



MEDIA OWNERSHIP RULES IN EUROPE: A FOCUS ON EU MEMBER STATES' LEGISLATION ON FOREIGN OWNERSHIP

Fact Sheet

The Media Pluralism Monitor

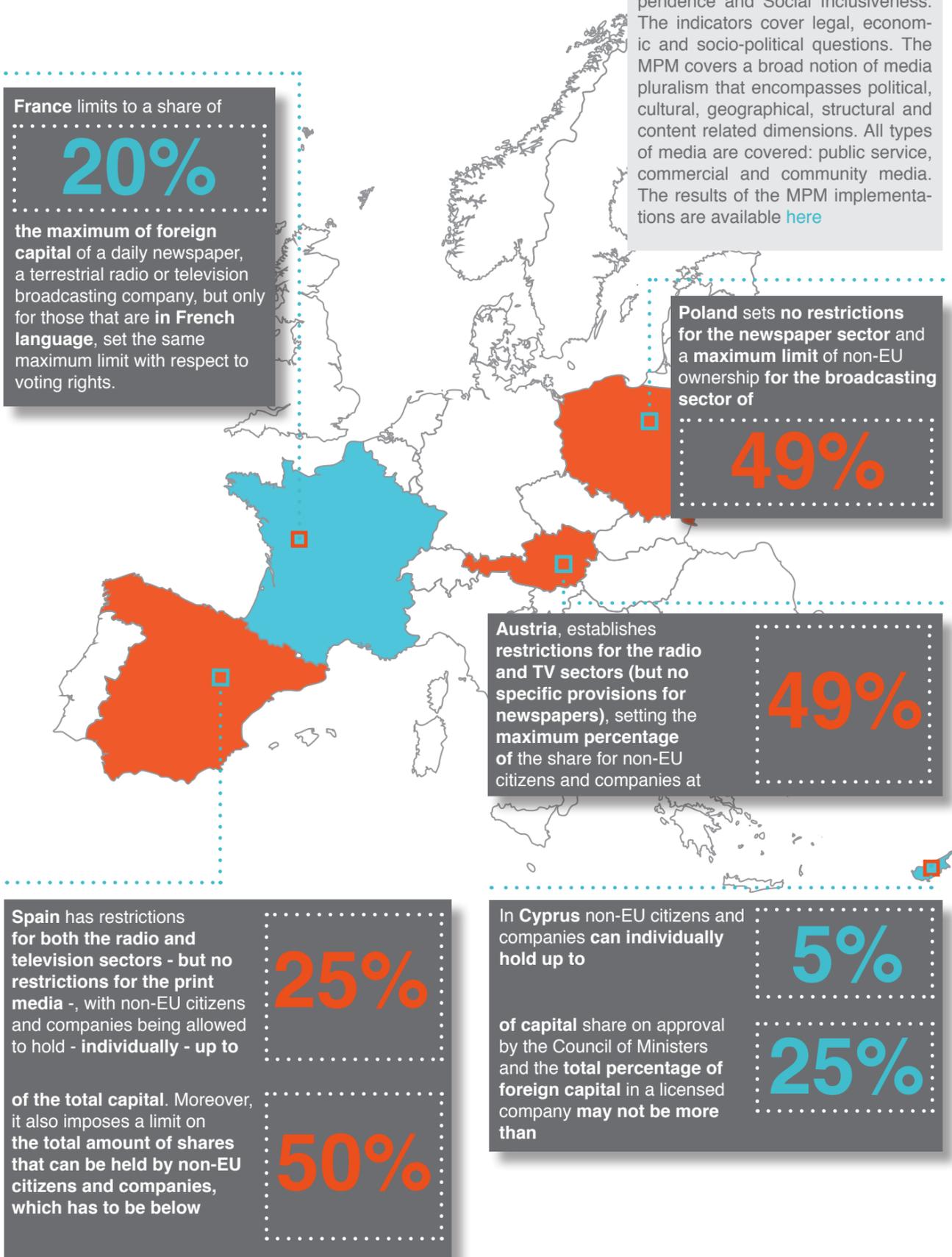
The Media Pluralism Monitor (MPM) is a tool that has been developed by the CMPF to assess the risks for media pluralism in a given country. The MPM project is co-funded by the European Union. The tool has been tested under two pilot-projects co-funded by the European Union in 2014 and 2015. These two pilot-test implementations built on the prototype of the MPM that was designed in the 2009 Independent Study on Indicators for Media Pluralism in the Member States – Towards a Risk-Based Approach. In 2016, the CMPF has applied the MPM in EU-28 and in Montenegro and in Turkey; In 2017 in EU-28 and Serbia, FYRoM and Turkey. The Monitor assesses the risks for media pluralism based on a set of twenty indicators covering four different areas: Basic Protection, Market Plurality, Political Independence and Social Inclusiveness. The indicators cover legal, economic and socio-political questions. The MPM covers a broad notion of media pluralism that encompasses political, cultural, geographical, structural and content related dimensions. All types of media are covered: public service, commercial and community media. The results of the MPM implementations are available [here](#)

