

# European media facility in Armenia

## Credible Media. Viability. Cooperation.

Internal political crises, ongoing conflict, as well as external factors such as the recent geopolitical developments in the wider region prepared a fruitful ground for the dissemination of hate speech, fake news, disinformation, and misinformation. The context is becoming more complicated in Armenia with very small number of independent media lacking financial, institutional and in some cases human capacities to provide the wider public with free and fair information.

DW Akademie in partnership with BBC Media Action, Democracy Development Foundation (DDF), Hetq/Investigative Journalists NGO, and Factor TV, was entrusted by the European Union (EU) and the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) to implement the project called “European Media Facility in Armenia — Building Sustainable and Professional Media.”

The three-year project is aimed at contributing to the promotion of a vibrant and viable media sector in Armenia, that is capacitated to fulfil its role as a watchdog for the Armenian society. The main target groups

of the initiative are media managers, regional media outlets, independent journalists, fact checkers, young journalists, and students.

*“Professional and responsible journalism is the guardian of democracy, providing the public with accurate and unbiased information that empowers individuals to make informed decisions and fosters a more enlightened and harmonious society. People in Armenia are concerned about disinformation and more and more vigilant about it. The European Media Facility in Armenia project, which is close to conclusion, aimed to address the issues above, and help to find solutions to them. The European Union remains committed to supporting the media as they represent the most effective instruments for promoting shared values.”*  
H.E. Mr. Vassilis Maragos — Ambassador, Head of the EU Delegation to Armenia.

The project consists of a whole set of mutually enriching activities including fact-checking and investigative reporting development, networking opportunities for media representatives within Armenia and abroad, as well as financial support and capacity building activities for regional media



Factor TV Students Award Ceremony

organizations. Additionally, Armenia’s first media management E-School has been established within the project.

The project has conducted several needs assessments on media management, fact-checking, as well comprehensive research reports on the coverage of environmental issues in Armenian media and preferences and insights of audience on partner media organizations. Moreover, individually designed consultancy sessions were organized for each of the local partners based on needs and expectations raised by them.

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BBC MA “Serving audiences when they need it most” networking event

# BBC Media Action

## Improved capacities and new exchanges



### Capacity building for strong, independent Armenian media

Within the framework of the project, BBC Media Action is supporting both regional and national media partners with a focus on strengthening their editorial and technical capacity as well as organisational resilience to produce more engaging public interest content that resonates with audiences.

The main achievements to date include more than 30 consultations with regional media to improve technical and editorial skills of 10 selected partner organisations; the development of a set of universally applicable editorial principles and journalistic standards within Armenia; study trips to the BBC in London for journalists representing two of the most trusted independent media organisations in the country, with an additional visit organized for members of the factchecking network created by Hetq; a two-day international media conference in Yerevan which attracted more than 70 participants; national and regional workshops; as well as bespoke support to Hetq and Factor TV on issues including editorial development, content

production, organisational development and financial viability.

*"I participated in all the trainings with great satisfaction and interest, which not only gave all of us new professional knowledge and skills, but also healthy debates and discussions through which we exchanged experience with the trainers. The training passed quite quickly, because the process was interactive, and everyone was given the opportunity to express their point of view and opinion."* Roza Vardanyan, Factor TV

### Editorial standards fit for Armenia

BBC Media Action also consulted with the Media Ethics Observatory, the Yerevan Press Club and 10 regional media partners through a wide range of means, including national and regional workshops, to develop a set of universally applicable editorial standards within Armenia that tie in with the Self-Regulation Initiative signed by almost 70 Armenian media organisations.

While they are based on the BBC editorial guidelines, the categories and their principles are bespoke for Armenia and tailored to be applicable to the media landscape and context of the country. They are formed of six core principles: Impartiality, Accuracy, Editorial Independence, Right to Privacy and Anonymity, Fairness, Respect and Values, and Conflict Reporting.

### Peer-to-peer exchange between Armenian and international media

In the context of this project, the project organised workshops and study tours to create space for exchanges between Armenian media practitioners and international media on international best practices in areas

of media most relevant for the Armenian context.

During our study tours to the BBC's Broadcasting House in London, delegates were able to observe newsgathering teams in action and met with a wide range of BBC experts from BBC News, BBC World Service, Newsnight, the BBC Global Disinformation Unit, BBC Audience Research, and more. The interactive format of the study visit allowed for in-depth discussions on sensitive topics, including the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

BBC Media Action also provided space for peer-to-peer learning during its networking conference in Yerevan in May 2023, "Serving audiences when they need it most: the key role of media in emergencies". International, local, and regional media experts came together to discuss the vital role that media plays during times of crisis. The conference featured keynote speeches, panel discussions, and workshops to provide attendees with practical insights and tools for media production and cross-sector coordination.

*"The skills gained during the BBC Media Action [conference], focusing on presenting social problems through human stories, have been very helpful for the team. Using these skills, we're able to make our content even better by presenting a whole range of issues in each story, instead of focusing on a single story."* Susanna Shahnazaryan, Goris Press Club

#### Contact Us

For more information on our projects and how to get involved, contact us through any of the following:

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