



The EU Media Wallet reconnects citizens with independent journalism and especially young adults through a Youth News Pass free of charge. By promoting media diversity and rebuilding trust, it fosters informed participation and safeguards democracy.

Introduction

Democratic resilience depends on informed and engaged citizens. But the new era of online platform dominance has transformed the information environment. This has created a chasm for the proliferation of disinformation that threatens the very foundation on which European democracies and their national security rest.

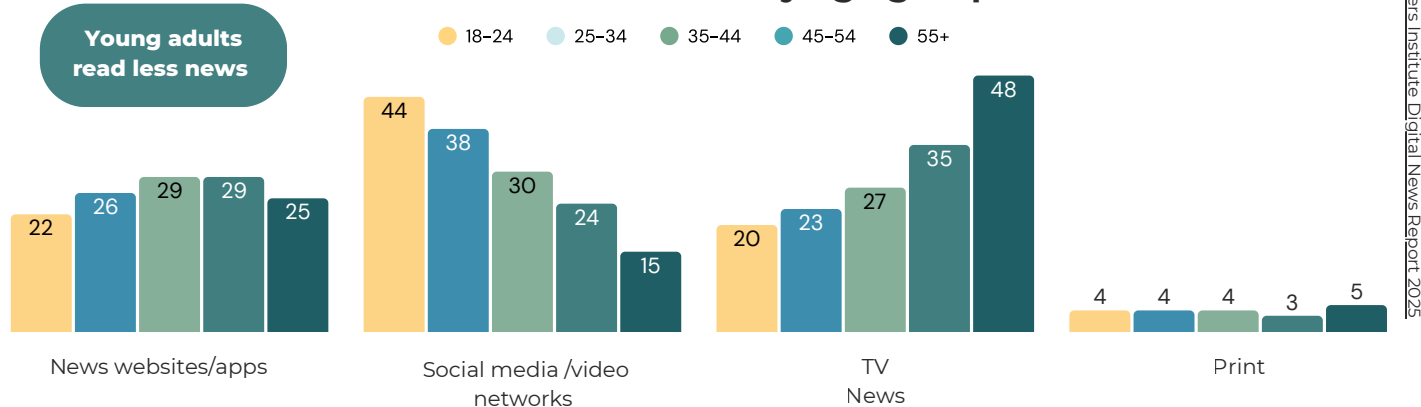
Sustained EU efforts boost media freedom but scaling them up has proven difficult and citizens still often face barriers in accessing high-quality news. Democratic resilience requires an infrastructure that ensures the financial sustainability of news outlets and allows citizens to access accurate news easily. With young adults most likely to disconnect from news outlets, our proposal places their future readership at its core.

We propose

The EU Media Wallet, a pan-European digital platform connecting citizens directly with high-quality journalism through an easy-to-use interface, where citizens can pay for independent news from different outlets on a per-article basis.

As trusted news is least accessible for young adults, the Media Wallet integrates a tool that gives 18-24-year-olds free access to a selection of quality news content: the Youth News Pass.

Main source of news by age group



Key Actors

DG EAC - Creative Europe

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Multimedia Action
13.5 million euros

Creative Europe,
Cross-Sector Strand
16.1 million euros

EU Action Grant
3 million Euros

2024 Work Programme
3 million euros

The EU has increasingly allocated funds to find solutions to address the decline in accessing free and independent media content. In 2025 alone, the EU has issued the following proposals for News Media sector.

In the MFF 2028-2034 proposal from the European Commission, EU financial support for media freedom is only expected to grow, with 8.6 billion euros proposed for Culture and Democracy.

How does EU Media Wallet address specific policy problems?

	POLICY PROBLEM	SOLUTION	STAKEHOLDERS
1	Quality news are hard to find and behind paywalls	→ Easier access to independent news through the Media Wallet	News consumers
2	Low youth engagement	→ Youth News Pass with free and accessible journalism	Young adults
3	Prioritization of user engagement over quality	→ Connecting outlets and quality news with consumers	Digital information infrastructure
4	Low reader traffic and revenue streams	→ Central platform for exposure & extra revenue	News organisations



The EU Media Wallet includes **the Youth News Pass**, a separate feature only available for younger audiences. It grants EU citizens **aged 18 to 24 free access** to a selection of quality content.

The News Pass supports **the EU Youth Strategy's aim** of engaging young people to be active in society and complements existing **EU youth programmes** such as **DiscoverEU** and **Erasmus+**.

Three stage implementation of the EU Media Wallet



PLATFORM CREATION



Develop and launch the EU Media Wallet, a mobile app and website, giving Europeans easy access to independent regional and national media. The platform includes a free Youth News Pass for young adults and a user-friendly system to discover and support quality journalism.

1

2

PILOTING

Conduct pilot tests in varying EU countries from diverse regions to collect data, improve user experience, and establish best practices for scaling up the EU Media Wallet across Member States.



SCALING-UP

Analyse pilot data and expand the EU Media Wallet across Member States, introducing new features to enhance usability, such as improvements to the pay-by-article option.

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