

Master Resource Document

Advocacy for Funding: Key Messages, Data and Resources

Instructions & Guide How to use this document

This Master Document is a collaborative resource designed to support advocacy efforts related to funding for independent media and journalism. It serves as a central space to collect key messages, data, and resources that can be used in advocacy processes and toolkit development. Unlike a Toolkit, which provides practical guidance for a specific process and includes templates, the **master document is a living document meant for ongoing contributions and updates.**

This document is intended to be a **shared reference point**, helping organisations **align their messaging, strengthen evidence-based advocacy, and enhance coordination.** By pooling knowledge and insights from diverse contributors, we ensure that our collective advocacy efforts are well-informed and impactful.

How to use this document

Collaborate and Contribute: This is a dynamic document, and **we encourage contributions from everyone.** Whether you have key data points, messaging suggestions, or useful case studies, your input will help strengthen our collective advocacy. ***Please use the “suggesting mode” to link resources, studies, data, language, or arguments in the respective sections below. When adding data, please ensure it is referenced accordingly.***

Extract Key Messages: The document includes data and key arguments to support messaging in different themes to support different priority areas. These messages can be adapted for different advocacy contexts. Use these messages in your communications, reports, and engagement with stakeholders.

Leverage Data and Resources: The included data and resources provide a strong foundation for advocacy. Use these materials to substantiate your arguments and ensure that advocacy efforts are evidence-based.

Bridge to Toolkit Development: The Master Document also serves as a basis for toolkit creation. While this document compiles extensive information, toolkits will distil this into practical, user-friendly guides tailored to specific advocacy processes.

What can you find in this master document?

- [Instructions & Guide: How to use this document](#)
 - [Current Processes to influence](#)
 - [Language and key messages according to priorities and themes:](#)
 - [Freedom of expression and media's role in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#)
 - [Sustainable development, freedom of expression and human rights](#)
 - [Public interest media's role in fostering transparency and accountability](#)
 - [Public interest media and public digital infrastructure](#)
 - [The importance of funding public interest media and promotion of EU values](#)
 - [Information integrity](#)
 - [National and International Security](#)
 - [Challenges for journalism and media](#)
 - [Relevant international documents outlining the role of media, freedom of expression](#)
 - [Joint statements and position papers](#)
 - [Data and resources - and how to use them](#)
 - [Examples of op-eds, articles, and public outreach](#)
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Current processes that we want to influence

Outcomes of the processes:

- They may result in an outcome document signed by member states of the UN or other international organisations' member states (e.g. the OECD, EU, or UNESCO), which then becomes part of their international obligations (e.g. the Pact for the Future).
- They may also lead to the adoption of various legal instruments—some more binding than others—such as laws and recommendations.
- They may also establish a financing mechanism, such as the Multiannual Financial Framework, which is implemented over a set period.


Depending on the nature of the process and its expected outcome, there are different **advocacy targets and key moments** to focus advocacy efforts, language, and arguments to persuade policymakers. In some cases, advocacy will also involve monitoring and promoting implementation.

[EU's Multiannual Financial Framework | GFMD Policy & Advocacy Center](#)

The European Union's Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) is the EU's long-term budgetary plan, spanning seven years and determining funding priorities across key sectors such as agriculture, development, humanitarian aid, and media support. It ensures that EU spending remains predictable and within agreed limits, facilitating effective financial planning and the implementation of EU policies. The MFF is currently undergoing a midterm review, while negotiations for the next framework (2028–2034) have already begun. The process starts with the European Commission drafting a proposal, expected in June 2025.

Advocacy targets: EU Commission, Members of the European Parliament, European Council.

Working Group: [EU Media Advocacy](#)

Advocacy Toolkit:  [\[Advocacy Toolkits\] EU Multiannual Financial Framework](#)

[The Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development \(FFD4\) | GFMD Policy & Advocacy Center](#)

The Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FFD4) is one of the key global policy processes shaping the future of journalism and is pivotal in ensuring journalism remains a cornerstone of democracy and the public interest. As the world faces growing challenges in securing the necessary preconditions and infrastructure—legal, financial, technological, and institutional—required for journalism to operate, it is essential to ensure that human rights, freedom of expression, civil society, and, in particular, the journalism and media community are recognised—not only as stakeholders but as a sector deserving of funding from both state and multilateral institutions.

