

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE

Working group: Freedom of Expression and Media

Themes discussed:

Democracy, human rights and rule of law all three work together to achieve two basic needs: on the individual level they aim to give every human being the possibility to be the author of one's own life. On the group level they aim to give any minority the right to be different from the majority and to work in a democratic and peaceful way to achieve political influence. The last objective cannot be achieved without a pluralistic media landscape, with high ethical standards and a clear view on the democratic role that the media plays. This global reality of media and information has profound implications for all human rights efforts and will affect the outcome of any engagement seeking to promote the European Convention on Human Rights and the Council of Europe values and priorities related to security, development, migration, and growth. It is a reality that needs to be addressed in tandem with all other efforts that contribute towards achieving the Council of Europe agenda. And it is a reality that frames the mandate of this working group.

Aims:

The ambition of the working group is to inform and influence decisions and policies at the Council of Europe level for the respect, protection, support and promotion of freedom of expression and media development in the Council of Europe member states. This working group will contribute towards the promotion of several Articles of the Convention, and in particular Article 10 and Article 11, with a focus on access to reliable information and fundamental freedoms as an indispensable and enabling prerequisite for all other human rights.

Working languages: English

Coordinator: Gulnara Akhundova

INGO members : to be completed

Date created: June 2018

Foreseen duration: 2020

Expected results:

- Synopsis and reference guide based on legislative framework for freedom of the media and overall situation for journalists in the Council of Europe area ;
- Analysis of the protection mechanisms for endangered journalists;
- At least two policy briefs informing decisions on the subjects of great importance, for instance, hate speech or disinformation;
- Seminars (at the CoE and EP) on regional security and hate speech (religious hatred), divergences on freedom of expression and the criminal offences on hate speech;
- At least three information seminars to sensitise INGO members on the issues identified as priorities during development of the Action Plan - from catching on emerging trends (e.g., online regulation) to getting insights into the situation in a particular country/region; bringing external speakers;
- In cooperation with one of the CoE institutions, a public event on the issues identified as priorities during development of the Action Plan;

- In cooperation with stakeholders other than Council of Europe, a public event on the issues identified as priorities during development of the Action Plan;
- Media and information literacy campaigns; social media campaigns to engage citizens;
- Media – special tool for peace and security, starting by journalists' education/ training (ethics) on informing with respect, prudence and responsibility to sensitive issues as religious sentiments, etc.

Dissemination of the results:

- Different ways, publications

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