Resolutions Report

by

The Czech Citizen Parliament on Media and Democracy
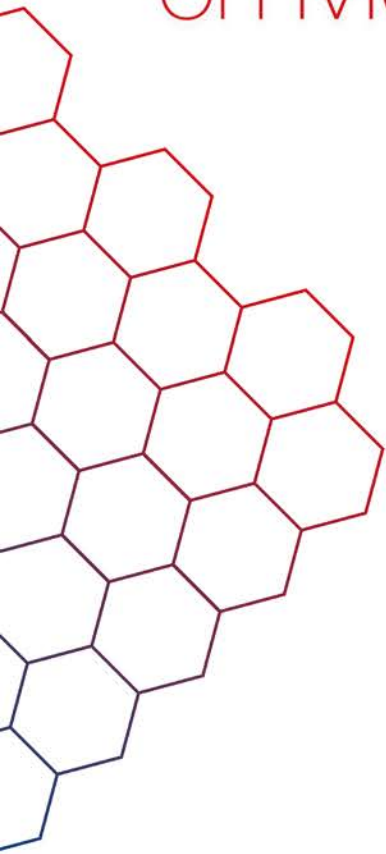
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The Czech Citizen Parliament

on Media and Democracy

MEDEMAP

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Table of Contents

Foreword

Nico Carpentier

Extraordinary Professor, Culture and Communication Research Centre, Charles University

In this report, you will find the work of the 2025 Czech Citizen Parliament on Media and Democracy. Looking back at the experience of being one of planners and organisers of this citizen parliament, within the framework of the Horizon Europe research project MeDeMAP (Mapping Media for Future Democracies), I can only start by emphasising that this experience has convincingly demonstrated the importance of citizen parliaments and citizen assemblies. There are many academic publications and organisational narratives that point to the importance of creating platforms for citizens to have their voices heard and to engage in a respectful dialogue with the field of institutionalized politics, but it remains a privilege and fascinating experience to witness the actual practice of a citizen parliament in action.

In particular, the Czech Citizen Parliament on Media and Democracy has proven the capacity of 'ordinary' citizens to collectively rethink the role of media in democracy, in relation to three main topics: media systems, media representation and media participation. Their resolutions—included in this report—are well-considered, extensively deliberated and simply wise. We should keep in mind that there are many stereotypes about ordinary citizens, as they are often seen as passive, disinterested, selfish, incompetent and even destructive. The Czech Citizen Parliament on Media and Democracy demonstrated the opposite, through the work of the 20 deeply committed, active, engaged, caring, knowledgeable and constructive citizens, who together formed the Czech Citizen Parliament.

Maybe equally important is that they moved beyond the constraints of current legal frameworks, and beyond what may be politically possible, but instead produced a normative perspective on the future of Czech media and democracy—rooted in their minds and hearts, and driven by "what should be", not by "what could be".

And, thirdly, what the work of the Czech Citizen Parliament on Media and Democracy also demonstrated is the capacity of 'ordinary' citizens to deliberate and collaborate. In times where there is ample discussion about societal polarization, and the emphasis is placed so often on what divides us, the 20 parliamentarians—all very different people—engaged in intense and always civil discussions, defending their perspectives with passion, but then also investing their energy in making decisions, reaching a consensus when possible, but also sometimes accepting the lack of support for a particular proposal. In short, the Czech Citizen Parliament on Media and Democracy showed the beauty of democracy and deliberation.

But it also showed that 'ordinary' citizens are always also 'extraordinary'.

Of course, organising the Czech Citizen Parliament on Media and Democracy took a huge effort, in time, energy and other resources. Here, we should not forget that for participatory processes to work, organisational structures are very much needed. Citizen participation is not enabled by simply locking 20 people into a room; it requires careful planning, wisely deploying structures, formats and facilitation, knowing when to intervene and when to show restraint, always with the deepest respect for the participatory process, the agency of the 20 parliamentarians and their ability to get the job done. It also requires the trust of the parliamentarians in those organisers and facilitators, who had to find the difficult balance between the desire for perfection, on the one hand, and the efficiency of decision-making and the time constraints, on the other. For this trust, I am particularly grateful to the parliamentarians.

And of course, there is space for improvement. There always is. As citizen parliaments are not very common in the Czech Republic, the Czech Citizen Parliament on Media and Democracy was still an experiment, and one with limited resources. This novelty made us more prudent, keeping the numbers of participants relatively low, and not working with the normal random selection of participants. Also the broadness of the theme (media and democracy), in combination with the limited number of sessions we could (afford to) organise, was a constraint, even though the parliamentarians performed little miracles during each session, by selecting particular areas of interest (called subtopics) within this broad theme and by working in the most efficient and effective ways possible.

This Czech Citizen Parliament on Media and Democracy does offer an opportunity for the future in two ways. First, the theme of media and democracy is important in itself, and requires much further reflection, in a variety of societal fields, including academia, politics, journalism and civil society, with its many actors. But, secondly, the concept of the citizen parliament has proven its value, and should be deployed more in the Czech Republic, in relation to other themes, and on different (local, regional and national) levels.

Finally, allow me to end this foreword by expressing my gratitude to the 20 parliamentarians, to our many helpers and assistants, to the other MeDeMAP teams, and to the experts who shared their knowledge with the parliamentarians. But in particular, I want to thank here my fellow organisers and researchers—Vaia Doudaki, Miloš Hroch, Karolína Šimková, Štěpán Šanda, Natálie Švarcová, Mazlum Kemal Dağdelen and Klára Odstrčilová.

Thank you.

At a glance

The Czech Citizen Parliament on Media and Democracy took place during March – May 2025. Twenty citizens deliberated on the role of media in the Czech society and formulated in total 31 resolutions, advocating for concrete steps towards the strengthening of the role of Czech media—broadly defined —in supporting democracy, in the areas of media systems, media representation and media participation.

The Czech Citizen Parliament on Media and Democracy held four one-day sessions, each session focussing on specific themes and topics concerning the role of media in democratic societies, and in the Czech society more specifically. The parliamentarians were engaged in intensive cycles of learning, groupwork, dialogue, deliberation and decision-making, formulating and voting the resolutions that were deemed important to enhance the media's democratic roles.

The citizen parliament was characterized by demographic, geographical and ideological diversity of its participants, reflecting the diversity of the Czech society. To further engage with the principle and practice of geographical diversity and facilitate the interactions of the participants with regional and local experts, the citizen parliament held sessions in three different Czech cities: Two sessions were held in Prague (on 15 March and 17 May), one in Olomouc (on 5 April) and one in Brno (on 26 April).

During this three-month period, the parliamentarians reflected, deliberated and voted 31 resolutions about:

- how to organise the Czech media landscape to better serve democracy by enhancing transparency, accountability and protection of media freedoms;
- how media content can better support democracy by representing the diversity and pluriformity of the Czech society;
- how to ensure that citizens have better access to the media, that their voices and issues are better represented in the media, and how citizen participation can be enhanced in and through the media.