As the data from the Media Pluralism Monitor 2016 shows, EU Member States generally do not impose any restrictions on foreign ownership. That is the case for 23 countries out of 28.

There are only 5 Member States' that establish some kind of regulatory restriction on foreign ownership in the media sector, but in none of them do such restrictions apply to citizens or companies from EU countries, which enjoy the same rights as national citizens and companies created under the laws of the respective country.

The restrictions on foreign ownership vary both in terms of percentage of capital held and the sector to which they apply.

no legislation on foreign ownership
 legislation on foreign ownership for all media sectors
 legislation on foreign ownership for some media sectors



Therefore, in all EU MS that establish some degree of restriction on non-EU ownership, the common pattern is that non-EU companies and citizens cannot have control of the media company, with Cyprus and France having the most restrictive environment, applying to all media sectors and with maximum limits for non-EU capital of 20 and 25%, respectively.

* In Slovakia, although there is no specific limit for foreign participation in the capital of a media outlet, the Council for Broadcasting and Retransmission when granting the license for analogue radio and TV broadcasting (currently used only on analogue radio licensing) has to take into consideration that the applicant has "adequate capital participation of the Slovak persons and their representation in bodies of the company provided that the applicant for the licence is a legal entity with foreign capital participation." Nevertheless, considering that this requirement does not apply to digital broadcasting licensing in practice, we can say that there is no significant restriction on foreign ownership in the country.

Sources:

The main source for this Fact sheet is the Media Pluralism Monitor 2016 (MPM2016) Database, created under the Media Pluralism Monitor 2016 Project. For the final report of the project, see [here](#). The fact sheet relied also on information provided by the Media Pluralism Monitor 2017 (MPM2017) country teams.

Other sources:

Media Reform Coalition (2015). [The elephant next door: a survey of international media ownership regulation](#)
Olga Finkel and Daphne Ann Grech, WH Partners (2016). Regulation and outsourcing in Malta: overview. [Thomson Reuters, Practical Law](#)
Wagner Hatfield (2016). Media ownership and concentration in Europe: a comparative analysis with reflections on the situation in Slovenia. Study commissioned by AKOS - Agency for Communication Networks and Services of the Republic of Slovenia

CMPF

The Centre for Media Pluralism and Media Freedom (CMPF), established in 2011 at the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute - Florence ([cmpf.eui.eu](#)), aims to develop innovative and relevant lines of research on media freedom and pluralism and on fundamental rights, both online and offline, in Europe and beyond, and to provide knowledge support to the international, European and national policy and rulemaking processes. The Centre, directed by Prof. Pier Luigi Parcu, coordinated by Elda Brogi, is composed of a team of experts in media markets and economics, law, political science, and communications studies. CMPF draws on a scientific committee and a unique network of experts in media pluralism across Europe and beyond, and engages in public debate with academics, policy makers, regulators, and journalists.

Contact: cmpf@eui.eu

