



European Center for
Not-for-Profit Law



EU and Media Engagement Strategies to Protect Human Rights

Knowledge-sharing event

September 30 - October 2, 2025

Sofia, Bulgaria

Day/date	Time	Programme
Day 0 - September 30	19:00 (tentatively)	Welcoming dinner & informal introduction
Day 1 - October 1	9:00-09:30	Welcoming and introduction to Day 1 Moderators: NHC
	9:30-10:00	Setting the context: legal and media environment in Bulgaria and Romania <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What are the recent legal challenges or (if any) favourable conditions for civil society?• How do media approach covering EU policies, human rights and collaboration with CSOs?• What challenges do CSOs face approaching journalists? Moderators: ECNL, FPPE
	10:00-11:00	Introduction: EU Law + examples of media coverage of CSOs activities



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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is EU law? • Division of competences: EU competencies vs. National Member States' • Competencies • EU and human rights: EU Charter of Fundamental Rights <p>The points above will be accompanied by media/campaign examples.</p> <p>Speakers: ECNL with contribution from FPEE</p>
	11:00 - 11:30	Coffee break
	11:30-12:30	<p>Panel discussion: Educating media and journalists on EU and human rights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do journalists and media approach EU and human-rights related topics? • The most popular (mis)conceptions about EU and human rights in the media. (+ examples of media confusion between EU, CoE, EU court and Strasbourg Court, etc) • Why investing in education/training of journalists/editors on human rights and long-term relationship with media can be beneficial? • What are the best practices of EU and human rights education for journalists? <p>Moderator: FPEE</p> <p>Panel: TBC</p>
	12:30 - 13:30	<p>Training: Legal Avenues for using EU law to protect civic space:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to use EU law in national level litigation? • What are the legal avenues for triggering action by EU institutions?



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who else can take up the matter when the EU law has been breached? <p>Speaker: ECNL</p>
	13:30 - 14:30	Lunch
	14:30 - 15:30	<p>Training: Navigating media engagement & pitching</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key tactics to approach journalists and newsrooms How do you make the media interested in what you offer? Maintaining relationships with media and journalists over longer periods of time Choosing the right angle to present your story Persuading the journalist/editor that your story can bring them added value Writing a pitch and presenting it to the outlet <p>Speakers: FPPE + Catalyst participants sharing success stories</p>
	15:30 -16:00	<p>Group assignment: mapping a legal and media strategy in defense of human rights</p> <p>Moderators: ECNL and FPPE</p>
	16:00-17:00	Working on the assignment in groups
	17:00 – 17:30	Coffee break and Housekeeping for Day 2
Day 2 - October 2	9:00-9:15	Welcoming and introduction to the day
	9:15-10:00	<p>Advocacy avenues with the EU</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EU Tools for CSOs to uphold the Rule of law in their countries (Rule of Law Mechanism, Rule of Law Cycle, Rule of Law Framework)



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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NHC Director Joeri Buhner Tavanier presents experiences working on Rule of Law report in the Netherlands Tools developed by civil society to inform and advocate with the EU on civic space issues <p>Moderator: ECNL and NHC</p>
	10:00- 10:45	<p>Session 3: Strategic Litigation Against Public Participation (SLAPPs):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The EU Anti-SLAPP directive and its transposition within Romania and Bulgaria Council of Europe Recommendation on countering SLAPPs complementing to the EU Directive <p>+ brainstorming on campaigns for effective implementation of both instruments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to counter campaigns of the government/business against you (CSOs) <p>Moderator: ECNL</p>
	10:45: 11:00	Coffee break
	11:15 - 12:00	<p>Panel Discussion: Campaigning as a direct way of communicating to target audience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to plan an effective awareness/communication campaign Tips and tricks to get media attention to your campaign What channels are best to get your message on? How to formulate the right message for your target audience? How to engage bloggers and content creators?



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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legal challenges <p>Moderator: FPEE</p> <p>Participants: Catalyst of Change participants (TBC), NHC, ECNL</p>
	12:00 - 13:00	Lunch
	13:00 - 13:45	<p>Workshop: Communicating directly to target audience: content and measurement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the simple tricks to make things attractive for social media? What audience metrics are important? How to attract media attention after publishing a viral story? <p>Speaker: FPEE</p>
	13:45 – 14:00	Coffee break
	14:00 – 15:30	<p>Practical workshop: using Chat GPT and other AI instruments to format content for the (social) media</p> <p>Speaker: FPEE</p>
	15:30 – 16:00	Groups reconvene to review their assignments
	16:00 – 16:30	<p>Presentation of the group assignment + feedback</p> <p>Moderators: FPEE and ECNL</p>
	16:30 – 17:00	Conclusions



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