About the Czech Citizen Parliament on Media and Democracy

The importance of the Czech Citizen Parliament on Media and Democracy

Citizen parliaments or citizen assemblies are democratic tools that offer opportunities to citizens to engage in processes of increased democratic participation regarding important issues of broad societal relevance. The citizen parliaments facilitate democratic dialogue by carefully organising deliberations on particular societal issues, and supporting citizens to formulate resolutions that propose specific societal and policy action to address these issues to the benefit of society. Citizen parliaments do not replace the democratically elected parliaments or governments, but they complement and enrich them, allowing for more enhanced citizen participation.

In the Czech Republic, citizen parliaments or assemblies have only been rarely organised. The organisation of the Czech Citizen Parliament on Media and Democracy –the first in the country focussing on media and democracy– provided an opportunity to Czech citizens to be part of such a democratic endeavour. Through their participation in the parliament, the citizens shared their views, deliberated with other citizens and worked together to develop proposed solutions on how the Czech media can (be supported to) strengthen democracy in the country.

As the produced resolutions by the Czech Citizen Parliament on Media and Democracy (as captured in this document) are now available to, and actively being shared with, Czech political actors and institutions, Czech media and relevant organisations, EU policy makers, and European academic researchers, the citizen parliament participants have their views and proposals being taken into consideration, in policy and practice, in the field of media and democracy in the Czech Republic. Media institutions and regulators are also invited to take into account these citizens' claims and proposals, and to integrate them in their efforts aimed at strengthening the role of the media in strengthening democracy.

The MeDeMAP research project and the Czech citizen parliament organising team

The Czech Citizen Parliament on Media and Democracy was organised as part of MeDeMAP (Mapping Media for Future Democracies), a European research project that engages 10 partners from nine European countries, studying the democracy-media relations and explores ways to enhance media's roles in serving democracy and citizens' contribution to it.

Apart from the Czech Republic, citizen parliaments on media and democracy have been organised during March – June 2025, also in Austria, Ireland, Slovenia, and Germany, following similar methodologies and design, but adjusted in each case to address the specificities of the national contexts. The organisation of citizen parliaments in several European countries, which aimed to create the opportunities for citizens to address core issues pertaining to the media-democracy nexus from their perspective, may serve as an important health check of the media ecosystems in different parts of Europe at a time when the struggles of media for independence from state control, political and economic influence, but also economic sustainability, are ongoing. Moreover, the organisation of the citizen parliaments on media and democracy comes at a time when political parties, institutions, media and journalists face growing distrust, and their relevance and role are increasingly questioned by European citizens.

Organiser of the Czech Citizen Parliament on Media and Democracy was CULCORC, the Culture and Communication Research Centre at the Institute of Communication Studies and Journalism at Charles University, led by Extraordinary Professor Nico Carpentier. The Czech organising team consisted also of Associate Professor Vaia Doudaki, Assistant Professor Miloš Hroch, PhD researchers Štěpán Šanda, Karolína Šimková, Klára Odstrčilová, Mazlum Kemal Dağdelen and finance officer Dr. Natálie Švarcová. The organisation of the Czech citizen parliament was supported also by Daniela Nemešová (in Prague), Tomáš Holešovský (in Olomouc) and Vojtěch Herman (in Brno).Miloš Hroch and Karolína Šimková were the citizen parliament's moderators, facilitating the citizen parliament sessions and guiding the participants throughout the sessions' activities.

The Advisory Council for the Czech Citizen Parliament on Media and Democracy

To facilitate the broad circulation of the call for participants, connect with civil society and reach diverse social groups, an Advisory Council for the Czech Citizen Parliament on Media and Democracy was formed, which consisted of the following organisations:

- Arnika, environmental organisation
- Council of Senior Citizens of the Czech Republic (Rada seniorů České republiky)
- Ecumenical council (Ekumenická rada církví)
- Elpida, cultural and educational organisation for senior citizens
- Konsent, organisation combating harassment and sexual violence
- Open Society Fund Prague (Nadace OSF), civil society foundation
- PAQ research, organisation focussing on economic research and economic literacy
- People in Need (Člověk v tísni), humanitarian NGO
- Platform for Citizen Assemblies (Platforma pro občanská shromáždění)
- Syndicate of Czech Journalists (Club of reporters) (Klub reportérů a reportérek (Syndikát novinářů České republiky))

The advisory council, apart from helping with the recruitment of citizen parliament participants from diverse social groups, provided feedback on the design and organisation of the parliament, and has also a supportive role in the dissemination of the citizen parliament's resolutions.

The participants of the Czech Citizen Parliament on Media and Democracy

As the aim was to have a diverse group of parliamentarians, with diverse socio-political profiles, and from different parts of the country, the call for participants was circulated broadly through news media, social media, university and civil society channels, during June 2024 – January 2025.

Interested individuals could contact the citizen parliament organising team and were asked to fill out a questionnaire, which facilitated the recruitment of participants applying a series of diversity criteria. Shortlisted candidates were then interviewed by a member of the research team, and a final decision was taken by the parliament's organisers.

The 20 citizen parliament participants were selected in February 2025, on the basis of diversity criteria related to gender, age, residence, educational and professional profile, political orientation and views regarding media and democracy. Also their willingness to engage in constructive dialogue, and their commitment to attend and actively participate in all four meetings that took place in the March-May 2025 period, in Prague, Olomouc and Brno, were used as selection criteria.

The CP participants, who live in 12 different parts of the country, were (in alphabetical order by last name) the following:

- Yara Abu Aataya
- Amanda Baxová
- Iveta Černá
- Irena Eibenová
- Libuše Fojtová
- Ema Janoušková
- Lydie Kárníková
- Petr Knepr
- Taťjana Kopalová
- Lenka Kymličková
- Patricie Martinů
- Luboš Pavlovič
- Martina Plesníková
- Karel Prohaska
- Radoslava Renzová
- Jáchym Sobotka
- Vilemina Svobodová
- Vojtěch Štulc
- Josef Tokár
- Gabriela Zárubová

The Czech Citizen Parliament on Media and Democracy: Design, process and sessions

The Czech Citizen Parliament on Media and Democracy was structured around four full-day sessions and included learning, reflection and feedback cycles prior, in-between and after the four sessions, covering a three-month period (March – May 2025).

The basic design and structure of the citizen parliament was designed by the MeDeMAP research team and was common among the five countries that organized citizen parliaments (Czech Republic, Austria, Ireland, Slovenia, Germany). Specific adjustments to the Czech Citizen Parliament on Media and Democracy, which was led by Nico Carpentier and Vaia Doudaki, were implemented to serve the specificities of the Czech national context, and to address the feedback and the experiences of the participants, throughout the three-month duration of the parliament.

The three thematic areas of the citizen parliament

To allow for structured dialogue and deliberation on relevant issues in the broad field of media and democracy, the citizen parliament focused on three thematic areas (or main topics): media systems, media representation and media participation (always in relation to democracy). These thematic areas addressed issues such as the organisation of the Czech media landscape in ways that it promotes transparency, accountability, journalistic independence and protection of media freedoms; the representation of the diversity and pluriformity of the Czech society and the inclusion of marginalised voices in media content; the creation of increased opportunities for people to participate in media content creation and management, as ways to enhance democratic practice.

