



1st meeting, 8–9 March 2018, Strasbourg

**MSI-JOQ(2018)05
4 April 2018**

Meeting Report

1. Opening, agenda, election

1. The Committee of Experts on Quality Journalism in the Digital Age (MSI-JOQ) met in Strasbourg on 8 and 9 March 2018. Silvia Grundmann, Head of the Media and Internet Division welcomed members, participants and observers and provided information on the Council of Europe's Steering Committee on Media and Information Society ([CDMSI](#)), to which the MSI-JOQ is a subordinate body, as well as on its activities and priorities. She underlined the importance of media pluralism and the central role of journalism in creating informed societies, especially in the current environment compromised by partisan interests and disinformation. She evoked the recent adoption of Recommendation CM/Rec(2018)1 on media pluralism and transparency of media ownership and its importance for the work of the MSI-JOQ. Urška Umek, Secretary to the MSI-JOQ, introduced the working methods and processes of expert committees and provided background to the MSI-JOQ's terms of reference and expected deliverables. The members of the MSI-JOQ introduced themselves and presented their initial views on the most important challenges for creating/maintaining a favourable environment for quality journalism in the digital age.
2. The MSI-JOQ unanimously elected Ms Katharine Sarikakis and Ms Alexandra Borchardt respectively as Chair and Vice-Chair and appointed Mr Tom Law as gender-equality rapporteur. In line with Article 12 d. of Resolution CM/Res(2011)24, the term of office of the Chair and Vice-Chair are one year, renewable once.
3. Thereafter the meeting was chaired by Ms Katharine Sarikakis. The Committee adopted the agenda without change ([Appendix II](#)). The list of participants appears in [Appendix I](#). Of the 38 participants, there were 20 women (53%) and 18 men (47%).

2. During the meeting, the MSI-JOQ took the following decisions:

4. The MSI-JOQ took note of the [Terms of Reference](#) and of [Resolution CM/Res\(2011\)24](#) on intergovernmental committees and subordinate bodies, their terms of reference and working methods. It discussed form and scope of the deliverables it is expected to finalise by the end of its mandate in December 2019.
5. The committee confirmed that it would work on the following deliverables:
 - a. a Draft recommendation on promoting a favourable environment for quality journalism in the digital age;
 - b. a Study on a possible standard-setting instrument on the promotion of media and information literacy in the digital environment.

3. Working methods

6. The two MSI-JOQ drafting groups have been constituted as follows:

The draft recommendation on promoting a favourable environment for quality journalism in the digital age will be drafted by Ms Nadia Bellardi and Mr Darian Pavli, while the study on the promotion of media and information literacy in the digital environment will be produced by Ms Martina Chapman and Mr Markus Oermann.

4. Structure and content of the documents to be produced

7. With regard to the first expected result, namely a Draft recommendation on promoting a favourable environment for quality journalism in the digital age, the MSI-JOQ centred its discussions around the following elements: the guiding principles of quality journalism related to its status as a public good, its mission, core values, key characteristics and outcomes; the challenges and opportunities resulting from the changes brought by the digitisation of the media environment (the so-called enabling and disabling factors); and remedies for the disabling factors, the building blocks of journalistic sustainability in the digital age.
8. As regards the personal scope of application of the draft recommendation, a number of members and other participants stressed that the Recommendation should steer away from a prescriptive definition of quality journalism/journalist. However, continuity should be ensured with the concepts defined in previous CoE Recommendations (Recommendation CM/Rec(2011)7 on a new notion of media, Recommendation CM/Rec(2016)4 on the protection of journalism and safety of journalists and other media actors, and Recommendation CM/Rec(2018)1 on media pluralism and transparency of media ownership).
9. Another general consideration noted by the expert committee concerned the significant diversity of settings and frameworks across the Council of Europe member states, and the consequent need to produce an instrument that is specific and targeted yet can be effectively implemented across the board, in all member states.
10. As regards the mission of journalism and its core values, the MSI-JOQ proceeded from the notion that people want and need to understand the world to be able to take an active part in public life, and that journalism can support them in this process by acting as a watchdog of power and by providing accurate, relevant and timely observation and interpretation of people, places and events. The committee discussed the various ways

that journalism serves the public interest and the common good, and stands in defence of public spaces for democratic representation, universality and debate.

