

# Luxembourg Unveils Major Reform of the Media Sector Rules

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**O**n 30 September 2025, the Luxembourg government published bill of law n°8625, substantially reforming the Media Law of 27 July 1991 on electronic media (the “Media Law”), citing the need to adapt to the move away from traditional media to new and hybrid forms of online content; an opportunity given by EU Regulation 2024/1083 (also known as the “European Media Freedom Act”), to remedy the current “patchwork of rules” under Luxembourg law.

## Wider scope and wider powers of the Luxembourg media authority

The reform aims first and foremost at modernising and unifying the legal framework applicable to all media services in Luxembourg. It strengthens the powers of the soon to be former “*Autorité luxembourgeoise indépendante de l’audiovisuel*” (ALIA), to be renamed “*Autorité luxembourgeoise indépendante des médias*” (ALIM), while aligning Luxembourg law with evolving European standards. The draft, however, introduces simplified procedures for establishing operations in Luxembourg and revises the annual supervisory fee, which previously averaged 800,000€ per year (see p. 326 of the financial statement).

The reform also follows the key trends set out by the European Media Freedom Act in covering all media in whatever form with harmonised rules in the EU, whether traditional (television, radio, press) or digital (podcasts, content creators, video-sharing platforms, etc.). National obligations previously limited to traditional media would now extend to digital content.

Crucially, content creators and influencers are now explicitly included within the bill’s scope. However, the draft definition remains vague and is expected to spark parliamentary debate. As it stands, the definition requires that a creator both “generate and upload” content, which would arguably exclude certain forms of live content for example. The listed definitions of the Bill will likely be the most debated elements during parliamentary deliberations. This approach enshrines the principle of equal treatment between established players and new entrants.



The proposed reform also aims at implementing EU Regulation 2024/900 on political advertising, which became fully applicable on 10 October 2025. From then on, entities providing political advertising services disseminated in, or targeting the EU, must be established in the EU and be ultimately controlled by an EU citizen or a third-country national permanently residing in that particular election or referendum. While stricter rules may be decided at the national level, the reform limited itself to designating the ALIM as well as the National Commission for Data Protection (CNPD) as competent authorities.

## Impacts for investing in media operators

The European Media Freedom Act explicitly refers to the need to remedy three main media “market failures”: the diverted revenues of advertising to online platforms, restrictions to cross-border services such as “*opaque and unfair allocation of public and private economic resources*” in the sector, and the presence of third country providers gaining importance in the EU market which rely on “*internal market freedoms for abusive purposes, thus thwarting the proper functioning of market dynamics*” as well as engaging in disinformation and manipulative tactics.

From a commercial standpoint, Luxembourg holds a non-negligible position in the European media sector, not only due to its longstanding position as a hub for corporate structures of a number of European broadcasters, but also as the historic home of RTL. Whilst under the current Media Law the Luxembourg government was able to retain a *droit de regard* (disclosure of the shareholding) on shareholding through the media concessions on chan-



nels, which also led to courtesy notifications and clearance with the government in case of changes to such shareholding.

Notwithstanding the provisions of the foreign direct investments (FDI) law which also cover foreign investments “*in the media sector, [particularly in activities of] publishing, audiovisual activities and broadcasting*”. The reform will retain the *droit de regard* tied with these concessions, albeit now limited to radio communications. In an effort to promote innovation and make Luxembourg more attractive to both established media providers and independent creators, the bill largely abolishes the former system of concessions and formal governmental authorisations. Instead, a notification regime has been introduced for media services (Art. 9), audiovisual media (Art. 20), and video-sharing platforms (Art. 37).

The bill will also notably require media service providers to “*make easily and directly accessible*” to their recipients (meaning the natural persons accessing said media) “*the name or names of their direct or indirect owner or owners with shareholdings enabling them to exercise influence on the operation and strategic decision making, including direct or indirect ownership by a state or by a public authority or entity*” as well as their “*beneficial owner(s)*”. Given that this may amount to the end of public disclosure, the lessons learned from the Sovim case law of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) regarding privacy rights of beneficial owners may potentially again be raised here to limit such public access.

## More comprehensive rights and protections

One of the most significant innovations is the introduction of a list of key fundamen-



tal rights that apply uniformly to all media services, regardless of their form or platform. These include the freedoms to communicate information and ideas, to receive and retransmit content, to provide media services, and to exercise editorial independence (Art 7 et seq.).

However, these freedoms are not absolute. The draft law expressly provides that they may be restricted where the common set of obligations applicable to all actors in the media ecosystem is not respected. These include incitement to hatred or violence, terrorist propaganda, offences against human dignity, child pornography, denial of genocide, discrimination, and threats to national security or public order (Art. 11 and 12). These obligations also extend to user-generated comments on media services (Art. 11(2)). Media actors are responsible not only for their own content, but also for ensuring that comment sections and interactive spaces under their control do not host prohibited material, which echoes the logic of the Digital Services Act.

In addition, the bill provides sector-specific obligations: commercial communications must be clearly identifiable and non-clandestine (Art. 22); product placement is restricted in certain categories such as consumer shows, children’s programmes, or news broadcasts (Art. 24); and special measures are introduced to ensure accessibility for persons with disabilities (Art. 28), the promotion of cultural and linguistic diversity, and quotas for European works (Art. 30–31).

## Enhanced protection for minors

The bill also reinforces the protection of minors. Media services must adopt appropriate measures such as for example age classification systems, parental controls,

and content-locking mechanisms (Art. 39). Commercial profiling or targeted advertising using minors’ personal data is expressly prohibited (Art. 27, and 39(3)). A particularly sensitive proposed measure concerns age verification. Although optional under the draft, this remains one of the most contentious issues in Europe. The European Commission recently announced that it is developing a harmonised EU digital identity wallet to facilitate age verification, suggesting that national divergence on this issue could be short-lived. Given that neighbouring countries and the Digital Services Act already impose such obligations, Luxembourg’s approach will likely attract attention during parliamentary debates.

## A revised sanctioning regime

Despite the government’s stated focus on “awareness and prevention rather than repression,” the proposed sanctions are significantly reinforced. A new “*Commission d’agrément et de sanctions*” will be created. The administrative sanctions regime is significantly strengthened, with penalties ranging from warnings and reprimands to temporary suspension of services, withdrawal of accreditation, and increased financial fines, now up to EUR 250,000 (a 90% increase from the current law) (Art. 80). Beyond financial penalties, the ALIM is also empowered to issue takedown orders for harmful illegal content, monitor media content, grant or revoke accreditations, investigate complaints (Art. 63 et seq.), and issue formal notices (Art. 79). Importantly, the authority may initiate proceedings either on its own initiative or following a complaint from any natural or legal person, whether public or private (Art. 66).

## Conclusion

This draft law represents a major milestone for Luxembourg’s media regulation: ambitious, comprehensive, and aligned with European standards. It introduces an empowered independent authority, harmonised obligations across traditional and digital media, and simplified administrative procedures that could bolster Luxembourg’s position as a hub for responsible media innovation. The bill of law (and the European Media Freedom Act)’s emphasis on removing barriers to cross-border operation and investment suggests opportunities for market expansion, but success will depend on carefully navigating the new transparency, independence and pluralism safeguards that aim to create a more level playing field across Luxembourg (and the EU)’s internal market for media services.