

ACCELERATING EUROPEAN MEDIA INNOVATION

The media sector plays a crucial role in addressing societal and economic challenges. Media organizations, SMEs, research and educational institutes contribute to creating inclusive and cohesive societies; they promote fundamental democratic values such as media pluralism and freedom of expression and help to develop the skills necessary for informed citizenship.

Innovation is central to ensuring the sustainability and development of Europe's media and creative industries in an increasingly global and competitive marketplace. European media innovation must be accelerated by putting a stronger focus on the sector in the relevant EU programmes and by creating an adequate regulatory framework.

1. Increasing prominence of media innovation and research in EU programmes

Horizon Europe should provide for well-resourced, collaborative and cross-industry research and innovation activities in the media and creative sectors. A strong involvement of SMEs will bridge the gaps between technological innovation, creativity and R&D in the media field. Horizon Europe should provide support to media innovation in proportion to the value of the European media and creative sector. All relevant EU programmes should promote transversal activities (Artificial Intelligence, Big Data, 5G, etc.) with media as an integral part and they should support media innovation communities.

2. Empowering open innovation

EU programs will have real impact if they foster fast transition from project ideas to rapid prototyping, pilots and commercial implementation. They need to help scaling up successful examples of open innovation to connect technology experts, creators and media organizations and to support joint cross-border collaborations. A perfect balance of diverse skillsets will boost creativity, collaboration and impact for European markets.

3. Developing cutting edge technologies for media

European media need support to exploit emerging technologies and adapt them for innovative services: artificial intelligence and data, cloud-based platforms, immersive experiences and technologies, language management & accessibility, and recommendation and personalization services.

- 4. Fostering European-wide content production and securing cross-border access to content**

EU programmes should support R&D which enables European media to share content and to provide content in all European languages to the citizens (e.g. via connected and AI-enabled archives). It should support the development of a media supply chain where media can collaborate on content creation, post-production and distribution.
- 5. Enhancing digital and media literacy skills**

Digital and media literacy play a key role in empowering informed citizenship and fighting the information disorder, including disinformation. Providing citizens with creative instruments to develop a critical understanding of the avalanche of information they are exposed to should be a priority.
- 6. Securing a fair online platform environment**

Citizens increasingly access content online via global platforms such as social media, video sharing sites, search engines and voice assistants. These platforms have evolved into gatekeepers between content providers and their audiences, often exercising dominant bargaining power to take unilateral decisions on the organization, display and removal of third-party content, sometimes to favour their own. Building on regulatory initiatives taken during the 2014-2019 EU mandate, more work is needed to ensure a fair and transparent online platform environment.
- 7. Delivering the increased responsibility of online platforms**

Media have editorial responsibility and liability for the content they publish. By contrast, platform operators only have a very limited responsibility for the content which they distribute or make available - despite the impact they can have on opinion forming. Platform providers' responsibilities should be in line with their ability to influence public opinion and their potential to harm citizens. The behaviour of these companies should be more transparent. They should be held accountable, with effective rules to protect public interest, including free expression and quality content. Platforms should not exercise additional control over content from media service providers which is already subject to regulation.
- 8. Ensuring access to user data to support innovation**

Media organizations need access to the data that platforms generate from the use of their content and services, in line with data protection and privacy rules. Analyzing data and acting on insights enables media organizations to innovate further and enhance their offer to the viewers.
- 9. Preserving the open internet**

Net neutrality is a key driver of democracy and freedom of speech as well as innovation. Effective enforcement of existing EU rules which prevent online traffic from being unduly blocked, slowed down, altered, degraded or discriminated against remain key. These principles do not obstruct the introduction of innovative 5G solutions, nor the enabling of 5G broadcasting network deployment.