11. Regarding the challenges and opportunities of the digital age, the former included, *inter alia*, the increased speed of information dissemination and news reporting and its impact on accuracy of information, the challenges of distributed news selected by algorithms rather than news curated by editors, the decline of local news, the decrease in trust, the deterioration of working conditions for journalists and, in particular, the loss of advertisers/funding to the internet platforms and the consequent change in the business models of journalism. As concerns the opportunities, the experts mentioned, *inter alia*, the ability of new technologies to better serve societal groups with special needs and the internet platforms as enablers of freedom of expression and antidotes against censorship. Regarding the actions needed to address these changes and restore the sustainability of journalism, the MSI-JOQ focused on removing the restrictions imposed upon journalism, the need to protect journalists to be able to do their job, and to support original reporting and thought. It was agreed that investments in investigative journalism and various innovative models of news production covering commercial media, public service media, not-for-profit community media and local media were necessary, as were sustainable business models for all those various media types and outlets. The experts stressed that sustainability would require a variety of funding sources, ranging from subscriptions and public financing (through favourable legal and tax status and different other methods of subsidising) to private funding and other sources. As for journalistic processes and products, the importance of commitment to professional and ethical standards of journalistic profession, of verification and quality control was emphasised, along with transparency of journalistic processes, of processing customer/audience data, of algorithms and other automated processes (including AI) involved in the news production and dissemination, of sponsors, etc. The experts also addressed the question whether in the digital age existing codes of ethics are adequate and sufficiently comprehensive or require some adaptation. It was furthermore pointed out that effective self-regulatory complaint mechanisms for the audience were necessary. The Committee also evoked the need to rebuild trust with audiences through digital opportunities. The importance of educating news consumers about how media is produced, the provenance and nature of content and the need to make fact-checking more visible and effective was also discussed.
12. As concerns the second expected result, namely, the Study on a possible standard-setting instrument on the promotion of media and information literacy in the digital environment, MSI-JOQ discussed a short outline of the Study prepared by the Secretariat and by the drafting group. It agreed that the purpose of the study is to give impetus to the process of implementation of the Recommendation CM/Rec (2018)¹ on media pluralism and transparency of media ownership; inform the conception of media literacy guidelines for the future Recommendation on promoting a favourable environment for quality journalism in the digital age, and identify the possible need for further research and/or policymaking. As for its content, the expert committee agreed that the study should: describe the skills and knowledge required by the public to recognise and value quality journalism; summarise and analyse the range of best practice case-studies which promote these skills and knowledge in order to identify opportunities for new or other stakeholders to advance media and information literacy.
13. Both drafting groups will provide outlines based on the discussions, which will be completed on the basis of comments received from other members. The MSI-JOQ will proceed with its work in line with the draft MSI-JOQ Roadmap ([Appendix III](#)).

14. Further to proposals made by the experts, and compatibly with the current budgetary restrictions, the Chair proposed to invite other categories of stakeholders to attend a segment of one of the expert committee's meetings, including representatives of self-regulatory bodies such as press councils, social media platforms, media owners, media producers and advertisers.

5. Any other business

15. The MSI-JOQ agreed to hold its next meeting in Strasbourg on 24-25 September 2018.
16. The MSI-JOQ decided that the Secretariat would prepare a draft meeting report to be sent to the Chair and the Vice-Chair for consideration. Thereafter the Secretariat will send the draft report to the MSI-JOQ with a deadline of five working days allowing for comments. In the absence of comments within the deadline, the report will be deemed adopted by the MSI-JOQ and will be transmitted to the CDMSI.

Appendix I: List of participants

MSI-JOQ

Committee of Experts on quality journalism in the digital age
(MSI-JOQ)

Comité d'experts sur le journalisme de qualité dans l'ère
numérique (MSI- JOQ)

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

1st MEETING, 8-9 MARCH 2018
(9:30-17:30)
Council of Europe, Strasbourg
AGORA G04

1^{ère} REUNION, 8-9 MARS 2018
(9h30-17h30)
Conseil de l'Europe, Strasbourg
AGORA G04

List of participants

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Nadia BELLARDI, Project Consultant and Media Expert specialising in Journalism, Community Media, Media Diversity, Transcultural Communication, Migration, Integration, Islam and Gender Issues

Zoran BOJAROVSKI, Head of the Press Team at Communication, Accountability and Transparency Department – Government of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Alexandra BORCHARDT, Director of Strategic Development – Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism

Martina CHAPMAN, Communications Professional specialising in Media Literacy and Digital Engagement

Pierre François DOCQUIR, Senior Legal Officer – ARTICLE 19

Oiha HERASYMIUK, First Deputy Chair, National Council of Television and Broadcasting of Ukraine - Ukraine

MEMBRES DU COMITE

Nadia BELLARDI, Consultante de projet et experte des médias spécialisée en journalisme, médias communautaires, diversité des médias, communication transculturelle, migration, intégration, islam et questions de genre

Zoran BOJAROVSKI, Chef de l'équipe de presse du Département de la communication, de la responsabilité et de la transparence – Gouvernement de l'ex-République yougoslave de Macédoine