Learning about media and democracy

The citizen parliament included learning components, providing to the participants resources which would allow them to get information and knowledge about the three thematic areas of the citizen parliament, serving as sources of reference and of inspiration, when deliberating and formulating the resolutions.

Resources in the form of three videos produced by the MeDeMAP research team and a selection of Czech texts were made available to the participants prior to the first meeting of the citizen parliament, on an online platform, and remained available throughout its duration. The videos, that offered introductions to the three thematic areas of the parliament (media systems, media representation and media participation), were projected during the citizen parliament sessions and served as starting points for the lectures by Czech scholars and practitioners. The experts that joined the citizen parliament sessions were Dr. Vlastimil Nečas, Dr. David Klimeš, Dr. Karel Páral, Marek Zelenka, Dr. Klára Smejkal, Jana Ustohalová, Dr. Miloš Hroch and Michaela Mašková. As will be described later-on, these experts elaborated on and unpacked further the key concepts, ideas and debates around the three thematic areas, using examples from the Czech context, and then engaged in conversation with the citizen parliament participants, around the topics they presented.

The four citizen parliament sessions

Each citizen parliament session lasted a full day (9:00 – 17:00) and included components of learning, groupwork, dialogue, reflection and deliberation. The first session played an introductory and agenda-setting role, while the outcome of each of the following sessions was a set of subtopics addressing aspects and dimensions of the three thematic areas (media systems, media representation, media participation), and a series of resolutions within each subtopic, formulating specific policy actions, measures, and/or solutions, to cater for the issues identified by the parliamentarians.

Resolutions were put to the vote at the citizen parliament, using a qualified majority of 2/3 of the votes. This voting system was chosen by the parliamentarians themselves, is it allowed for high levels of agreement among the citizen parliament participants on the core decisions and outputs of the parliament.

The citizen parliament aimed to be a space offering increased opportunities for respectful dialogue and visibility of the diversity of opinions and positions of the issues and topics the parliamentarians deliberated and decided upon. Special attention was paid to give visibility not only to the majority but also to the minority positions expressed during the operations of the citizen parliament, while respecting the majority's decisions.

After each citizen parliament session, the participants would: get access to the session's minutes; be invited to reflect on the session via a survey questionnaire, allowing for the core team of organisers and moderators to make adjustments to the upcoming sessions, attending to the participants' concerns and experiences; and be invited to express both supportive and dissenting opinions for each voted resolution, allowing for both the majority and minority positions to be expressed not only during but also after each citizen parliament session.

Citizen Parliament Day 1
Prague, 15 March 2025

The first (introductory) session was held in Prague. During this session, the parliamentarians were introduced to the structure, objective and procedures regarding the operation of the citizen parliament. They then deliberated and agreed on basic interaction and decision-making rules. The 'conversation and interaction' rules addressed the importance of respectful, argument-based and fact-based discussion, the respect for others' opinions, and an overall ethical stance of care and respect, in interaction and decision-making.

Regarding the decision-making and voting rules, the participants decided to use a qualified majority model (2/3 of the votes) for the key decisions of the citizen parliament. These decisions concerned the adoption of subtopics around which the resolutions would be formed and the approval of the resolutions. Procedural matters would be approved by a simple majority (50% + 1 of the votes). The participants would vote (either in public or via secret vote, if the majority of participants wished for it) using the Yes, No and Abstention options.

The first session also aimed to further familiarize the parliamentarians with the theme of media and democracy, and the three thematic areas. The guest experts of this session, media sociologist Dr. Vlastimil Nečas (Institute of Communication Studies and Journalism, Charles University, Prague) and journalist and educator Dr. David Klimeš (Institute of Communication Studies and Journalism, Charles University, Prague) provided an overview of three thematic areas (media systems, media representation and media participation) in the Czech context and gave examples out of the contemporary conditions in the media field.

During this first session, the citizen parliament participants developed initial lists of subtopics for each of the thematic areas which were revised and finalised in the next three sessions, and which would guide the formulation of resolutions, addressing the triple question "How can the media systems / media representation / media participation be improved to better serve democracy?"

Citizen Parliament Day 2
Olomouc, 5 April 2025

The second session of the citizen parliament was held in Olomouc and focused on media systems, zooming in on the Czech media system.

The guest experts of this session, Dr. Karel Páral (Assistant professor, Department of Media and Cultural Studies and Journalism, Palacký University, Olomouc) and Marek Zelenka (lawyer and public procurements analyst, DatLab) addressed the role and operation of the Czech media system, in the contemporary conditions of global communication on the one hand, and of regional and local specificities, on the other hand, and their connection to democracy.

The citizen parliament participants, through cycles of groupwork and deliberation, revised and finalised the previously developed subtopics that were related to the media systems thematic area, and voted to accept 16 resolutions (out of 25 proposed resolutions), guided by eight subtopics (see next section, for the voted resolutions in detail).

Citizen Parliament Day 3
Brno, 26 April 2025

The third session of the citizen parliament was held in Brno and focused on media representations and their role in promoting diversity and pluralism in a democratic Czech society.

To stimulate learning and to offer inspiration for the follow-up deliberations, two experts addressed these issues, during the first part of the parliament's activities. Dr. Klára Smejkal (Assistant professor, Department of Media Studies and Journalism, Masaryk University, Brno) focused on the task of the Czech public service media to promote diversity and pluralism. Journalist and lecturer Jana Ustohalová (Department of Media Studies and Journalism, Masaryk University, Brno/ journalist, Czech news outlet Deník N), unpacked specific cases of stereotypical or inappropriate representation of certain social groups by the Czech media.

The citizen parliament participants, building on the subtopics of media representation that had been developed in the first citizen parliament session, and after several rounds of intensive groupwork and deliberation, formulated 13 resolutions, out of which nine were voted by the large majority of participants, guided by four subtopics (see next section, for the voted resolutions in detail).

During this session, the parliamentarians selected Amanda Baxová from among the parliament's members as their representative speaker at the event "Media for Democracy: Roundtable on Strengthening Media and Democracy in the Czech Society", held in the Senate of the Czech Republic on 5 June 2025, to reflect on the operations of the Czech citizen parliament and present its resolutions.

Citizen Parliament Day 4
Prague, 17 May 2025

The fourth, and last, citizen parliament session was held in Prague and focused on media participation, zooming in on how citizen participation in and through the media, can enhance democracy in the Czech society.

