

Greece



*Measuring compliance with the
European Media Freedom Act (EMFA)*

○ ATHENS 37°59'N 23°44'E

An annual measure of media capture in the EU, and of how far Member States meet the standards the European Media Freedom Act sets against it.

The **Media Capture Monitoring Report (MCMR)** is produced by the International Press Institute (IPI) and the Media and Journalism Research Center (MJRC). Each country report assesses the four safeguards in the European Media Freedom Act (EMFA) that bear most directly on media capture: the independence of public service media, the independence of media regulators, protection against the misuse of state funds to influence the media, and transparency of media ownership and safeguards for media pluralism.

The 2026 edition follows the EMFA's first year of full application, from 8 August 2025. Written by national experts and edited by MJRC and IPI, the reports are deliberately short: they track what has changed since the 2025 baseline assessment and identify the problems that remain.

The project is part of the **Media Freedom Rapid Response (MFRR)**, a Europe-wide mechanism which tracks, monitors and responds to violations of press and media freedom in EU Member States and Candidate Countries. It is co-funded by the European Commission.

This report covers developments up to October 2026.

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READ THE BASELINE

Media Capture Monitoring Report: Greece 2025

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ipi.media/greece-media-capture-monitoring-report-2025/

Greece's work to align national legislation with the European Media Freedom Act (EMFA) moved from consultation to law in November 2025, when Law 5253/2025 reformed the governance of the public broadcaster ERT and introduced the first EMFA implementing provisions. This was followed in June 2026 by Law 5308/2026, which licensed regional television and added further measures for EMFA compliance. The two laws combined require all media to disclose their beneficial owners and the state advertising they receive, create a publicly accessible national media ownership database, task the National Council for Radio and Television (NCRTV) with an annual report on state advertising, and expand the regulator's permanent posts. The reforms nonetheless leave key levers in government hands. By autumn 2026, the database had not been launched, no state advertising report had been published, and the new NCRTV posts remained largely unfilled. Outside the four core areas, a strong anti-SLAPP law adopted in July 2026 was a notable gain for press freedom, but effective independence of the regulator and public service media has yet to be demonstrated. Despite some progress in 2026, Greece has only partially implemented EMFA requirements and serious questions remain over Article 5 and Article 25.

THE YEAR IN BRIEF

SEP 2025	Shipping and oil businessman Dimitris Melissanidis takes a 51% stake in Efimerida ton Syntakton, until then owned by its workers' cooperative.
NOV 2025	Law 5253/2025 reforms ERT's governance and introduces the first EMFA provisions, including beneficial-ownership disclosure for all media and an annual NCRTV report on state advertising.
JUN 2026	Law 5308/2026 licenses regional television for the first time in 28 years and creates a national media ownership database. A National Action Plan for the Safety of Journalists is presented.
AUG 2026	Journalists' unions and the state sign a collective agreement for journalists on private-law contracts in the public sector, including rules on the use of their work by AI systems.
SEP 2026	NCRTV has published no report on state advertising, and the ownership database is still not public.
OCT 2026	The journalists' union ESIEA calls for recruitment at ERT, where about 500 journalists remain on permanent contracts.
2027	Parliamentary elections are due.

01

Changes since the 2025 report

Since the 2025 report, Greece has adopted two laws that begin to align its legislation with the European Media Freedom Act. Law 5253/2025¹, passed in November 2025, reformed ERT's governance by enlarging its board from seven to nine members and drawing the president and CEO from a shortlist produced by ASEP, the independent civil-service selection body. However, the Deputy Minister to the Prime Minister and Government Spokesperson still makes the final choice, presenting a major question over the law's compliance with EMFA.

The same law introduced the first EMFA implementing provisions under Article 25: all media, including online outlets, must disclose their beneficial owners, ministries must publish their advertising programmes before spending, and NCRTV must report annually on the allocation of state advertising. Law 5253/2025 also introduced a framework for the establishment of a Hellenic Media Council as an independent self-regulatory body bringing together journalists, media owners, academia and civil society. This council is expected to promote dialogue and initiatives relating to media freedom, journalists' safety, disinformation, media literacy and editorial independence. Its implementation remains to be seen.

