

FONDS  
POUR UNE  
PRESSE  
**L**IBRE



# IMPACT REPORT

## 2024

# CONTENTS

<b>EDITOR'S NOTE. Five years, thanks to you .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>1. OUR ACTION, THEIR IMPACT .....</b>	<b>6</b>
• The 9 projects we supported in 2024 .....	7
• 5 articles that changed the world .....	9
• 5 media making a real difference locally .....	11
• Hear from the winners .....	13
<b>2. CHANGING THE MEDIA TOGETHER .....</b>	<b>15</b>
• Our actions for the independence of the press.....	16
• The 16 recommendations of the EGPI.....	19
• Who we work with / Our allies .....	22
• Freedom of information, the long-standing enemy of the far right .....	23
• How the oligarchs got their hands on/ captured the media .....	25
• Press funding unfairly distributed .....	27
• How to silence journalists .....	28
<b>3. HOW IT ALL WORKS .....</b>	<b>31</b>
• Who finances the Fund's work? .....	32
• How are funds/grants allocated?.....	33
• Meet the FPL team .....	34
• A word from Edmond Espanel .....	35
<b>CONCLUDING EDITORIAL .....</b>	<b>36</b>

# EDITORIAL

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## **FIVE YEARS, THANKS TO YOU**

**The Fonds pour une Presse Libre (Fund for a Free Press) - a non-profit organization with a mission of general interest created in autumn 2019 by the co-founders and team of Mediapart - is proving to be more crucial than ever. France is facing both unprecedented political crises and major social crises - to overcome these crises, we need independent, diverse and high-quality information.**

*«Freedom of the press, alongside universal suffrage, means the thought of all people enlightening the government of all people. Undermining ones undermines the other».* Victor Hugo's famous warning, from September 1848, still rings true. The political crisis in France is coupled with a deep crisis in the media, illustrated by an unprecedented breakdown of trust between citizens and the information systems that serve them.

**The Fonds pour une Presse Libre** helps to create alternatives to misinformation. Its core mission is to *«defend press pluralism, freedom of information and independent journalism»*. We do this by providing financial support to independent media via open calls: so far, we have provided grants worth a total of 686,069 euros to 37 diverse media outlets across France.

Each successive Macron government has made repeated attacks on the basic principle of the independence and pluralism of information, and has refused to countenance any reforms that would unshackle **«liberate the news»**. So, it's down to us - the citizens - to keep the pressure on the authorities, but more than that, to provide actual, concrete support to non-conformist, independent, quality journalism.

6,500 of you have supported the FPL's work in its first five years. Now we must all work to grow our community and to mobilize even more people. Our new impact report shows that alternatives are possible. **Read it, share it, act on it!** As always, thank you for your support.

**Team FPL**

# THE FPL IN BRIEF

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**The Fonds pour une Presse Libre (FPL)** was set up to guarantee Mediapart's long-term independence by securing its entire capital in a non-profit entity - the «Société pour la Protection de l'Indépendance de Mediapart» (SPIM). As a result, Mediapart has become the first national media outlet in France that can't be bought, **can't be captured and can't be traded for profit.**

What that means is that, even though FPL controls Mediapart's capital via SPIM, we're 100% independent of Mediapart in what we do and how we operate. Not one euro of the donations you make to the Fund can benefit Mediapart, whether directly or indirectly. And now the independent press as a whole can apply to the FPL, to gain access to the financial support, expertise and access to benefits that they have long lacked.

## « 66% OF DONATIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE »

### WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

When I give **€100**, it only costs me **€34** in the end, as **€66** can be deducted from my tax return.