Assistant Professor Miloš Hroch (Institute of Communication Studies and Journalism, Charles University, Prague) addressed the main components and dimensions of citizen participation in and through the media, using as example the creation of Czech fan zines, periodicals created non-commercially by engaged audiences, most often from the field of popular culture or subcultures. Journalist Michaela Mašková (editor-in-chief, Naše Broumovsko news outlet) further explained the role of local and regional media in engaging audiences in news moderation and creation, and the challenges of running participatory or self-managed media projects.
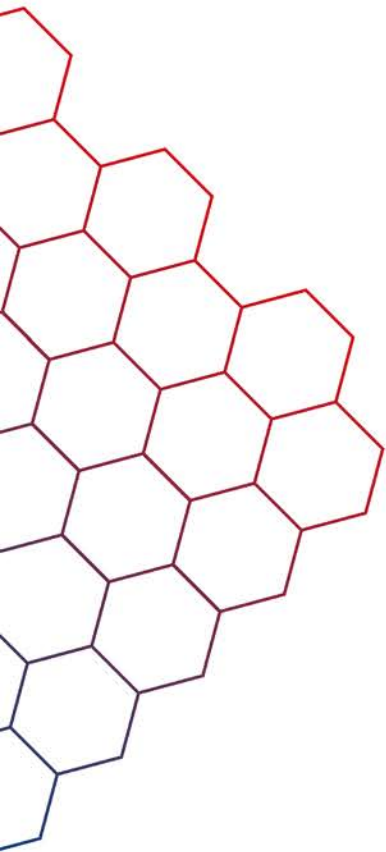
The parliamentarians, after revising and finalising the previously formulated subtopics on the theme, voted to accept six resolutions on media participation (out of in total 14 proposed resolutions) guided by four subtopics (see next section, for the voted resolutions in detail).

During this last session, the parliamentarians elected their representatives to attend a special European workshop (for/with the European Parliament and Commission), in Brussels, which is scheduled to take place in January or February 2026. Josef Tokár and Iveta Černá were elected as the two representatives of the Czech citizen parliament, with Radoslava Renzová and Luboš Pavlovič being elected as substitute representatives. The elected parliamentarians will represent the Czech Citizen Parliament on Media and Democracy, presenting the Czech citizens' demands for more democratic media, serving democracy. This workshop will be attended also by citizen parliament representatives from the other participating countries (Austria, Ireland, Slovenia and Germany) that have been organising citizen parliaments on media and democracy.

Czech Citizen Parliament on Media and Democracy

Resolutions

The citizen parliament participants formulated 51 proposed resolutions in the three thematic areas of the Czech Citizen Parliament on Media and Democracy: 25 proposed resolutions in the thematic area of media systems, 13 proposed resolutions in the thematic area of media representation and 14 proposed resolutions in the thematic area of media participation. These resolutions were guided by a series of subtopics, which were developed by the citizen parliament participants, and which addressed aspects and dimensions of these thematic areas.

These resolutions propose specific policy actions and measures, addressing the triple question "How can the media system / media representation / media participation be improved to better serve democracy in the Czech Republic?"

Out of these 51 proposed resolutions, 31 resolutions were accepted by the citizen parliament participants using a qualified majority of 2/3 of the votes: 16 resolutions on media systems, nine resolutions on media representation and six resolutions on media participation.
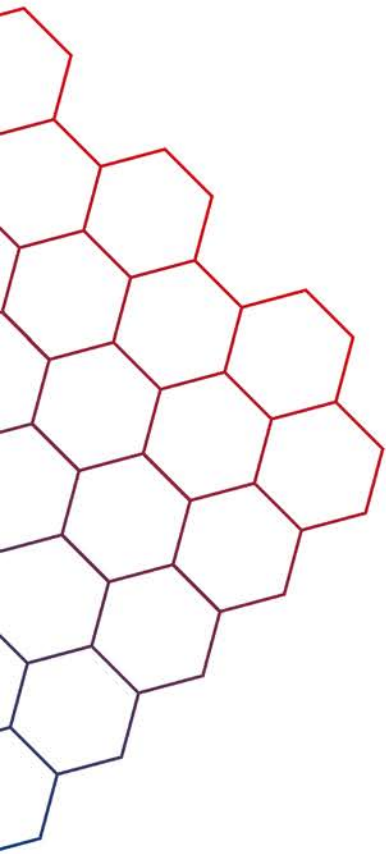
After each citizen parliament session, the parliamentarians were invited to address comments on each voted resolution, on the parliament's online platform, allowing for further reflection on the resolutions after their acceptance, and giving visibility to both the majority and minority positions of the parliamentarians, while respecting the majority's decisions.

The accepted resolutions, the subtopics that guided their formulation, together with selected quotes addressing both confirmatory and dissenting opinions formulated after each citizen parliament session, are presented below. Where necessary, contextual notes provide clarifications addressing legal or political aspects related to the resolutions. Also, short introductions to the comments that these resolutions received, are provided, summarising key ideas, to facilitate the navigation through the accepted resolutions.

Resolutions
Media Systems

Subtopic — Ensuring diversity and pluralism through media laws

Resolution 1

Media concentration rule: A media house must be owned by a joint-stock company with various entities as shareholders

Note

Publishing houses tend to have different structures; they are not just joint-stock companies. Resolution 1 could, under certain conditions, potentially conflict with the Constitution of the Czech Republic, interfering with the right to conduct business.

Context and comments from individual parliamentarians (after the citizen parliament session)

Some parliamentarians, while supporting the resolution, expressed doubts about the nature of its formulation, and argued that the search for a better formulation did not produce the desired results. A minority objected to the resolution itself:

- "I agreed with this resolution, but it was not an easy choice. I must say that we have been trying all along to find a way to ensure that the media are not owned by private owners who promote their interests [in the media they own]. At the same time, these owners are often super-rich and businessmen who can influence the world. But I am not sure that ownership by a joint-stock company is the best solution."

- "The objective [of the resolution] was to tighten the concentration of media ownership by private entities, or rather by a single private entity. [...]".

- "I disagree. I think that private media, in order to be competitive, should not be subject to unnecessary obstacles in their business, which can be circumvented anyway, and would only create a 'cosmetic' obstacle. Furthermore, I am not convinced that a joint-stock company would guarantee greater transparency, [and] media balance. Of course, the issue of political function and media ownership is another matter, where I would be in favour of restrictions."

- "I disagreed, but only because it seems to me to be a too-specific condition. However, I am fundamentally against media companies being controlled by a single entity."

Resolution 2

Adopt measures against oligopolies and monopolies in the media sector

Note

Resolution 2 is addressed to some extent in the European Media Freedom Act – Article 22 on the assessment of mergers in the media market.

Context and comments from individual parliamentarians (after the citizen parliament session)

Some parliamentarians, while strongly supporting the spirit of the resolution, found its formulation very broad, and a small minority objected to it:

- "I agreed, I find it important not only in general, but especially now that the parliamentary elections are approaching."

- "Yes, [it is important to] ensure that at least three equal decision-making bodies have decision-making authority."

- "It is impossible to disagree with such a wording of the resolution. […] But even this very general wording is – given its unequivocal acceptance – a signal of the majority's disagreement with the current situation and a call to solve it."

Resolution 3

Creation of a system (by law) of financing independent, regional and community media

Context and comments from individual parliamentarians (after the citizen parliament session)

This resolution was strongly supported by the parliamentarians, albeit, again, a few of the parliament members missed a more specific formulation or pointed to its idealist nature:

- "Overall, I agree, I think that public media would not have to have such a high share of regional news if there were more quality regional independent journalism."