In June 2026, Law 5308/2026² established a framework for licensing regional television for the first time in 28 years, with NCRTV running the procedure. Some 81 stations had been operating under a "provisional legal operation" status with little oversight. It also created a publicly accessible national media ownership database recording owners, beneficial owners and the state advertising each outlet receives, and increased the number of NCRTV's permanent posts.

Alongside these reforms, a National Action Plan for the Safety of Journalists³ was presented in June 2026 and remained in public consultation as of September. On 4 August 2026, the Journalists' Union of the Athens Daily Newspapers (ESIEA), the Union of Magazine and Electronic Press Journalists (ESPIT) and the Greek state signed a collective agreement⁴ for journalists employed under private-law contracts in the public sector, valid from 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2027, covering leave, non-wage benefits, union facilities and safety provisions, as well as ethical issues including the use of journalistic work by AI systems.

Finally, during the June 2026 debate on Law 5308, the government said a new bill on licensing radio stations nationwide would follow. Radio stations are in the same position as regional TV was before Law 5308: most operate under a provisional "legal operation" status rather than proper licences.

Regional television

81

STATIONS WITHOUT PROPER LICENCES

Operating under a "provisional legal operation" status with little oversight. Law 5308/2026 sets up the first licensing in 28 years, run by NCRTV.

1. Law 5253/2025 on the "Modernization of the legal framework for the organization and operation of the "Hellenic Radio and Television Corporation (E.R.T. S.A.)" and strengthening its public character and its competitiveness in the Media market - Taking measures for the implementation of Regulation (EU) 2024/1083 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 April 2024 on the establishment of a common framework for media services in the internal market and amending Directive 2010/13/EU (European Regulation on freedom of the media - European Media Freedom Act)." See www.taxheaven.gr/law/5253/2025
2. Law on the "Licensing of free-to-air terrestrial digital television broadcasting content providers with regional scope and other provisions". See www.kodiko.gr/nomothesia/document/1329154/nomos-5308-2026
3. "Secretary Gen! Kirmikiroglou announces National Plan for Journalists' Safety at Samothrace conference", APE-MPE, 27 September 2026, www.amna.gr/article/1026434/Secretary-Genl-Kirmikiroglou-announces-National-Plan-for-Journalists-Safety-at-Samothrace-conference
4. Journalists' Union of the Athens Daily Newspapers, "Η ΝΕΑ Σ.Σ.Ε. ΓΙΑ ΤΑ ΔΗΜΟΣΙΑ Μ.Μ.Ε. 2026 -2027", www.esiea.gr/i-nea-s-s-e-gia-ta-dimosia-m-m-e-2026-2027/

REGULATORY AUTHORITY

AVMSD ART. 30

NCRTV staff

92

PERMANENT POSTS, UP FROM ABOUT 57

Under Law 5308/2026, including 23 lawyers and nine economists. How many will be filled remains to be determined.

Law 5253/2025 establishes a public media ownership register, improves state advertising transparency, and expands NCRTV oversight of audience measurement.

The new law addressed longstanding issues regarding funding, staffing and technical resources. Under the new Law 5308/2026, NCRTV's establishment rises to 92 posts, up from about 57. The posts include 23 lawyers, nine economists, engineers, a broadcast-market researcher and social or political analysts. How many of the new posts will actually be filled remains to be determined.

An Autonomous Legal Support Office reporting directly to NCRTV's president will be made up of a legal adviser and four salaried lawyers. The adviser will be hired by NCRTV's plenary after a public call.

Under the law, NCRTV will have more control over hiring, since it will select its scientific staff through its own committee, after a public call and mandatory interviews. Public-law posts still go through the independent civil-service selection body (ASEP) and depend on the government's annual recruitment plan. How these provisions are implemented remains to be seen.

The regulator also takes on new tasks as the licensing authority for regional television, and must give prior approval for transfers of 5% or more of the shares in regional licensees, deciding within 60 days and with the power to hold hearings (Art. 23).

In addition, NCRTV is now tasked with producing an annual report on the allocation of state advertising under Law 5253/2025. No report had been produced as of September 2026. Finally, licensed regional stations must pay NCRTV an annual supervision fee. This does not change the fact that its budget is still set by the Ministry of Finance.

While there are no direct reports of direct government interference in its operations or in overruling decisions, questions remain regarding the authority's operational independence, as ongoing reforms continue.