Advocacy targets: Government delegations participating in the negotiation process on the outcome document, as well as the Co-Chairs of the FFD4 Preparatory Committee—Mexico, Nepal, Norway, and Zambia.

Working Group: [GFMD's UN Policy and Advocacy](#)

Advocacy Toolkit: [Advocacy Toolkit_ The 4th International Conference on Financing for Development 2025](#)

Language and key messages according to priorities and themes

In this section, you can find (and add!) some language and relevant arguments in relation to the topics below:

[Freedom of expression and media role in advancing the Sustainable Development goals \(SDGs\)](#)

[Sustainable development, freedom of expression and human rights](#)

[Public interest media role in fostering transparency and accountability](#)

[Public interest media and public digital infrastructure](#)

[The importance of funding public interest media and promotion of EU values](#)

[Information integrity](#)

[National and International Security](#)

[On challenges for journalism and media](#)

Please add language linking it to relevant sources below. Feel free to add other relevant priorities and themes

Key arguments

- Public interest media is crucial for fostering transparency, accountability, and human rights in development financing.
- Investments in public digital infrastructure must prioritise transparency, security, and human rights while safeguarding against digital manipulation.
- Long-term and core funding for public interest media is essential to uphold EU democratic values, counter disinformation, and support investigative and local journalism.
- Journalism and independent media are vital for democracy but remain underfunded, leaving them vulnerable to crises and threatening their role in global development.
- Helping distinguishing facts from fiction and nurturing of culture of dialogue are among the two of the most important roles that PIM play in information ecosystems that are increasingly fragmented and polarized.
- No progress toward addressing major global challenges can be achieved without shared understanding of facts and without a public sphere promoting inclusive dialogue to seek constructive solutions.
- *[Add more arguments and data below]*

Freedom of expression and media role in advancing the Sustainable Development goals (SDGs)

Key arguments:

- Access to information, media freedom, journalist safety, and a resilient information ecosystem are essential for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.
- Freedom of expression, media freedom, and access to information are essential for just societies, sustainable development, peace, and global challenges like health, climate change, and gender equality.
- No crisis can be tackled without reliable information, which depends on journalists' safety and media organisations' independence and resources.
- Sustainable development and human rights, including freedom of expression, are interdependent and mutually reinforcing.
- *[Add more arguments and data below]*

Language:

"It is impossible to think about the future without media development or media freedom". *Access to information and fundamental freedoms such as freedom of expression and media freedom, including the safety of journalists, the vibrancy and viability of public interest media, and the resilience of a healthy, affordable, and autonomous information ecosystem, are central for advancing the entirety of the Sustainable Development Goals.*"

Source: [GFMD's advocacy around the Summit of the Future](#)

*Freedom of expression, media freedom, and access to information are fundamental to achieving the entirety of the **Sustainable Development Goals**: for fostering fair and just communities, pursuing meaningful and sustainable development and peace, and addressing shared interests in areas such as health, climate change, social justice, economic growth, gender equality, and youth empowerment.*

Source: [GFMD's advocacy around the Summit of the Future](#)

“No crisis or challenge – whether health, climate, economic, political, or humanitarian – can be addressed without reliable information and information integrity at its core. However, reliable information and information integrity cannot be ensured without journalists who can safely report and media organisations that can operate with adequate resources and without undue interference.”

Source: [GFMD’s advocacy around the Summit of the Future](#)

There is a growing body of evidences showing that support to local journalism is among the most effective measures to address disinformation over the long term. The world’s research community expressed a strong consensus that providing accurate information is the top priority for improving the global information environment, and an effective way to do so, favored by experts, is to support free and independent media.