- "[I agree]. The media needs to be diversified without the threat of financial dependence."

- "I agree, their existence is threatened by the instability of income."

- "I agreed with the resolution, but more specific elaboration is missing. In any case, independent journalism deserves state support."

- "I agree, even though the resolution seems slightly utopian to me. If it could be realistically implemented, it would be absolutely fundamental and important."

Subtopic — Improving leadership and administration through councils

Resolution 4

Parliament (both chambers): Mandatory disclosure of information (CV, background, e.g. via online register) about nominees for councils, including who nominated them

Note

Resolution 4 is already partially in use; some of the required information about nominees can be found, for example, in the Senate Prints (such as information about who nominated the candidates). However, it can be said that this information is not easily available.

Context and comments from individual parliamentarians (after the citizen parliament session)

The parliamentarians emphasised the importance of transparency in councils' syntheses to ensure ethical management and accountability:

- "I agreed; although this information is published to a limited extent, it is difficult to find."

- "We know the nominees, but we can't always find out who nominated them. It is important to know what views they share."

Resolution 5

Media experts elect councilors with the aim of depoliticizing the electoral process

Note

The election of these bodies will probably never be free of a certain political influence, and this resolution raises the question of who will select the experts. However, it aims to reduce the influence of the legislative and executive branches of government on the oversight bodies of public service media.

Context and comments from individual parliamentarians (after the citizen parliament session)

Some parliamentarians expressed doubts about the exact nature of the resolution's formulation, even though they supported the principle of the resolution:

- "I agreed with this resolution because I want councillors to be elected in a different way than they are now. At the same time, I do not think that only media experts should elect councillors. I think this group could be broader and more diverse."

- "I agree, Czech Television definitely needs to be depoliticized."

- "Overall, I agree, but I am not sure whether this step in itself would ensure depoliticization."

- "I agreed, but I have doubts about who will appoint these 'media experts'."

Subtopic — Conditions and standards of journalistic work

Resolution 6

The Parliament of the Czech Republic should approve legislation that will speed up the handling of SLAPP lawsuits against journalists

Note

In 2024, the European Commission issued a directive on protection against SLAPP lawsuits, which the member states are to transpose by 5/2026. However, this directive only addresses cross-border cases. However, the European Commission has issued a recommendation that the main tools of the directive be implemented by the member states also for domestic cases. The topic is currently being addressed by the Czech Syndicate of Journalists or the Czech branch of the IPI (International Press Institute).

Context and comments from individual parliamentarians (after the citizen parliament session)

While agreeing with the principle of the resolution, some parliamentarians expressed doubts whether the accepted formulation of the resolution will produce the desired outcomes:

- "I agree, I think that the form of silencing the public and journalists with the threat of lawsuits is an indirect form of blackmail and should be taken more seriously.

- "I agree, SLAPP lawsuits are unnecessarily delaying."

- "Yes, the protection of journalists is essential for democracy."

- "The European Commission has already adopted the measure. The Czech Republic should implement it into its law by May 2026. I agree that it should be implemented."

- "The law must not pretend that journalists have different rights, SLAPP lawsuits are not a legally special type of lawsuit - they are ordinary civil or criminal lawsuits. Acceleration could have led to a violation of the right to a fair trial."

- "In my opinion, formulated in this way, it could actually endanger journalists. A SLAPP lawsuit is a presumption, it is up to the court to decide whether it is valid or not. I would support legal protection for journalists in the event of a lawsuit."

Resolution 7

The Czech Syndicate of Journalists should / The state will support the establishment of an independent organization that should ensure:

- better union organizing of journalists
- decent salary conditions
- possibility of stable long-term employment contracts
- support for free legal services in case of SLAPP lawsuits

Note

Resolution 7 can also be interpreted as an impulse towards the state of journalism. It is related to the economic and working conditions in the media, as well as to the will of journalists to organize, which has been weak for a long time. The Czech Syndicate of Journalists could fulfill the role of a trade union organization. It already offers free legal aid to its members.

Context and comments from individual parliamentarians (after the citizen parliament session)

The resolution was strongly supported in the parliamentarians' comments; still, a minority expressed doubts about, or disagreement with, some of the provisions of the accepted resolution, not supporting exceptions and special conditions for journalists' unions:

- "I agreed because this is crucial for the functioning of journalism. The conditions for journalists are dismal."

- "I agree, I think it could help journalists organize themselves better."

- "I agreed, but this is on the assumption that the Syndicate will not be just a formal institution, I don't know if it can have such powers. In general, these are very important things for the practice of journalism."

- "I completely agree, it is a necessary economic-social-legal basis for the democratic and safe functioning of journalism."

- "I disagree with this measure. [...] I believe that every organization has the opportunity to count on unions, which should negotiate better conditions. I think that other professions in the Czech Republic also do not have good working conditions, and a special commission cannot be created for everything."

Subtopic — Public service media financing system

Resolution 8

Increasing license fees depending on inflation

Note
The increase in television and radio fees in line with inflation was approved by the media amendment, which is effective from May 1, 2025.

Context and comments from individual parliamentarians (after the citizen parliament session)
The resolution received supportive comments by the parliamentarians, still, a minority disagreed, arguing that increasing fees is not a fair solution for all social groups:

- "The current bidding for fee amounts is undignified. Without stable and secured funding, public service media cannot be "strong". ČT and ČRo [the Czech public service television and radio] need sufficient funds with control through independent councils."

- "Agree, it is necessary for journalists to be able to do their job with dignity."

- "I agree that it is necessary to ensure independent financing of public service media to the extent that they can fulfil their function."

- "I rather agree, but I miss the progressive amount of fees depending on different incomes and social classes of payers."

Resolution 9

Leave the current financing composition of 90-94% license fees and other parts (grants, funds, business (merch))

Note

The aforementioned media amendment limits the possibilities of income from sponsorship and leaves existing advertising options, so as a result it contributes to the share formed by fees increasing rather than decreasing.

Context and comments from individual parliamentarians (after the citizen parliament session)

While supporting the principle of this resolution, a few parliamentarians expressed doubts about either the formulation or the necessity of the resolution:

- "I agree with this measure. The purpose of license fees is to finance public service media. They should not come under the influence of other financial groups."

- "I agree, I think that most of the funds should come from the public."

- "Without further clarification, this formulation may give the impression that the proposed valorisation of fees is in conflict with the effort to maintain the current composition of resources."

Resolution 10

License fees should be secured by e.g. constitutional law (3/5 required to abolish)

Context and comments from individual parliamentarians (after the citizen parliament session)

While the resolution received high support in the parliamentarians' comments, a minority did not support it, on the basis of the argument that this provision should not be enacted constitutionally:

- "I agreed, it is necessary to anchor the stability of financing so that someone (the opposition) cannot cancel it again as soon as they come back to power."

- "I agree with this measure because I believe that we are in an information war. We urgently need independent public service media that exist and are not paid by politics or by lobbyists."

