

ACT WELCOMES EUROPEAN DEMOCRACY SHIELD VOTE, CALLS FOR ACTIONS TO SUPPORT MEDIA SUSTAINABILITY

BRUSSELS, 15 SEPTEMBER. The Association of Commercial Television and Video on Demand Services in Europe (ACT) welcomes the adoption by the European Parliament of its report on the European Democracy Shield (EUDS).

ACT represents Europe's commercial audiovisual champions - responsible, accountable, and invested in creating and distributing high-quality content for Europeans. They offer a model for how media can contribute to Europe's culture, democracy, and economy by providing value-added content and a safe environment for viewers of all ages.

The report sends a strong message to the defence of democratic discourse in an era of unprecedented digital challenges. ACT particularly welcomes the report's recognition of the importance of supporting trusted, pluralistic media, and that any meaningful defence of democracy must reinforce media plurality and the sustainability of responsible editorial media while curtailing the dominance of very large and gatekeeping online platforms.

Tangibly, to be successful the EUDS needs to deliver measures that have real world impact. Notably, through three critical elements:

- The **robust enforcement of existing digital rules** that support Europe's information ecosystem, in particular the proper implementation of the DSA, DMA and EMFA
- The **support for an advertising market** that genuinely incentivises media investing in quality journalism and cultural content
- The **systematic incorporation of media impact assessments** into EU regulatory processes to ensure legislative proposals support rather than undermine media sustainability

On advertising, ACT commends the report's call for measures to improve fairness in online advertising and for encouraging incentives for advertisers to support trusted European media. The Commission should explore via the EUDS ways to incentivize investments in media which fund newsrooms, professional journalism and cultural content, rather than in online platforms bearing no editorial responsibility.

The report also rightly reinforces the principle that platforms must properly address systemic risks to democracy - especially disinformation - under the DSA, and take effective mitigation measures.

The European Parliament's call to address how platform algorithms and AI-driven search reduce the traffic and visibility of media is also important. Ensuring fair visibility for editorial media is a democratic resilience issue, not merely a market one. This is all the more pressing as consumption shifts to new smart devices, such as connected TVs, highlighting the importance of tackling TV operating systems operated by gatekeepers under the DMA. We therefore endorse the call for full implementation and effective enforcement of the DMA.

Finally, ACT strongly supports Parliament's call on the Commission for evidence-based media impact assessments and the appropriate consultation of media stakeholders ahead of initiatives that may affect the viability of European media companies. Good policymaking requires a full understanding. ACT and its members stand ready to contribute to this work.

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The sector ACT represents is Europe's commercial broadcasters and their on-demand services — companies that both create and distribute trusted news, and much-loved entertainment and sport. Rooted in Europe's economies and cultures, they invest billions every year in European creativity, talent, and growth.