responsibility.

Partners	Public authorities (Members of the Parliament, relevant ministries, the Audiovisual Regulatory Authority (Haute autorité indépendante de la communication audiovisuelle - HAICA), journalism schools in Tunisia, journalism professional associations, self-regulatory bodies, national human rights NGOs
Beneficiaries	Members of the Parliament, representatives of public authorities, members of the HAICA (Haute autorité indépendante de la communication audiovisuelle), representatives and staff of public media, networks of citizen journalists, civil society.
Main activities	Thematic round-tables and seminars, legal analysis and expertise, workshops and in-house trainings.