Alexandra BORCHARDT, Directrice du développement stratégique - Institut Reuters pour l'étude du journalisme

Martina CHAPMAN, Professionnelle des communications spécialisée en éducation aux médias et en engagement numérique

Pierre François DOCQUIR, Juriste principal - ARTICLE 19

Oiha HERASYMIUK, Premier vice-président, Conseil national de la télévision et de la radiodiffusion de l'Ukraine - Ukraine

Tom LAW, Director of Campaigns and Communications – Ethical Journalism Network

Tom LAW, Directeur des campagnes et des communications - Ethical Journalism Network

Helena MANDIĆ, Director of Broadcasting, Communications Regulatory Agency - Bosnia and Herzegovina

Helena MANDIC, Directeur de la radiodiffusion, Agence de régulation des communications - Bosnie-Herzégovine

Tarlach MCGONAGLE, Senior researcher/lecturer, Institute for Information Law, Amsterdam - Ireland

Tarlach MCGONAGLE, Chercheur principal /chargé de cours, Institut de droit de l'information, Amsterdam - Irlande

Markus OERMANN, Policy Consultant, German Federal Commissioner for Culture and the Media, Department for general issues of the media and media competency – Germany

Markus OERMANN, Conseiller politique, Commissaire fédéral allemand à la Culture et aux Médias, Département des questions générales de la compétence médias et médias – Allemagne

Darian PAVLI, Expert on Media and Human Rights Policy

Darian PAVLI, Expert sur les médias et la politique des droits de l'homme

Katharine SARIKAKIS, Professor of Communication Science (Media Industries, Media Organisation, Media Governance), Jean Monnet Chair of European Media Governance and Integration; Director at Media Governance and Industries Research Lab, Department of Communication, Vienna - Greece

Katharine SARIKAKIS, Professeur en Sciences de la communication (industries des médias, organisation des médias, gouvernance des médias), Chaire Jean Monnet de gouvernance et d'intégration des médias européens; Directeur du laboratoire de recherche sur les industries et la gouvernance des médias, Département de Communication, Vienne - Grèce

Inge WELBERGEN, Senior Legal Officer Media, Ministry of Education, Culture and Science – The Netherlands

Inge WELBERGEN, Juriste principal Médias, Ministère de l'Education, de la Culture et de la Science - Pays-Bas

COUNCIL OF EUROPE MEMBER STATES

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Rosa CAVALLARO, Italian Communications Authority Audiovisual Content Directorate – Media Pluralism Unit

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GEORGIA

Ivane MAKHARADZE, Head of Broadcasting Regulation Department, National Communications Commission

GEORGIA

Ivane MAKHARADZE, Chef du Service de régulation de l'Audiovisuel, Commission Nationale des Communications

REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

Tatiana BURAGA, member of the Audiovisual Coordination Council

REPUBLIQUE DE MOLDAVIE

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Karol ZGÓDKA, Head of the Division of Media Law of the Department of Intellectual Property and Media, Ministry of Culture and National Heritage

REPUBLIC OF POLAND

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Nurullah ÖZTÜRK, Member of Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTÜK), Ankara

Mehmet Bora SÖNMEZ, expert in the International Relations Department of the Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTÜK), Ankara

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Helmut PEISSL, Président

CENTRE POUR LE PLURALISME DES MÉDIAS ET DE LIBERTÉ DES MÉDIAS - ROBERT SCHUMAN CENTRE D'ÉTUDES AVANCÉES - INSTITUT UNIVERSITAIRE EUROPÉEN

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Chanaz EI AKRICHI, Head of Cooperation division, Ministry of Communication

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Jan KLEIJSSSEN, Director, Directorate of Information Society and Action against Crime (apologized)

Patrick PENNINGCKX, Head of Information Society Department (apologized)

Silvia GRUNDMANN, Head of Media and Internet Division, Information Society Department

Urška UMEK, Secretary of MSI-JOQ Committee, Media and Internet Division, Information Society Department

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Jan KLEIJSSSEN, Directeur, Direction de la société de l'information et de la lutte contre la criminalité (excusé)

Patrick PENNINGCKX, Chef du Service de la société de l'information (excusé)

Silvia GRUNDMANN, Chef de la Division médias et internet, Service de la société de l'information

Urška UMEK, Secrétaire du Comité MSI-JOQ, Division médias et internet, Service de la société de l'information

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Sorina LECLER, Assistante, Division médias et internet, Service de la société de l'information

Appendix II: Annotated agenda

21 February 2018

MSI-JOQ (2018)02

MSI-JOQ 1st MEETING
8-9 March 2018 (9:30-17:30)
Strasbourg, AGORA Building (Room G04)

ANNOTATED AGENDA

1. Opening of the meeting

Ms Silvia Grundmann, Head of Media and Internet Division will open the meeting

2. Adoption of the agenda

3. Information by the Secretariat

Information on the relevant standard-setting work of the Council of Europe with regard to journalism, notably [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2016\)4 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the protection of journalism and safety of journalists and other media actors](#) and [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2018\)x \(provisional version as of 7th December 2017\)](#) of the Committee of Ministers to member States on "Media Pluralism and Transparency of Media Ownership", and on the MSI-JOQ working methods and procedures.

