



INVITATION TO WEBINAR

Media and Conflict: Freedom of Press in Ukraine

Freedom of expression and of the media constitute a basic human right and imply a commitment to democracy, good governance and political accountability. It is one of the main challenges facing EU enlargement countries due to persisting political interference in the media, violence against journalists.. Improving this situation goes beyond the transposition of EU rules: it calls for change in the areas of politics, judiciary and media.

Since the Euro-Maidan and the EU- Association Agreement in 2014, Ukraine has made progress in implementing media reforms and European standards in the fields of media, freedom of expression and information society. However, further efforts are needed as major oligarch-controlled lean towards political influence and commercial gain. Nevertheless, reinforced persecution of some part of the opposition and independent Russian speaking TV channels, by the Ukrainian authorities, are raising concerns. President Zelensky's decree on the termination of the work of 3 TV channels (February 2021) and recent sanctions against the famous blogger Anatoly Sharij have been criticised by the UN, OSCE and some leading European politicians. Should we accept such kind of censorship? How could Ukraine be supported in its efforts to “de-oligarchise” the media, without compromising freedom of expression? How can Ukraine develop a democratic, independent, pluralistic and balanced media landscape, which could bring to an end the politically motivated persecution of media channels?

To answer these and many other questions, EU Buzz, in cooperation with Vocal Europe, invites you to an expert roundtable on Thursday, *30 September 2021*, to discuss the topic of freedom of the press. The panel aims to debate on the right of freedom of expression and the situation in Ukraine from diverse perspectives.

Registration: Please send an email to events@EUBuzz.News

Time: Thursday, 30 September 2021, 11:00 – 12:30 AM (Brussels Time)

Venue: Zoom

The Program

11:00

Welcoming Remarks

Henri Malosse, Honorary Chairman of Vocal Europe & President of the Association Jean-Monnet, Former President of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)

Introduction

Julia Tittelbach, Moderator

11:10

Views from the Institutions

Ardita Abdiu, Head of Division Cooperation on Freedom of Expression, *Council of Europe*

Nestor Shuhfrich, Chair of the Committee Freedom of Expression, *Ukrainian Parliament- Rada*

11:30

Views from the Media

Nadia Sass, Media Host, *First Independent TV*

Aleksandra Kharchenko, Correspondent, *Internet-paper Strana.ua*

Alia Papageorgiou, Vice President, *Association of European Journalists*

Geert Degrande, Journalist, *Co-Founder Re-story.be*

12:10

Political Perspective from the EU

Mick Wallace, AFET, SEDE, *European Parliament*

12:20

Q&A Session

12:30

End of the Panel