# THE FPL'S FIRST FIVE YEARS

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37

media  
supported

€ 686.069

distributed in 5 years

€ 260.861

of donations received  
in 2023

10.664

individual donations  
received between  
2019 and July 2024

6.500

total donors

## THESE INDEPENDENT MEDIA WERE SUPPORTED BY THE FPL:

Afrique XXI, Au Poste, Basta!, Climax, CQFD, Disclose, Far Ouest, Guiti News, Guyaweb, Inf'OGM, L'Arlésienne, Le Bondy Blog, Le Crestois, La Déferlante, Le Courrier des Balkans, L'Empaillé, Le Mouais, Le Postillon, Le Poulpe, Le Ravi, Marsactu, MedFeminiswiya, Médiacités, Orient XXI, Radio Parleur, Reflets.info, Rembobine, Rue89 Bordeaux, Rue89 Lyon, Rue89 Strasbourg, Splann!, StreetPress, Terrestres, Vert, Voxeurop

# 1. **OUR ACTION, THEIR IMPACT**





# THE 9 PROJECTS SUPPORTED IN 2024

MEDIA OUTLET	PROJECT	SUPPORT PROVIDED	DETAIL
<b>BASTA! LE PORTAIL DES MÉDIAS LIBRES</b> Investigative media on environment and social issues	<b>Development of digital tools</b>	<b>Repayable loan</b> • <b>€ 45.000</b>	Since 2015, Basta! has been aggregating articles from inde- pendent media on its « Free Media Portal » to offer an alternative to the mainstream media. The project aims to expand this Portal, strengthen the brand with a logo and graphic charter, grow the audience and improve user experience.
<b>LE BONDY BLOG</b> Participatory and citizen media	<b>Video series</b>	<b>Grant</b> • <b>€ 17.000</b>	Le Bondy Blog wants to report on gentrifica- tion in Seine-Saint-De- nis through a series of videos telling the stories of people pushed out of Paris. The interviews will retrace their jour- neys and put a human face on these stories of displacement.
<b>DISCLOSE ET REMBOBINE</b> Investigative media and impact newsletter	<b>Development of digital tools + Developing the community</b>	<b>Grant</b> • <b>€ 17.000</b>	« In Search of Impact » is a collaborative project between two media organizations to assess the impact of journalism. They will share the results both via innovative formats (newsletter, articles, da- tabase) and through the independent media.
<b>L'ARLÉSIENNE</b> Local news media	<b>Survey + Developing the community</b>	<b>Grant</b> • <b>€ 17.000</b>	The 'Chose publique' section of L'Arlésienne monitors local democra- cy in Arles, promoting transparency and de- mocratizing key issues. The project « Chose publique: open news- room » aims to build on this mission and involve readers in participatory journalism workshops.

<b>MEDFEMINISWIYA</b> Media on feminist issues in the Mediterranean	<b>Developing the community</b>	Grant • <b>€17.000</b>	The grant will help MedFeminiswiya grow its audience by strengthening its presence on social networks. The team will develop a plan to help increase the visibility of their editorial project on Mediterranean women and to interact more directly with the public.
<b>LE MOUAIS &amp; LE SYNDICAT DE LA PRESSE PAS PAREILLE</b> Participatory and citizen media	<b>Development of digital tools</b>	Grant • <b>€17.000</b>	The SPPP wants to create a platform for independent media to share mutual services (printing, material, sources, investigations) and hire a webmaster for a common website.
<b>STREETPRESS</b> Investigative media and urban culture	<b>Developing the community</b>	Repayable loan • <b>€36.000</b>	StreetPress plans to shift towards a membership model focused on recurring donations, by offering StreetPress readers the chance to join a « club » and deepening their relationship with their community.
<b>VERT</b> Environmental news media	<b>Survey + Reports or analyses</b>	Grant • <b>€17.000</b>	Vert has launched « Eau secours », a series of investigations to respond to water crises and debunk misconceptions. An episode will be released every week during the summer of 2024, alongside an educational poster.
<b>VOXEUROP</b> Media covering European news and issues	<b>Development of digital tools</b>	Grant • <b>€17.000</b>	After a financially difficult 2019, Voxeurop is improving its subscription offer, its digital strategy and its donation tool. They want the editorial community to be more involved in promoting the project.