Source: IPIE Synthesis Report [Trends in the Global Information Environment: 2024 Expert Survey Results](#); « Countering Disinformation Effectively: An Evidence-Based Policy Guide », Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2024.

With regard to SDG 16.7 (Ensure responsiveness, inclusive, participatory and representative decisionmaking at all levels)

PIM contribute to this target by promoting dialogue – both vertically between citizens and decision makers, and horizontally between the different parts of the society – and by promoting the political participation of citizens.

(source: e.g. RCT on the impact of radio dialogue programs on youth civic engagement in Madagascar, here:

<https://www.hirondelle.org/en/the-impact-of-a-studio-sifaka-dialogue-program-on-civic-engagement-among-malagasy-youth>

See the strong evidences gathered in this publication: “Journalism for development: the role of journalism promoting democracy and political accountability and sustainable development” by y Joseph Stiglitz, Anya Schiffrin, and Dylan Groves (<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000389301>)

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Sustainable development, freedom of expression and human rights

Key arguments:

- Free and independent media is a fundamental pillar of human rights and sustainable development, providing the public with reliable information and countering misinformation that can undermine democratic institutions.
- *[Add more arguments and data below]*
-

Language:

*Sustainable development and the realisation of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to freedom of expression, **are interdependent and mutually reinforcing.***

Source: Joint statement on the UN Summit of the Future - [GFMD Urges Stronger Action to Safeguard Freedom of Expression and Media Freedom Ahead of the UN Summit of the Future](#) - September 2024

Freedom of expression is a necessary condition for the realization of the principles of transparency and accountability that are, in turn, essential for the promotion and protection of human rights.

A free, uncensored and unhindered press or other media is essential in any society to ensure freedom of opinion and expression and the enjoyment of other Covenant rights. It constitutes one of the cornerstones of a democratic society. (...) The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights embraces a right whereby the media may receive information on the basis of which it can carry out its function. The free communication of information and ideas about public and political issues between citizens, candidates and elected representatives is essential. This implies a free press and other media able to comment on public issues without censorship or restraint and to inform public opinion. The public also has a corresponding right to receive media output.

(Human Rights Committee, General comment No. 34 on Article 19: Freedoms of opinion and expression (CCCPR/C/GC/34) 2011)

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Public interest media's role in fostering transparency and accountability

Key arguments

- Investigative journalism helps expose corruption and misconduct, ensuring governments and institutions remain accountable to the public.
- *[Add more arguments and data below.]*

Language:

“Public interest media plays a vital role in fostering transparency, accountability, and human rights within development financing. Strengthening media infrastructure, enhancing journalists' capacity, and improving public

understanding of development finance are essential to empowering citizens and ensuring accountability.”

Source: [GFMD input on the First draft: Outcome document of the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development](#)

Prof. Mungiu-Pippidi published the results of a major analysis of the data available on corruption. The role of a free media had among the greatest effects in limiting corruption. Mungiu-Pippidi concluded: “We found evidence that a society can constrain those who have better opportunities to spoil public resources if free media, civil society and critical citizens are strong enough.”

Source: Mungiu-Pippidi, A. (2015) *The Quest for Good Governance: How Societies Develop Control of Corruption*. Cambridge University Press, p.56

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Public interest media and public digital infrastructure

Key arguments:

- Funding independent media supports the development of accessible and reliable public digital infrastructure, ensuring diverse and high-quality journalism remains available to all citizens.
- *[Add more arguments and data below]*
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“Investments must prioritise transparency, security, and public welfare. Focus on resilient, secure, and inclusive public digital infrastructure, built with comprehensive human rights impact assessments. Investments should incorporate safeguards against digital manipulation and promote financial and media literacy to ensure informed and resilient societies in the face of emerging digital challenges.

Source: [GFMD input on the First draft: Outcome document of the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development](#)

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The importance of funding public interest media and promotion of EU values

Key arguments:

- A free press strengthens European democratic values, social cohesion, and informed civic participation, reinforcing the principles of justice, human rights, and rule of law.
- *[Add more arguments and data below]*
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Provide [long-term financing of public interest media](#) and in doing so, recognise journalists' role in promoting EU democratic values, the rule of law in member states and candidate countries. We recommend [funding to strengthen support for the existing work of investigative journalists, local media, and community media](#), all of which are key components towards countering disinformation and for the fact-checking organisations that play a further pivotal role.

