



Council of Europe  
Conseil de l'Europe



# FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA FREEDOM ACTIVITIES OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

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<sup>TWEETS</sup>  
'A lie ~~gets~~ halfway around  
the world <sup>WIDE WEB</sup> before the truth has a  
chance to ~~put its pants on~~'

WINSTON CHURCHILL <sup>LOG</sup>





# European Convention on Human Rights

## Article 8


### Right to privacy

TEXT in French and English  
For the Government of the Kingdom of Belgium  
*Paul-André*  
For the Government of the Kingdom of Denmark  
*W. Smith*  
For the Government of the French Republic  
*Thorez*  
For the Government of the German Federal Republic  
*W. Decker*

## Article 10

### Freedom of expression

For the Government of the Italian Republic  
*Spadolini*  
For the Government of the Netherlands  
*P. M. de Krom*  
For the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland  
*Norval H. Lough*



Protection from  
arbitrary  
application of  
law

Safety of  
journalists

Media  
independence

Freedom of expression



Media pluralism  
and diversity

3 Protection of  
freedom of  
expression on  
the Internet



## Are we going in the right direction?

→ Continued trend of declining media freedom across Europe

- Media under state control
- Violence, threats and pressure on journalists
- Misuse of defamation laws for political purposes
- Disproportionate effects of counter-terrorism laws and measures
- Restriction of Internet freedom, particularly during protests



## What does the Council of Europe do?

- Recommendation on the protection of journalism and safety of journalists and other media actors
  - Report of the Secretary General on State of Democracy, Human Rights and Rule of Law
    - Online platform to promote the protection of journalism and the safety of journalists
    - Co-operation activities
- 



Standard  
setting



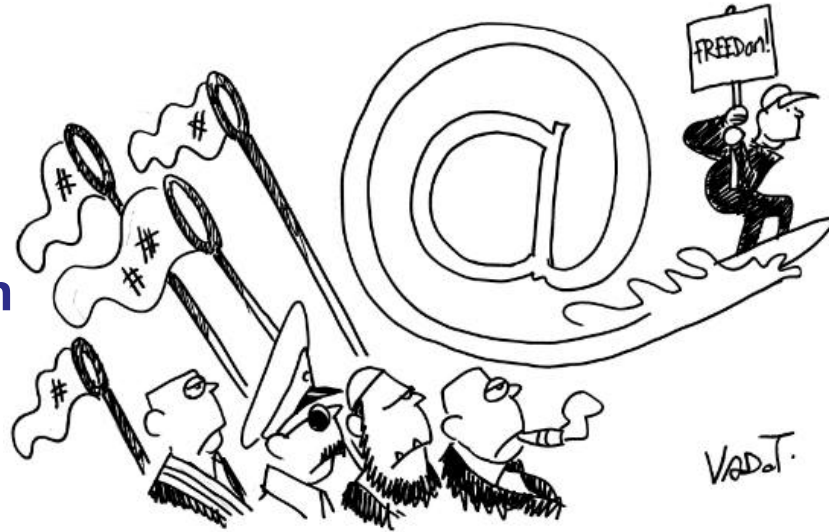
Monitoring



Co-  
operation

## Internet Standard-Setting

**Recommendation  
on the free,  
transboundary  
flow of information  
on the Internet**



**Comparative  
study on  
blocking filtering  
and take-down of  
Internet content**



**Recommendation on  
Internet Freedom**

**Recommendation on  
network neutrality**





## Digitalisation of society

### Catalyser and threat for human rights

### New challenges

- Algorithms influencing search results entailing a “filter bubble”
- Liability of Internet intermediaries
- Effective and non-discriminatory access to Internet content
- Hate speech & radicalization online
- Protection of children on the internet

## STEERING COMMITTEE ON MEDIA AND INFORMATION SOCIETY (CDMSI)

### MSI-MED

*Committee of experts on Media Pluralism and Transparency of Media Ownership*

- draft **Recommendation on media pluralism and transparency of media ownership**
- **Study on the use of the Internet in electoral campaigns**
- **Study on gender equality in media coverage of elections**