PUBLIC SERVICE MEDIA

EMFA ART. 5

ERT board

9 members, up from 7; not yet in place

- ● ● Appointed by the minister the competent minister
- Ministry of Finance one member
- ● President and CEO the minister picks from ASEP's top three
- ○ ○ Staff and academia two employee representatives, one professor

Law 5253/2025 introduced the most significant changes to the governance of the Hellenic Broadcasting Corporation (ERT) in several years. ERT's board was enlarged from seven to nine members: two employee representatives, the president, the CEO, a university professor with specified qualifications, three members appointed by the competent minister and one member from the Ministry of Finance. However, this hasn't been implemented yet. The president and CEO are now selected through a competition run by the independent civil-service selection body (ASEP), with written and oral examinations marked by independent graders. The minister then appoints one of the three highest-ranked candidates. This applies also to the Athens-Macedonian News Agency. So, APE-MPE's and ERT's general directors are therefore to be selected under the same procedures as in other state-owned companies.

The reform is a procedural improvement. Introducing an ASEP competition reduces the scope for purely discretionary appointments. However, ERT continues to be officially overseen by the General Secretariat for Communication and Media, which is placed under the responsibility of the Deputy Minister to the Prime Minister and Government Spokesperson. The Ministers are also involved in appointing the ERT president and CEO, raising serious questions over Greece's alignment with Article 5(2) of EMFA, which requires states to ensure that procedures for appointing and dismissing heads of management or members of

ERT licence fee

€52m

UNPAID SINCE 2013

According to the government, Fee revenue reached €228m in its best recent year. Electricity suppliers may now keep 1% of the fees they collect, up from 0.5%.

ERT journalists, October 2026

- About 500 on permanent contracts nationwide
- More than 200 on freelance service contracts
- More than 180 through outsourced production companies

Source

ESIEA

MISUSE OF STATE FUNDS

EMFA ART. 25

State advertising: the new rules

- 1 Advertising programmes published by public bodies before spending
- 2 Outlet disclosures state advertising received, each year
- 3 Annual report on allocation, by NCRTV
- 4 Eligibility only media in the MET and MHT registries

Allocation criteria

None set

the management board of public media providers aim to guarantee independence. The minister also still directly appoints four of the nine board members. With no opposition or civil society representation and no independent oversight body, the governance structure still allows the government to exert decisive influence.

ERT's funding model remains unchanged: a licence fee collected through electricity bills. The law does, however, tighten collection. Electricity suppliers may now retain 1% of the fees they collect, up from 0.5%, but they must justify any amounts not collected, subject to audit. According to the government, around €52 million has gone unpaid to ERT since 2013, while fee revenue reached €228 million in its best recent year. As in other public companies, any annual surplus, after staff performance incentives, is returned to the state budget. The changes to funding concern collection efficiency, not independence: the budget remains tied to a state-set fee, and surpluses flow back to the treasury. Serious doubts remain over whether ERT receives adequate, sustainable and predictable resources, as required under Article 5(3) of EMFA.

Beyond the law, a collective agreement for journalists employed under private-law contracts in the public sector was signed on 4 August 2026. The agreement is a positive step for working conditions in public media but leaves untouched the governance arrangements through which political influence is exercised. In October 2026, ESIEA called on the government to launch a recruitment competition at ERT, warning that hundreds of permanent journalists had retired without being replaced, leaving only around 500 on permanent contracts nationwide, while more than 200 now work on freelance service contracts and more than 180 are employed through outsourced production companies. According to the union, this reliance on precarious employment is being used to cover ERT's permanent needs, creating inequality and insecurity among staff and affecting the quality of the information the public broadcaster provides.⁵

This is the area where Greece has moved furthest towards EMFA alignment. Law 5253/2025 requires all ministries and public sector bodies to publish their advertising programmes on their websites before spending. It also gives the National Council for Radio and Television a new duty to publish an annual report on how state advertising is allocated, based on the spending each outlet discloses, in line with Article 25(3) of EMFA. Under the law, only media in the Registry for Print Media (MET) and the Registry for Electronic Press (MHT) are eligible to receive state advertising.