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Information integrity

Key arguments:

- Independent media plays a vital role in countering disinformation, providing fact-checked reporting, and safeguarding public discourse against manipulation and propaganda.
- Information ecosystems are diverse, and therefore require diverse, inclusive, plural and multilingual media.
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- *[Add more arguments and data below]*
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Language:

Information integrity is only achievable with an independent, free and pluralistic media. Robust and urgent responses are needed to support public interest journalism around the world.

Source: [United Nations Global Principles For Information Integrity](#)

A healthy information ecosystem should support and advance human rights, in particular freedom of expression, which includes the right to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas of all kinds. [...] Governments, the private sector, civil society, academia, and the technical community should work together to promote a shared, positive vision for online spaces.

Source: [FOC's Blueprint on Information Integrity](#)

In its last report on global risks, the World Economic Forum made clear that disinformation amplified by AI is the first major global threat in the short term. (World Economic Forum Global Risks Perception Survey 2023-2024)

There is a growing body of evidences showing that support to local journalism is among the most effective measures to address disinformation over the long term. The world's research community expressed a strong consensus that providing accurate information is the top priority for improving the global information environment, and an effective way to do so, favored by experts, is to support free and independent media.

Source: IPIE Synthesis Report [Trends in the Global Information Environment: 2024 Expert Survey Results](#); « Countering Disinformation Effectively: An Evidence-Based Policy Guide », Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2024.

As evidenced in CAR, even in the most fragile and polarized environments, PIM can gain trust across the partisan divide and help audiences distinguish between facts and fiction, therefore reducing epistemic insecurity that is a major driver of mis-disinformation. (<https://www.hirondelle.org/en/bekou-study-the-impact-of-radio-ndeke-luka-before-and-after-its-launch-in-three-remote-regions-of-car>)

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National and International Security

Key arguments:

- A strong, independent press is essential to guarantee national and international security by exposing extremist narratives, countering misinformation, and informing policy decisions that protect national and international stability
- Funding independent media ensures reliable reporting on economic conditions, governance, and the rule of law, providing critical insights for investors and international development agencies. It strengthens the media's role in monitoring aid effectiveness, reducing corruption, and promoting stability in partner countries.
- *[Add more arguments and data below]*
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Language

Independent media – as a powerful accountability force in its own right – reduce the risk of international armed conflict by putting security concerns on both public and political agendas and by providing the public with accurate and timely information about the risks of armed conflict and about the horrors and reality of conflict. Media freedom is thus critical for ensuring greater international security.

Source: [Media Freedom, Democracy, and Security Research OSCE Report](#), by Marina Nord, Martin Lundstedt, and Staffan I Lindberg, July 2024

With regard to SDG 16.1 (Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere)

Professional and independent media can contribute to this target in particular by filling the information vacuum that is one of the main factors enabling the spread of disinformation and hate speech that might lead to violence.

While misinformation in the Global North often grows out of the confusion resulting from too much information, in contexts like the sub-Saharan Africa it more often grows out of an information vacuum. (*Araba Sey et al., "Sub-Saharan Africa," in "Meeting the Challenges of Information Disorder in the Global South," Herman Wasserman, ed., University of Cape Town, Research ICT Africa, InternetLab, LIRNEasia, and Arab Reporters for Investigative Journalism, 2022.*)

In the Sahel, circulation of fake news is not simply the product of external manipulation but circulate at the grassroots level because they fill a gap of reliable and accessible information. (*Guichaoua, Yvan and Bouhleb, Ferdaous (2023) Interactions between civilians and jihadists in Mali and Niger*)

