

02

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▲ Lvl. 2

No state  
reply yet

Romania

Alert created on: 21 Oct 2016

## Romania to Eliminate Public Broadcast Fee

SOURCE OF THREAT ▶ State

CATEGORY  ▶ Other acts having chilling effects on media freedom

### NO STATE REPLY YET

PARTNER: EFJ/IFJ, AEJ, Index

On 17 October 2016, the Romanian Senate approved a draft law to eliminate the monthly TV and radio licence fee and to introduce direct funding of public service media from the state budget. The proposal, initiated by the Social-Democrats leader Liviu Dragnea, has come just a few weeks ahead the general elections. The measure, highly significant for the future of public broadcasting in Romania, was buried in a draft law proposing the elimination of 102 non-fiscal taxes. The draft bill is now to be discussed in the Chamber of Deputies. The Romanian Federation of Culture and Mass-Media FAIR-MediaSind, the Center for Independent Journalism, ActiveWatch and the Convention of Media Organizations are calling the Members of the Parliament to reject the draft bill, which would increase the political dependency of the public broadcaster. The journalists' organisations in Romania insist that the licence fees are the best way to guarantee the editorial independence of public service media, reducing the risk of political interference. The licence fee represents 67.56% of the incomes for the public television, and 49% for the public radio. The current rate of the TV fee is 0.8 EUR per month, the lowest in Europe, and the radio fee is 0.6 EUR per month. Following a recent study from the European Broadcasting Union (EBU), the licence fee system is shown to be the most stable, transparent and adaptable way to fund Public Service Media.

### UPDATES

**01 Feb 2017:** On 6 January 2017, the President of Romania promulgated the bill on the elimination of over 100 non-fiscal taxes, including the radio-TV licence tax. The law entered into force on 1 February 2017.

 [Text of the law published in the Official Journal \(in Romanian\)](#)

**26 Oct 2016:** On 25 October 2016, the Lower Chamber of the Romanian Parliament adopted the bill providing for the elimination of over 100 non-fiscal taxes, including the radio-TV licence tax, rejecting the amendments of the special commission which would have seen the radio-TV licence tax remaining in force.

- ➔ Article published on the news site Nineoclock.ro: "Lower Chamber adopts Dragnea's bill eliminating over 100 non-fiscal taxes. Elimination of radio-TV licence tax stirs controversies"
- ➔ Article published by the Budapest Beacon

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ▼

- ➔ Report published on the Mapping Media Freedom Platform : "Romania: New proposal to abolish TV-Radio license fee "
- ➔ EFJ statement: "We call on Romania not to End Public Broadcasting Licence Fee "
- ➔ European Broadcasting Union (EBU) study on license fees: "Licence Fee still the core of public service media funding in Europe"
- ➔ Statement from the South East European Network for Professionalization of Media : "Romania to Eliminate Public Broadcast Fee "
- ➔ Article published on the news site Nineoclock.ro: "Senate adopts Dragnea Law that cancels 102 non-fiscal taxes, including TV and radio licence taxes"
- ➔ Statement by the Romanian Union of Journalists FAIR-MediaSind (in Romanian)

## FOLLOW-UPS ▼



**02 May 2017** | The CoE Commissioner for Human Rights details the prerequisites for well-funded and strong public service media.

- ➔ **Comment by the Commissioner for Human Rights: "Public service broadcasting under threat in Europe"**



**15 Dec 2016** | Statement by the participants at the 'Public Service Media and Democracy' Conference organized by the Council of Europe, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the Czech Television and the European Broadcasting Union (10th-11th November 2016, Prague)

- ➔ **Statement**

## RELEVANT COE INSTRUMENTS ▼

**15 Dec 2016** | Recommendation CM/Rec(2012)1 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on public service media governance (Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 15 February

2012 at the 1134th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies

 **Read Recommendation**

**DISCLAIMER** This section presents a non-exhaustive selection of CoE instruments and ECHR case-law . This information is not a legal assessment of the alert and should not be treated or used as such.