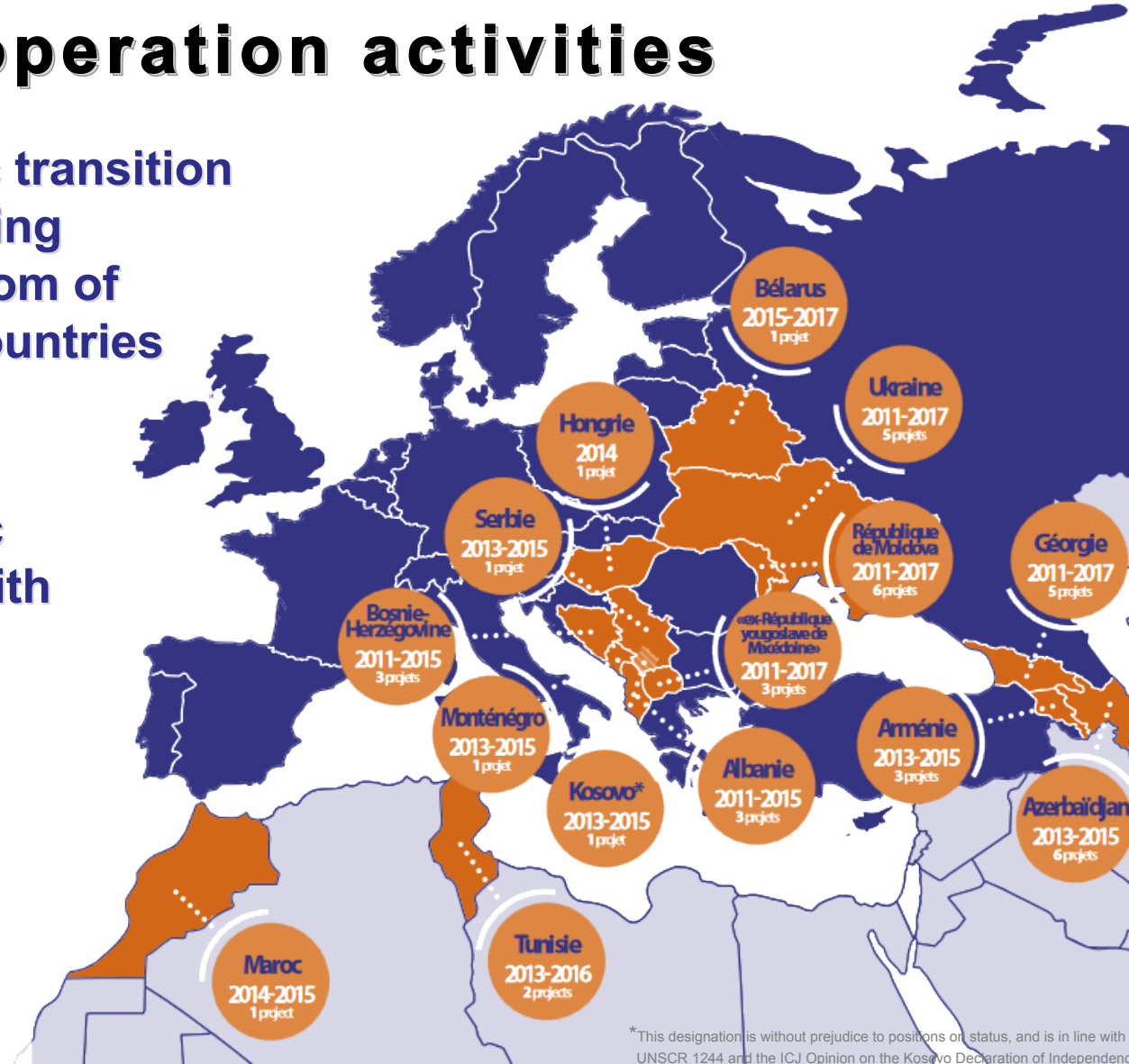
### MSI-NET

*Committee of experts on Internet Intermediaries*

- **Roles & responsibilities of Internet intermediaries**
- draft **Recommendation on Internet intermediaries + Guidelines**
- **Study on Human Rights dimensions of Algorithms**

## Co-operation activities

- Facilitating democratic transition and fostering an enabling environment for Freedom of expression in target countries
- Ensuring that domestic legislation is aligned with Council of Europe standards



\*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence

## Current situation & aspirations

### ✓ **Awareness-raising activities**

dissemination of information on the CoE standards among the public authorities, civil society, & participation in the legislative process

### ✓ **Implementation of the CoE standards and the ECtHR case-law in NHRIs' work**

### ✓ **Participation of NHRI in the CoE's cooperation activities**

### ✓ **Training and seminars for the effective application of the CoE standards relating to freedom of expression**

### ✓ **Establishment of direct communication between the NHRIs and CoE?**

### ✓ **New ideas generated by this Seminar?**



**Thank you for your  
attention**

➤ **Questions?**