In such contexts, many turn to untrustworthy sources. In the eastern DRC, for example, one study found that people continued listening to radio stations even when they did not trust them because they were looking for "orientation in the context of uncertainty related to the conflict" and that "the simple fact of accessing to information is comforting in itself, independently from the fact that the information is reliable or not, because that information can provide a sense of control, and maybe the illusion that the future can be overcome." (*Marie-Soleil Frère and Anke Fielder, "Balancing Plausible Lies and False Truths: Perception and Evaluation of the Local and Global News Coverage of Conflicts in the DRC," in Media in War and Armed Conflict: The Dynamics of Conflict News Production and Dissemination, Romy Fröhlich, ed. (New York: Routledge, 2018), p. 280.*)

As evidenced in CAR, even in the most fragile and polarized environments, PIM can gain trust across the partisan divide and help audiences distinguish between facts and fiction, therefore reducing epistemic insecurity that is a major driver of mis-disinformation.

(<https://www.hirondelle.org/en/bekou-study-the-impact-of-radio-ndeke-luka-before-and-after-its-launch-in-three-remote-regions-of-car>)

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On challenges for journalism and media

Key arguments:

- Economic instability, increasing digital threats, and declining revenues pose significant challenges to journalism, requiring urgent policy intervention and financial support to secure its future.
- *[Add more arguments and data below]*
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Language:

Ongoing regional conflicts, economic downturns, changes in major tech company policies, and the suspension of critical development assistance programs have severely destabilized independent journalism and media freedom worldwide.

Source: Joint statement addressing the U.S. government decision to suspend foreign assistance - [Urgent call for governments, multilateral institutions, and philanthropies to support independent media and journalism](#) - February 2025

Journalism and independent media are essential pillars of democratic societies, yet they **have been consistently underfunded and chronically undervalued**. This has left the sector particularly vulnerable to shocks, making it difficult to recover from disruptions like the current funding crisis. Media development fosters transparency, accountability, and civic engagement, yet without sustained support, its role in global development and human rights is at risk.

Source: Joint statement on the UN Summit of the Future - [GFMD Urges Stronger Action to Safeguard Freedom of Expression and Media Freedom Ahead of the UN Summit of the Future](#) - September 2024

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Relevant international documents outlining the role of media, freedom of expression

Please add any documents and resources below that are relevant to the themes outlined above.

- [Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#);
- the [General Comment on Article 19](#);
- [Freedoms of Opinion and Expression](#);
- the [1991 Windhoek Declaration](#); and the [2021 Windhoek+30 Declaration: Information as Public Good](#),
- [Target 16.10 of the Sustainable Development Goals](#)
- the [UN Global Principles for Information Integrity](#).
- [Pact for the Future, Global Digital Compact and Declaration on Future Generations](#)
- OECD [Development Co-operation Principles for Relevant and Effective Support to Media and the Information Environment](#)
- OECD [Recommendation of the Council on Information Integrity](#)
- OSCE [Media Freedom, Democracy, and Security Research Report](#), by Marina Nord, Martin Lundstedt, and Staffan I Lindberg, July 2024

Joint statements and position papers

Please add any statements and position papers below that are relevant to the themes outlined above.

- Joint statement addressing the U.S. government decision to suspend foreign assistance - [Urgent call for governments, multilateral institutions, and philanthropies to support independent media and journalism](#) - February 2025

- Joint statement on the UN Summit of the Future - [GFMD Urges Stronger Action to Safeguard Freedom of Expression and Media Freedom Ahead of the UN Summit of the Future](#) - September 2024
- EU MFF Position Paper (EPD, ARTICLE 19, IPI, ECPMF, EFJ)
- [Joint Statement on the Proposal for the European Media Freedom Act](#) - September 2022
- [Joint Input for the European Democracy Shield](#)
- [Perugia Declaration for Ukraine \(updated 2023\)](#)
- [Emergency Appeal for Journalism and Media Support](#) in response to COVID-19 pandemic - May 2020
- [The Media Viability Manifesto](#) September 2024