The reform, however, concerns transparency rather than allocation. Neither law sets the transparent, objective, proportionate and non-discriminatory criteria that EMFA Article 25 requires for awarding state advertising, and decisions on who receives it remain with the spending bodies. The infrastructure is also largely in government hands: the ownership database that carries outlets' disclosures is run by the General Secretariat for Communication and Information, which also approves public bodies' advertising programmes.

5. "Προκήρυξη διαγωνισμού στην ΕΡΤ ζητεί η ΕΣΗΕΑ", Journalists' Union of the Athens Daily Newspapers (ESIEA), 7 October 2026, www.esiea.gr/prokiryksi-diagonismoy-stin-ert-zitei/

Law 5308/2026, adopted in June 2026, adds a disclosure obligation on the media side. Through the new national media ownership database, every outlet must publish each year the total state advertising it received from Greek public authorities in the previous year, as well as any advertising revenue from public authorities of third countries. Access to these data is public.

For the first time, some – though not all – media have disclosed such data.

State advertising received in 2025, as disclosed by two outlets

Euros, rounded, as published under Art. 27 of Law 5253/2025

To Vima, newspaper		€392,505
tovima.gr		€90,255
iefimerida.gr		€125,672

Sources: Alter Ego Media, tovima.gr/pliories-a-27-n-5253-2025 (amounts exclude VAT; To Vima also reports €1,175 from public authorities of third countries); New Media Network Synopsis, iefimerida.gr/taytotita.

The reforms can only be judged once national totals appear, that is, once NCRTV publishes its first report and outlet-level figures become publicly accessible nationwide.

The updated version of the e-Pasitheia platform⁶, which provides electronic services for reporting advertising expenditure and submitting applications for approving public sector advertising programmes, has improved transparency.

Finally, the government announced⁷ a new five-year press support mechanism and a Regional Media Hubs⁸ initiative to support local journalism, the latter possibly with EEA Grants (European Economic Area Grants) funding. Their allocation criteria and the bodies responsible for distributing the funds have not been made public.

Since the 2025 report, Greece has strengthened its legal framework on media ownership transparency. Law 5253/2025 requires all media outlets, including online ones, to publish their direct, indirect and beneficial owners. Some have complied; others have not.

Law 5308/2026 also provides for a new national media ownership database.

More specifically, article 36 of Law 5308/2026 sets up an electronic national database of ownership for all media service providers established in Greece, as defined by EMFA. It is run by the Registries and Transparency Department of the government’s General Secretariat for Communication and Information. For each outlet, the database publishes:

- its name, legal form and contact details
- its direct or indirect owners whose holdings let them influence its operation and strategic decisions

MEDIA PLURALISM AND
POLITICAL INFLUENCE

EMFA ART. 6 & 22

6. e-Pasitheia platform, e-pasitheia.media.gov.gr/reports
7. “Kirmikiroglou: Changes in the media, state support and the fight against disinformation”, APE-MPE, 29 September 2026, www.amna.gr/article/1027051/OLYMPIA-FORUM-VII---Kirmikiroglou-Changes-in-the-media--state-support-and-the-fight-against-disinformation
8. “Greece announced a three-year roadmap for the National Action Plan for the Safety of Journalists”, Greek News Agenda, 20 April 2026, www.greeknewsagenda.gr/greece-announced-a-three-year-roadmap-for-the-national-action-plan-for-the-safety-of-journalists/

- its beneficial owners, as defined in the anti-money-laundering law (4557/2018)
- the total annual state advertising it receives from Greek public authorities, and its advertising revenue from public authorities of third countries.

Data for print and online outlets will be migrated from the existing registries, and NCRTV will transfer data for broadcasters. The database, however, is not public yet.

The law still provides no assessment of how media concentrations affect pluralism and editorial independence, as EMFA Article 22 requires. Mergers continue to be assessed solely under competition law.

In September 2025, shipping and oil businessman Dimitris Melissanidis, who already owns Naftemporiki, took over a 51% controlling stake in Efimerida ton Syntakton (EfSyn)⁹. EfSyn had always been an independent, left-wing newspaper owned by its workers' cooperative; however, severe financial distress forced the cooperative to look for a buyer. The contract guaranteed that the newspaper would maintain its left-wing editorial stance and protect existing staff from layoffs. During 2026, the new management moved ahead with staff layoffs, drawing significant backlash from the remaining worker-shareholders, who accused the new ownership of violating the job protection clauses.