- "I agree, it gives greater stability to the public service media in moments of political turbulence."

- "I definitely disagree. Just look at the valid 'constitutional laws' of the Czech Republic (mostly related to the regulation of state borders and the Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms). I consider securing and increasing license fees important, but it cannot be solved like this."

- "Outside the framework of legislative practice, constitutional laws determine the basic principles of the functioning of the state, not the technical details of financing public institutions. Securing license fees by a constitutional law is inappropriate both legally and practically – the constitutional framework does not serve to fix specific payments and a constitutional majority as a condition for change would completely paralyze the possibility of legitimate adjustment according to societal development."

Subtopic — Ensuring pluralism of financing of town hall and independent regional media

Resolution 11

Provide more funding for independent regional media, with municipalities spending part of the money (1:1) – to the amount of funds used for town hall newspapers – into a fund designated for independent journalism (NFNZ [Endowment Fund for Independent Journalism], Czech Syndicate of Journalists), thereby supporting the proposal of the Oživení organization

Context and comments from individual parliamentarians (after the citizen parliament session)

While this resolution received broad support, a few parliamentarians expressed doubts regarding its formulation but also its feasibility, in the current legal framework:

- "I agree, I think that the form of independent media dedicated to the activities of the [municipality] council, and the opposition is essential and should be financed separately."

- "I agree with this measure. [...] So, if there is a town hall newspaper, then let the town hall also support independent journalism."

- "I agree with the Oživení proposal. It is a respected organization of experts that I trust. I do not trust the wording of the resolution, which explicitly includes the NFNZ and the Syndicate of Journalists. In my opinion, such a resolution must be created with the participation of these entities."

Resolution 12

Increase legal liability and enforceability in the case of abuse of town hall newspapers for political self-promotion

Context and comments from individual parliamentarians (after the citizen parliament session)

The resolution received supportive comments by the parliamentarians, still a minority expressed doubts regarding the formulation, but also the practical application of the resolution:

- "I agree, political self-promotion has no place there."

- "I agree, taxpayers' money should not be misused for self-promotion of local governments."

- "I agreed, it is certainly not good when a politician uses newspapers for his own promotion."

- "I agree, although it seems like a utopia to me due to the impossibility of consistent independent assessment and enforcement."

Subtopic — Enforceability of compliance with the code of ethics in public service media

Resolution 13

Create an independent body that will not be appointed by the general director and will supervise compliance with the media's code of ethics and will task the director to sanction (the given problem)

Note

Compliance with the Code of Conduct of Czech Television and Czech Radio is now monitored by the Czech Television Council and the Czech Radio Council by law. These are independent and impartial bodies that are not established by the director general and can sanction the director's activities. In addition to this framework, the former director of Czech Television voluntarily established an advisory body, the Czech Television Ethics Panel.

Context and comments from individual parliamentarians (after the citizen parliament session)

Some parliamentarians while being supportive of the resolution in their comments, argued for a more precise formulation of the resolution. A minority objected to the resolution itself:

- "I agreed, the code of ethics is currently just a bit of an empty word for many media, including public service media."

- "I agree in general, but I am not sure whether this would not ensure the depoliticization of media councils themselves."

- "It would be nice, but the statute of the organization is key."

- "I disagree with this measure. I think we already have such a body in the form of RRTV [The Council for Radio and Television Broadcasting]. If it is not working well enough, it is necessary to focus on its effectiveness."

Subtopic — Integration of media platforms into the media system

Resolution 14

Creation of a legal and ethical framework for digital creators and a system of control and enforcement

Note

The legal framework for digital creators was established by the revised 2018 Directive (Directive 2018/1808 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 November 2018), which was transposed into Czech law through the Act on On-Demand Audiovisual Media Services. This matter is being progressed and discussed, for example, on the axis between RRTV and the Association of Digital Creators. The Directive does not address all legal or ethical issues.

Context and comments from individual parliamentarians (after the citizen parliament session)

Apart from the supportive comments the resolution received by the parliamentarians, a minority disagreed with it, doubting about its applicability in practice:

- "I agree. The role of digital creators is constantly increasing, and not only in the online world. Digital creators are also subject to applicable laws (copyright, criminal, protection of personality, GDPR) and general rules of decency. But it would not be out of place (even for them) to clearly state this."

- "I agreed – I don't know if a specific register could work, but the legislation (Press Act) should adapt to developments in the field of digital technologies."

- "I disagree, I think that digital creators should primarily be controlled in terms of illegal actions such as creating alarmist messages, hate speech or defamation, etc. Enforcement of the ethical framework seems to me to be an activity that the state should not require."

Subtopic — Improving media access to public information

Resolution 15

Preventing delays in providing information (sanctions for failure to meet deadlines)

Note

The legal system allows for a lawsuit for inaction, however, the Citizens' Parliament was also interested in the applicability of such a lawsuit.

Context and comments from individual parliamentarians (after the citizen parliament session)

For a minority of the parliamentarians supporting the resolution, the current legislation suffices to deal with the issue:

- "I agree with this resolution. […] there is a legal framework for providing information, but the sanctions are almost unenforceable in practice."

- "I agree, it is a basis that makes perfect sense. At the same time, I feel the need to also address the opposite moments, when the information provider would be deliberately overwhelmed with requests for information in such a way that it would paralyze them in their normal operations and exhaust them financially."

- "Yes, [it is important] to promote and make visible the importance and usefulness of correct and verified information for the entire public."

Resolution 16

Capping the amount of payment for obtaining information

Context and comments from individual parliamentarians (after the citizen parliament session)

A minority of parliamentarians found the formulation of the resolution very general and thus difficult to implement and/or disagreed with the principle of the resolution:
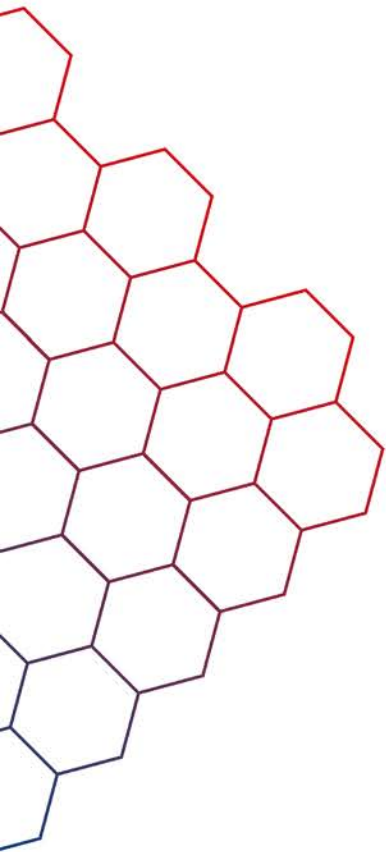
- "I agree, I think that information about state organisations should no longer be unnecessarily charged."

- "I agree with the resolution. In the information obtaining system, different authorities have different price lists. However, not every authority has a capped price."

- "Yes, [it is important to] not complicate obtaining correct and verified information for the entire public."

- "I disagreed; no payment for obtaining information should be legal at all."