Data and resources - and how to use them

Collaboration and data verification

- Cross-reference relevant data sources, using official reports and research papers.
- Keep data references accurate—directly quote from the data sources whenever possible and avoid rephrasing.
- Be mindful of the time frame—research is conducted for different periods.
- Some figures and data encompass much more than media support. For instance, the Creative Europe Media strand includes film production and distribution, not just media support.
- Some figures and data do not include all available funding mechanisms. For example, data published to the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) and data available in the OECD DAC Creditor Reporting System do not include most philanthropic funding.
- Engage with the community by sharing your research with partners, including GFMD and our members on the ground. They can serve as a sounding board in various ways—for example, by helping to determine whether a particular donor provides the majority of media funding in a country or identifying missing key data.
- Collaborate—divide the workload among organisations specialising in specific areas and regions, and ask for relevant data inputs.

Examples

GFMD's Data Briefing: U.S. Journalism and Media Funding:

[12022025 GFMD US Journalism and Media Funding Trends Briefing](#)

Relevant reports and research papers

Please add any research papers below that are relevant to the themes outlined above.

[DAC Network on Governance, Mapping ODA to media and information environment integrity report](#)

[Are Donors Taking the Journalism Crisis Seriously? An Analysis of Official Aid to Media 2010–2019](#), Center for International Media Assistance. Mary Myers and Heather Gilberts
[EU Funding in the Media. An Analysis of Journalism Projects Financed by the European Union](#),
Nikolas Schäfer & Marius Dragomir

[Where is the money? A global perspective on forms of funding, financing and investment for public interest media](#) - International Media Support IMS, October 2024

[Mapping media assistance in Western Balkans](#) - GFMD, September 2024

[Mapping of media assistance and journalism support programmes in the Levant region](#), GFMD,
March 2025

[Impact of U.S. Funding Suspension on Independent Media in Lebanon](#), Samir Kassir
Foundation, Widad Jarbough, April 2025

[Funding of Public Service Media](#), EBU, April 2025

[The State of Media Development, Global evidence on relevant and effective media support](#), DW
Akademie, April 2025

Collaborative initiatives and research groups

Engage with existing mechanisms, coalitions, and collaborative initiatives to amplify efforts, ensuring your message is heard and widely distributed.

Networks, coalitions, multi - stakeholder initiatives and partners

Please add links to relevant partner organisations and initiatives.

[Media Freedom Coalition](#)

[UNESCO - International Programme for the Development of Communication](#)

[Team Democracy Europe \(TED\) Network](#)

[The Trust, Accountability, and Inclusion \(TAI\) Collaborative - Funders for Participatory Governance](#)

[Media Viability Manifesto](#)

[Transparency, Accountability, and Participation \(TAP\) Network](#)

[Forum on Information & Democracy](#)

Data collection spreadsheet

For sharing and contributing to requests for data and case studies please use this **Data collection [spreadsheet](#)**.

Examples of op-eds, articles, and public outreach

Please add links to articles and op-eds.

- New York Times: ["Federal Funding Crackdown Imperils Global Newsrooms"](#)
- Columbia Journalism Review: ["Weaponizing Distrust"](#)

- Global Investigative Journalism Network: "[The USAID Crisis and Funding the Future of Independent Media](#)"
- Impact Investor - [Independent media a worthy focus for SDG investors, media fund CEO says](#)
- [As AI turbocharges spread of misinformation, ramp up support for media](#). By Laure-Hélène Piron, Cristina Ordóñez and Nick Benequista
- [Donor funding to international media is even lower than we thought – we need to increase it rapidly to protect and sustain independent journalism](#) - by Nishant Lalwani and James Deane
- [Media independence and sustainability](#) - policy paper by Mira Milosevic, GFMD
- Example of advocacy campaign: Advocacy of Czech Republic MoF to save Radio Free Europe ([BBC article](#), [Euronews article](#), [The Guardian article](#), etc)

For suggesting journalists and media reporting on these topics please use this spreadsheet [here](#).

Other useful resources

Please add to the list

[IFEX Advocacy explainers](#)

[FPU's Advocacy tools](#)

[TAP Network & SDG16Now Information and Engagement Toolkit](#)