

COUNCIL OF EUROPE PROJECT

PROMOTING FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION, MEDIA AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION IN ARMENIA

Launching Conference

Venue: Milano Hall, Doubletree by Hilton hotel, Yerevan, Armenia

26 February 2026

CONCEPT NOTE

The right to freedom of expression and information, as enshrined in Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), constitutes a cornerstone of any democratic society. Armenia, a member State of the Council of Europe since 2001, has demonstrated notable progress in improving the media landscape, particularly since 2018. Further reinforcing its commitment, Armenia ratified the [Council of Europe Convention on Access to Official Documents \(Tromsø Convention\)](#) in May 2022. Despite these positive developments, persistent challenges regarding exposure to disinformation and misinformation remain. These challenges are particularly significant considering the upcoming National Parliamentary Elections scheduled for June 2026, where the impact of disinformation on democratic processes may be substantial.

Countering disinformation is a key priority for the Council of Europe. The current challenges related to freedom of expression in Armenia can be addressed in the context of the [New Democratic Pact for Europe](#), which underlines the urgent need to redefine and strengthen democracy, making it more inclusive, resilient, and responsive. Council of Europe standards go beyond formal guarantees of freedom of expression and address structural risks to democratic discourse.

The project “Promoting Freedom of Expression, Media and Access to Information in Armenia” aims to strengthen freedom of expression and support ongoing legislative reforms in this field. In addition, its purpose is to enhance the institutional capacity of the audiovisual regulatory authority and the public broadcaster as well as to support Armenian authorities in countering disinformation and promoting media literacy, with particular attention to the pre-election period. The project is designed to address also legislative and practical measures to prevent and respond to SLAPPs, in line with Council of Europe standards and to support the effective implementation of access to information legislation in accordance with the Tromsø Convention.

The project is fully aligned with current 2023-2026 Council of Europe Action Plan for Armenia.

DRAFT AGENDA

Launching Conference

- 9:30-10:00** **Registration of participants**
- 10:00-10:30** **Opening remarks**
- **Maxime LONGANGUE**, *Head of the Council of Europe Office in Yerevan*
 - **Robert ABISOGHOMONYAN**, *Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia*
 - **Ruben RUBINYAN**, *Vice-President of PACE, Vice-President of National Assembly of Armenia (TBC)*
 - **High-level Representative of the Ministry of Justice (TBC)**
- 10:30-11:00** **Keynote speech: Council of Europe standards in the field of freedom of expression**
- **Roberto OLLA**, *Head of the Democratic Institutions and Freedoms Department, Council of Europe*
- 11:00-12:45** **Panel discussion**
- Ongoing reforms on freedom of expression in Armenia**
- **High-level Representative of the Ministry of Justice (TBC)**
- Media Freedom in Armenia: current challenges**
- **Boris NAVASARDIAN**, *Honorable President of Yerevan Press Club*
- Strengthening media coverage of elections: Council of Europe training modules**
- **Rasto KUZEL**, *Executive Director of MEMO98 (Slovakia), Council of Europe consultant*
- Discussion, Q&A session
- 12:45-13:00** **Conclusions and take aways**
- 13:00-14:30** *Lunch break*