In July 2025, Alter Ego Media, controlled by shipowner Evangelos Marinakis, acquired the Newsit-Tlife group of news websites¹⁰.

Media ownership in Greece remains heavily concentrated among a small number of shipowners and business groups with close political ties and interests in sectors that depend on the state. Without an Article 22 mechanism that assesses the impact of mergers on pluralism, the reforms make concentration more visible but do nothing to limit it.

Recent takeovers

- Efimerida ton Syntakton 51% to Dimitris Melissanidis, Sept 2025
- Newsit-Tlife to Alter Ego Media (Evangelos Marinakis), July 2025

Pluralism test **None; competition law only**

9. "Στον Δ. Μελισσανίδη περνά η "Εφημερίδα των Συντακτών" - Προσώφων 5 εκατ. ευρώ για το 51%", capital.gr, 22 September 2025, www.capital.gr/epixeiriseis/3945812/ston-d-melissanidi-perna-i-efimerida-ton-suntakton-prosumfono-5-ekat-euro-gia-to-51/

10. "ALTER EGO MEDIA Acquires Newsit and Tlife in €28.5 Million Deal, Expanding Its Digital Media Footprint", Dnews, 16 July 2025, www.dnews.gr/eidhseis/news-in-english/537029/alter-ego-media-acquires-newsit-and-tlife-in-28-5-million-deal-expanding-its-digital-media-footprint

02

Has the situation improved?

Compared with the 2025 report, the situation has improved, but mainly regarding transparency rather than independence. However, much of the new framework has yet to prove itself in practice.

Law 5253/2025 and Law 5308/2026 bring Greece closer to the implementation of the EMFA. All media must now disclose their beneficial owners and the state advertising they receive, and a publicly accessible national ownership database has been established. The new ownership database, however, is run by the government secretariat rather than an independent body, and has yet to be implemented. The e-Pasithea platform increases transparency by showing how public bodies spend their advertising budgets.

NCRTV has a new mandate to report on state advertising, a larger establishment plan with specialist posts, and new powers to license regional television. How this will be implemented also remains to be seen.

03

Outstanding problems

MEDIA REGULATORS

AVMSD ART. 30

Members of the National Council for Radio and Television are still chosen by the Conference of Presidents with a three-fifths majority, with no public call or merit-based procedure.

The new national database of ownership for all media service providers will sit under the government's General Secretariat (Law 5308, Art. 36) and not under NCRTV. The Online Media Registry and Print Media Registry should also be placed under the authority and supervision of an independent body.

The media regulatory authority should ensure that its annual reports are published in a timely manner.

PUBLIC SERVICE MEDIA

EMFA ART. 5

Both ERT and the Athens-Macedonian News Agency (ANA-MPA) remain under the supervision of the Deputy Minister to the Prime Minister.

No changes were identified to the governance of ANA-MPA, whose board is still appointed largely by the government, and no independent body has been created to monitor the editorial and functional independence of public service media.

MISUSE OF STATE FUNDS

EMFA ART. 25

Neither Law 5253/2025 nor Law 5308/2026 sets the transparent, objective, proportionate and non-discriminatory criteria EMFA Art. 25 requires. Spending bodies still decide who receives state advertising.

The General Secretariat for Communication and Information also runs the database where outlets disclose what they received. No independent body oversees allocation decisions, since NCRTV will report afterwards.

OWNERSHIP TRANSPARENCY AND PLURALISM

EMFA ART. 6 & 22

Concentrated and politically connected ownership exerts influence on editorial lines. Many major outlets are identifiable by their editorial stance: some consistently support the government and amplify its messaging, while others position themselves as its critics. These divisions often follow their owners' business and political ties rather than editorial choices made independently. With the next parliamentary elections due in 2027, this alignment has become more obvious.

A few owners still have major interests in shipping, energy, construction, banking or football clubs, and often depend on public contracts, licences or regulation. As for concentration, mergers and takeovers are assessed only under competition law. There is no assessment of how concentrations affect pluralism or editorial independence.

An annual measure of how far EU Member States have fallen under media capture, and of how well they meet the standards set by the European Media Freedom Act to combat it.



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