4. Election of Chairperson and Vice-chair person and appointment of a Gender Equality Rapporteur

[Resolution CM/Res\(2011\)24](#) on intergovernmental committees and subordinate bodies, their terms of reference and working methods, with particular reference to Article 12.

5. Discussion on deliverables under the MSI-JOQ Terms of Reference

The MSI-JOQ will discuss the texts it is expected to deliver during its mandate, notably a draft recommendation by the Committee of Ministers on promoting a favourable environment for quality journalism in the digital and a study on the media and information literacy in the digital environment. The Secretariat will provide short outlines with suggested issues for discussion.

[MSI-JOQ Terms of Reference](#)

6. Discussion of the road map for the MSI-JOQ in 2018 and 2019

7. Other business

Appendix III: Draft MSI-JOQ Roadmap

2018

8 - 9 March	<p>1st MSI-JOQ meeting</p> <p>Constitution of the Committee of Experts, election of the Chair and Vice-chair, appointment of Rapporteurs.</p> <p>Introduction to the working methods and processes.</p> <p>Discussion of the scope and main issues to be covered in the deliverables.</p>
12 April	<p>13th CDMSI Bureau meeting</p> <p>Report on the 1st MSI-JOQ meeting.</p>
May	<p>Outline of the draft recommendation on promoting a favourable environment for quality journalism in the digital age.</p>
19 – 22 June	<p>14th CDMSI Plenary meeting</p> <p>Report on MSI-JOQ work progress, CDMSI orientation on deliverables and timetable.</p>
1 September	<p>First draft of the deliverables.</p>
24 - 25 September	<p>2nd MSI-JOQ meeting</p> <p>Discussion of a first draft of the recommendation on promoting a favourable environment for quality journalism in the digital age.</p> <p>Discussion of a first draft of the study on the promotion of media and information literacy in the digital environment.</p>
16 - 17 October	<p>14th CDMSI Bureau meeting</p> <p>Report on the 2nd MSI-JOQ meeting and overall work progress. Invitation to CDMSI members to provide feedback on the draft deliverables at the plenary meeting.</p>
27 - 30 November	<p>15th CDMSI Plenary meeting</p> <p>Report on MSI-JOQ work progress and CDMSI feedback on and input into the draft deliverables.</p>

2019**March****3rd MSI-JOQ meeting**

Discussion of the revised draft Committee of Ministers recommendation to member states on promoting a favourable environment for quality journalism in the digital age; discussion on whether to conduct open consultations with other stakeholders.

Discussion of the revised Draft study on the promotion of media and information literacy in the digital environment, taking into account comments from the CDMSI.

April/May**15th CDMSI Bureau meeting**

Report on the 3rd MSI-JOQ meeting and overall work progress. Discussion of the draft Committee of Ministers recommendation to member states on promoting a favourable environment for quality journalism in the digital age.

Discussion of the Draft study on the promotion of media and information literacy in the digital environment.

June 16th CDMSI Plenary meeting

Report on work progress and discussion of the draft Committee of Ministers recommendation to member states on promoting a favourable environment for quality journalism in the digital age, with a view to conduct open consultations over the summer.

Discussion of the Draft study on the promotion of media and information literacy in the digital environment.

September**4th MSI-JOQ meeting**

Discussion and finalisation of the draft Committee of Ministers recommendation to member states on promoting a favourable environment for quality journalism in the digital age; Discussion and finalisation of the Draft study on the promotion of media and information literacy in the digital environment.

October**16th CDMSI Bureau meeting**

Discussion of the draft Committee of Ministers recommendation on promoting a favourable environment for quality journalism in the digital age and agreement on submitting the draft for approval to the CDMSI Plenary.

Discussion of the Draft study on the promotion of media and information literacy in the digital environment and agreement on submitting the draft for approval to the CDMSI Plenary.

Nov/Dec

17th CDMSI Plenary meeting

Possible approval of the draft Committee of Ministers recommendation on promoting a favourable environment for quality journalism in the digital age.

Possible approval of the Draft study on the promotion of media and information literacy in the digital environment.