



Audiovisual Media: Commission opens infringement procedures against 23 Member States for failing to transpose the Directive on audiovisual content

Brussels, 23 November 2020

Today, the European Commission launched infringement procedures against 23 Member States and the United Kingdom for failing to enact the new rules governing EU-wide coordination of all audiovisual media, both traditional TV broadcasts and on-demand services, and video-sharing platforms. These new EU rules aim to create a regulatory framework fit for the digital age, leading to a safer, fairer and more diverse audiovisual landscape. They reinforce the protection of viewers, with particular regard to the safety of those most vulnerable, such as minors, and the extension of rules regarding hate speech to video-sharing platforms, and foster cultural diversity in audiovisual media, at the same time as introducing for the first time new independence requirements for national media regulators and safeguarding media pluralism.

The deadline for transposing [the revised Audiovisual Media Services Directive](#) into national legislation was 19 September 2020 and only **Denmark, Hungary, the Netherlands** and **Sweden** have notified transposition measures and declared their notification complete.

Therefore, the Commission sent the letters of formal notice to **Belgium, Bulgaria, Czechia, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Croatia, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland, and the United Kingdom**, requesting them to provide further information. They now have two months to reply.

Executive Vice-President for A Europe Fit for the Digital Age, Margrethe **Vestager**, said: *"We want a level playing field for all media players and to better protect children and consumers when accessing audiovisual content. We also want to ensure more diversity on video-on-demand platforms and create a fairer audiovisual landscape. This is why we have common rules. The Audiovisual Media Services Directive merits all our collective effort. It is an important achievement, which will foster cultural diversity in audiovisual media services."*

Vice-President for Values and Transparency, Věra **Jourová**, said: *"It is high time that all Member States transpose the rules and do it well. The revised Audiovisual Media Services Directive is a key piece of legislation for media pluralism. It strengthens the independence of media regulators, encourages the transparency of media ownership and promotes media literacy."*

Commissioner for Internal Market, Thierry **Breton**, said: *"Two years ago, we collectively - including the Member States - agreed to upgrade EU rules on audio-visual content. These rules better protect all viewers - in particular the most vulnerable such as minors - foster cultural diversity and safeguard media pluralism. However, they won't bring any of these benefits if they remain on paper. I call on Member States to enact these rules without further delays to ensure a safer, fairer and more diverse environment online."*

Background

The EU's current [Audiovisual Media Services Directive](#) governs EU-wide coordination of national legislation on audiovisual media services, both traditional TV broadcasts and on-demand services, and video-sharing platforms. However, the media landscape has shifted dramatically in less than a decade. Millions of Europeans, especially young people, watch content online, on demand and on different mobile devices. Taking these new developments into account, the Commission proposed a revised [Audiovisual Media Services Directive](#) in [May 2016](#) that included a new approach to online platforms disseminating audiovisual content. The European Parliament and the Council reached in June 2018 a political agreement on the revised rules, which were adopted by the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union in November 2018.

The main goal of the Directive is to create and ensure the proper functioning of a single European market for audiovisual media services, while contributing to the promotion of cultural diversity,

providing an adequate level of consumer protection and safeguarding media pluralism.

Member States had 21 months to transpose it into national legislations. To make sure the new rules are enacted timely, over the past years, the Commission has supported Member State authorities, including through the [Contact Committee](#) and the [European Regulators Group for Audiovisual Media Services](#) (ERGA) on the transposition of the AVMSD. The Commission also published [guidelines](#) on European works and video-sharing platforms.

For More Information

[Revised Audiovisual Media Services Directive](#) (EU) 2018/1808

[Commission takes further steps to promote European audiovisual works and protect vulnerable viewers – Press release](#)

[Guidelines on the revised Audiovisual Media Services Directive – Questions and Answers](#)

[Digital Single Market: updated audiovisual rules - Questions and answers](#) (7 June 2018)

[Current Audiovisual Media Services Directive](#)

[General principles of regulating Audiovisual Media Services at European level](#)

[Infringement procedure](#)

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Press contacts:

[Johannes BAHRKE](#) (+32 2 295 86 15)

[Marietta GRAMMENOUE](#) (+32 2 298 35 83)

General public inquiries: [Europe Direct](#) by phone [00 800 67 89 10 11](#) or by [email](#)