- "I disagree. I see no reason. The reimbursement of costs in connection with the provision of information pursuant to Act No. 106/99 is meaningfully provided for in the cited Act, including the possibility of an appeal against the amount of the reimbursement. The reimbursement of costs is a safeguard against possible abuse of the law, and their "capping" could also lead to the paralyzing of the obligated entity."

Resolutions

Media Representation

Subtopic — More thorough dramaturgical and editorial work, leading to a more diverse selection of experts and strengthening the voice of people from different social groups

Resolution 1

A position will be created in the public service media that will focus on the initiatives of social groups that do not have enough space in the media, and will ensure their inclusion in the work of the editorial staff.

Context and comments from individual parliamentarians (after the citizen parliament session)

Parliamentarians expressed support for the resolution, still a minority argued that it is idealistic or that its efficiency will be limited in practice:

- "I agree. I think that there should be, for example, an ombudsman in Czech Television, at least dependent on the board and the director general, less responsible for operations, but more responsible for direct viewer feedback."

- "I agreed, it could be a function like an 'account manager', it would also connect the editorial departments in this topic with each other."

- "I believe that the new specialized position does not solve the problem. The key is the will of management and the editorial style of work."

- "I disagree. There should be a code, compliance with which is monitored by the manager."

Resolution 2

Media councils will more consistently promote a more diverse selection of experts in order to ensure a greater plurality of opinions.

Note

This resolution would mean an intervention in the legal regulation of public service media. Media councils may not interfere with content – the council is a supervisory, not an executive body: "Neither the council nor its members may directly interfere with the production and broadcasting of television programmes." (Act No. 483/1991 Coll.). Another case would be self-regulatory bodies, media councils, for example, following the Scandinavian model.

Context and comments from individual parliamentarians (after the citizen parliament session)

Parliamentarians expressed support for this resolution in their comments; still, a minority warned that such a resolution shall not undermine the independence of the editorial staff:

- "I agree, but they should not directly participate in the selection of experts but rather facilitate this work for the editorial staff."

- "I agree. Social diversity should be preserved and represented in public media."

- "I disagree. Editorial staff should have their autonomy. How experts are selected and why media always reach out to the same experts, is apparently determined by the possibilities of the individual medium."

Subtopic — Support for diversity among media content creators: a diverse category of people creates more diverse content

Resolution 3

The Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic, in cooperation with an independent organization (e.g. NFNZ), will introduce a scholarship programme for students of media fields from minority groups. It will introduce a grant programme for media to support the creation of job opportunities and mentoring, which will enable minority groups to enter the media industry.

Context and comments from individual parliamentarians (after the citizen parliament session)

Parliamentarians supporting the resolution emphasised the importance of creating the conditions for diversity and inclusion of minority profiles in the media professions. A minority expressed doubts regarding the efficiency of such a resolution in actual employment environments:

- "I agree. The entire social spectrum should be included in both representation and jobs."

- "I agreed, it is not fair to leave activity in this area only to NGOs, it should be co-financed directly by the Ministry. Editorial offices are already struggling with instability and low income levels, and this does not currently allow them to support the involvement of minority groups, even if they want to."

- "I disagree […]. The grant programme will not solve the problem if the environment in a given editorial office is intolerant and hostile towards a minority. If additional money were to go through the editorial office, I am not sure that it would really benefit the person who would apply for a given position or mentoring. I am concerned about abuse."

Resolution 4

The Ministry of Culture, in cooperation with an independent professional organization (e.g. NFNZ), will announce a grant programme to support media projects created by creators from regions, minority groups and people with insufficient representation in the media.

Context and comments from individual parliamentarians (after the citizen parliament session)

Parliamentarians supporting the resolution emphasised the importance of promoting diversity in content creation by rebalancing the opportunities of representation of different societal groups and regions:

- "I agree, I think that these groups should be financially supported, if they go through a grant procedure that assesses the quality of the proposal."

- "I agree. It is necessary to support news from the regions so that society can balance the differences in living standards between the centre and the outskirts of the country - locally and socially."

Resolution 5

The directors general of public service media will take measures to support the diversity of their teams, set goals, monitor them and publish the results—the boards will oversee their implementation.

Context and comments from individual parliamentarians (after the citizen parliament session)

Parliamentarians characterised the provisions of this resolution as an important function of the public service media boards, which according to some is already in operation, while a minority expressed doubts regarding its implementation in practice:

- "I agreed, the councils supervise the activities of the director general, and therefore the responsibility should lie with him/her."

- "I abstain; I do not know to what extent the competences of the director general should be in this area. I do not know how the current diversity of the director's team monitored in this way would actually be reflected in the diversity of content."

Subtopic — Supporting diversity of content: topics of minorities, socially disadvantaged and people without a voice (...)

Resolution 6

A periodic open forum will be established, which will collect feedback through discussion on what topics appear in the media. This body will operate on the basis of the principles of deliberative democracy and participants will be selected to represent different social groups.

Context and comments from individual parliamentarians (after the citizen parliament session)

Some parliamentarians emphasised the importance of such measures in strengthening democracy, while a minority found the resolution unrealistic or nonapplicable in the current conditions:

- "I agreed with the resolution because I would like to apply the concept of a citizens' assembly to other topics. In terms of what the media should write about, I find it very beneficial."

- "[I agree]. Broader citizen involvement cultivates democracy."

- "I agree, although I am concerned that we will not [...] have all the social groups represented. So, it will be difficult to build and maintain such a forum."

- "I disagreed, but only because I cannot imagine a truly fair application in practice."

Resolution 7

NFNZ (Endowment Fund for Independent Journalism) will support the creation of a tool contributing to the equal distribution of media space between experts and representatives of different social groups interested in the topic. Compliance (with the equal distribution of media space) will be positively motivated through the education of journalists and journalistic awards.

Context and comments from individual parliamentarians (after the citizen parliament session)

Parliamentarians addressed the relevance of the resolution for the support of diversity and pluralism in media content. A minority of parliamentarians expressed doubts about the feasibility and applicability of the resolution, in the context of the daily operational reality of the media:

- "I agreed with the resolution because it seems to me that more people from different sectors should appear in the media. Journalists should be more motivated to look for interviewees and experts who do not always hold one point of view. The resolution should ensure that the media content is more diverse and provides space for topics and opinions that are being sidelined."

- "I agree with the reservation that this already 'smells' too much of rigid quotas, which in my opinion this resolution should not be aimed at."

- "I agree, I think that there could be even greater plurality of editorial offices such as various subcategories of scientific, political, educational, economic [editorial offices]. I think there could be journalism awards for cultural journalism, scientific journalism, environmental journalism, etc. I think that awards are only a symbolic tool, but a higher diversity of topics plays an even greater role in it."

- "I disagreed because I do not think that it would work and that this role should lie exclusively with NFNZ."

Subtopic — Support for media education (literacy)

Resolution 8

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports will regularly announce grants and calls for proposals to support various organizations that provide educators with training and educational materials on current topics of media education.

