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## **UNESCO/EC Report Published**

### **“Needs and challenges for successful media self-regulation”**

Media self-regulation involves the media being accountable for their work by voluntarily managing and monitoring their own professional standards. A system like this can help to build public trust in the media, which is particularly needed in the region of South East Europe.

It can also empower journalists to be more resilient to informal economic and political pressures.

Strengthening the capacities of media councils is part of a broad UNESCO/EC strategy to promote media freedom and accountability in South East Europe.

A new [UNESCO/EC report](#) , now available online, analyses the needs of the five existing media councils in South East Europe and provides recommendations to encourage their improved functionality and sustainability. It also offers a comprehensive overview of the work of these five organizations and highlights the difficult circumstances in which the five media councils in the region are operating. Challenges include a combination of economic and political conditions, limited sustainable funding and high external expectations to deal with complex regulatory problems. The report draws on information received from a mixture of desk research, correspondence and meetings with representatives of each media council and informal consultation with external stakeholders.

The study shows how each media council is unique. The particular challenges of the five self-regulatory bodies are outlined in the report, together with a detailed presentation of factual information about the councils’ operations. However, a number of overarching issues were found to be common to all five organizations:

- a lack of financial sustainability,
- limited in-house resources,
- limited cooperation from some media outlets, and
- the growth of online media.

These issues will now inform UNESCO/EC programming for upcoming collaborations with the media councils.

This report was commissioned by UNESCO’s Division of Freedom of Expression and Media Development, which has managed since January 2013 a project to strengthen media accountability systems in South East Europe and Turkey. Funded by the European Commission, the Media Accountability in South East Europe project aims to promote media freedom and accountability by strengthening ethical and professional standards in journalism. It has promoted the concept of media self-regulation among media and other constituents, and has worked to raise awareness among civil society about issues related to media accountability more generally.

More information about the Report can be read [here](#) .