Note

Similar cross-border grant calls for proposals on media education and literacy are announced by the European Commission within the Creative Europe programme. In the Czech Republic, initiatives in the field of media education/literacy from RRTV, People in Need (One World in Schools or Media Education Weeks) or also from the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (https://databaze.opvvv.msmt.cz/vystup/2114), can be mentioned.

Context and comments from individual parliamentarians (after the citizen parliament session)

This resolution was fully supported by the parliamentarians, in their comments:

- "I agreed, this is perhaps the most important of all resolutions; currently random materials are being created but nothing systematic without proper use in practice, because it is not a priority of the Ministry of Education and Youth."

- "I agree, although I think that educators should prepare educational materials themselves. It is part of their work."

- "I agree, and I would focus it on the most interactive form possible, for example a simple computer game."

Resolution 9

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (Czech School Inspection) will more often evaluate the application of cross-cutting topics in the educational process in schools so that it can use the analyses in a society-wide debate on the importance of (among others) media education.

Context and comments from individual parliamentarians (after the citizen parliament session)

Parliamentarians commented on the importance of the resolution, whereas it was also noted that this measure has recently been initiated through research conducted by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MŠMT):

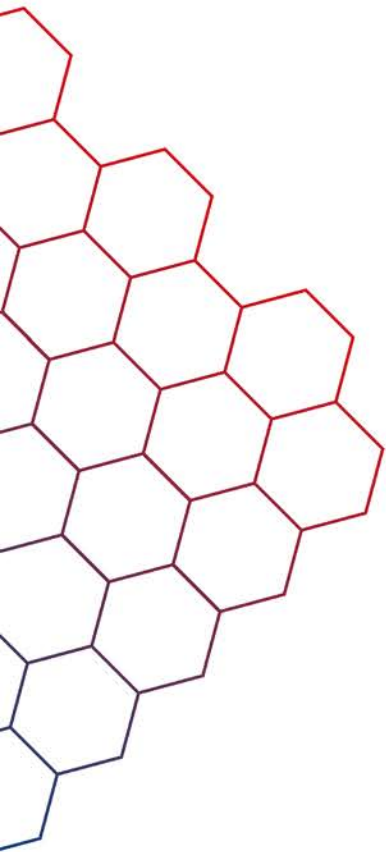- "I agreed, we need data on how these topics are actually applied in education and whether they have an effect."

- "I agree, I think that, for example, regular testing of media literacy is important."

- "I agree. Changes in education according to the 2030+ framework are taking place much, much slower than they should be. Society is not 'pressing' for changes because it does not understand them. The results of education in key competencies and cross-cutting topics should have been presented [to the public]."

Resolutions
Media participation

Subtopic — Support for cooperation between different types of media and organizations (e.g. commercial/public with non-profit media)

Resolution 1

Media councils – in cooperation with editorial offices – will create a platform for transferring professional experience in creating media content to regional and community media (e.g. in the form of exchange programmes, professional guidance, practical guides)

Context and comments from individual parliamentarians (after the citizen parliament session)

The parliamentarians emphasised the importance of supporting regional and community media, in their comments, also through collaborations aimed at "exchanging" experience and expertise, while a minority did not agree with the provisions of the resolution:

- "I agreed; I can't imagine the exact form of how this could be achieved now, but it would be a great support for the development of regional and community journalism."

- "I disagreed [...] I believe that regional and community media have a place to gain experience. In my opinion, the bigger problem is that they don't have the money or time to develop themselves."

- "I agree, [this is] one of the ways to provide quality information to the public."

- "I disagree, I don't think it's within the councils' competence."

Subtopic — Media education, teaching the possibilities of civic participation and how to create media content (competences and skills)

Resolution 2

The Ministry of Regional Development/Ministry of Culture will create a grant programme to finance media education for journalists, so that they can acquire practices and ways to engage different groups of citizens.

Context and comments from individual parliamentarians (after the citizen parliament session)

The parliamentarians emphasised the importance of creating the conditions for continuous education of journalists, integrating the component of citizen involvement in news creation. A minority expressed doubts regarding the willingness of journalists to involve citizens in news production, or considered the resolution's provisions as covered by other resolutions:

- "I agreed; with today's increasingly high level of deprofessionalization of journalism, more emphasis should be placed on educating how to do good and ethical journalism, including how to involve the widest possible population in it."

- "I agree. We need to find ways to tell the stories of people from the margins of the country or society."

Subtopic — Creating space for different social groups to participate in content that is relevant to them

Resolution 3

The state (and relevant ministries) will offer a grant, the recipient of which is the media, which will provide training programmes (e.g. Journalism Simulator organised by the Czech regional media outlet Naše Broumovsko) for interested people from different social groups so that they can become potential external media collaborators.

Context and comments from individual parliamentarians (after the citizen parliament session)

A minority of parliamentarians while supporting the resolution, did not find its formulation optimal, or considered the resolution's provisions covered by other resolutions:

- "I agree, this is a way to wider involvement of the public. And thus to democratization of the media environment."

- "I agreed, today [training and supporting external media collaborators] happens only thanks to the proactivity of individual people or non-profits, but it is extremely unstable. It should have stronger roots to rely on."

- "I agreed with the resolution [...]. The intention [of its formulation] was to support both potential applicants and the effort to obtain financial compensation for their employers."

Subtopic — (State) support for local, regional and community media

Resolution 4

The state will support local, regional and community media through subsidies and grants.

Context and comments from individual parliamentarians (after the citizen parliament session)

Some parliamentarians, in their comments, while supporting the resolution, found its formulation very broad:

- "I agree, it is important to support the fourth pillar of democracy at the local level."

- "I agree with reservations. [...] Which regional or district authorities will monitor the needs of the region, administer this agenda and have a budget and bodies for allocating subsidies and issuing grants?"

- "I agree. There is a need for diversity of media outputs."

Resolution 5

The state will support citizen participation in the creation of media content through subsidies and grants.

Context and comments from individual parliamentarians (after the citizen parliament session)

Some parliamentarians, in their comments, while supporting the resolution, found the formulation regarding the role of the state very general:

- "I agree. The state should make it known that it cares for participation."

- "[I agree]. The expression of everyone, even those who are silent, is always important."

- "I agreed, […] this topic deserves systemic support."

Resolution 6

Media established by local governments (municipalities) and regions (city hall, regional news agencies and radio stations) cannot draw funds from the sale of advertisements: this is an effort to set fair conditions so that independent local media are not disadvantaged.

Context and comments from individual parliamentarians (after the citizen parliament session)

Parliamentarians emphasised the importance of promoting the independence of local media by creating the conditions for their financial sustainability. A minority disagreed with favouring private local media at the expense of state/local public service media:

- "I agreed, if they draw on public money for operation, it is immoral in my opinion to take advertising money to promote, for example, their own political interests, etc."

- "I agree, the draining of financial resources from independent media should stop."

- "I disagree; I think that small advertising should be accessible."

- "I disagree. It is unfeasible. With the constantly increasing costs [these media are faced with], this is a path to extinction or acceptance of other support [which leads to] dependence."

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