# 5 ARTICLES THAT GOT PEOPLE MOVING THE LINES

## STREETPRESS

**THE RN CANDIDATE WITH  
THE NAZI CAP IS ALSO  
A MEMBER OF THE VERY  
RACIST AND ANTISEMITIC**

In Calvados, Rassemblement National candidate Ludivine Daoudi received 20% of the vote in the first round of the early legislative elections. She withdrew after a photo of her wearing a Nazi cap was circulated. StreetPress revealed that she is also a member of the racist, white supremacist and anti-semitic Parti de la France. This story was part of a wider investigation, in which the editorial team highlighted all RN candidates who had made discriminatory and hateful comments.

**This investigation had a real impact on a decisive election by exposing these Rassemblement National candidacies in detail, it showed that the party has not in fact « changed ».**

## VERT

**HOW TO PARTY WITHOUT  
RUINING THE CLIMATE?  
VERT'S MAP OF ECO-FRIENDLY,  
INDEPENDENT FESTIVALS  
IN 2023**

Transport, food, energy, washing up... Bringing thousands of people together in one place is not a simple task. And if they are not well-designed, these festivals can be engines of huge amounts of CO2 and waste. This collaborative map from Vert highlights an incredible web of independent, eco-friendly festivals throughout France.

**Shared thousands of times, this map has become the reference for choosing the summer festival without damages for the planet.**

## REFLETS.INFO

### DRAHILEAKS: ALTICE IN THE LAND OF PIRATES

This series of investigations reveals the extent of Patrick Drahi's wealth, but also how fragile his business empire is, built on a mountain of debt. Reflets.info joined forces with StreetPress and Blast to both conduct and publish these investigations.

Altice - destabilized and in financial turmoil - launched a series of SLAPPs against Reflets.info, managing to obtain an injunction in the commercial courts preventing publication. Fortunately, this decision was overturned on appeal.

## TERRESTRES

### WHO KILLED ANTHROPOCENE?

This three-part investigation looks at how the Earth sciences have got caught up in the debates about the Anthropocene. Taking a sociology of science perspective, it shows how particular decisions are influenced by different interests.

The investigation achieved significant success (it was read 6,000 times on the Terrestres website) and «La science CQFD», a programme on France Culture, picked out two sections as key resources.

## DISCLOSE

### THE NATIONAL POLICE ILLEGALLY USED ISREALI FACE RECOGNITION SOFTWARE

In 2015, the police secretly acquired CCTV analysis software - which has facial recognition capabilities - from Israeli company Briefcam. For eight years, the Ministry of Interior has been concealing their use of this tool.

In response, the CNIL launches an inspection of the Ministry of Interior. Gérald Darmanin announces an administrative investigation. Several French local authorities file cases against the use of Briefcam. Forty-five MEPs call out Emmanuel Macron.



# 5 MEDIA MAKING A DIFFERENCE LOCALLY



## RUE89 STRASBOURG

« NIGHT FOR BLOOD »  
NEO-NAZI FESTIVAL PLANNED  
NEAR SAINT-DIÉ-DES-VOSGES  
ON SATURDAY 25 FEBRUARY

Four « National-Socialist Black Metal » groups were set to perform at a neo-Nazi festival 50 Km from Saint-Dié-des-Vosges on Saturday February 25. Another gathering, less than a year ago, was organised 30km away by Third Reich enthusiasts.

After the article was published, the Interior Minister decided to ban the event. The police prevented the festival from taking place.

## LE POSTILLON

« FERRARI GETS FLASHED IN HIS CAR »

Le Postillon published - thanks to exclusive testimony from his former chief of staff - an investigation into the President of Grenoble and Mayor of Pont-de-Claix Christophe Ferrari for personal use of his company car and chauffeur.

A judicial enquiry was opened, and after a hearing, Mr. Ferrari was taken into the police custody on 30 September 2023. The investigation is ongoing.

## L'ARLÉSIENNE

« DEEMED UNDESIRABLE »

In December 2023, the newsroom was made aware of several eviction proceedings in Arles, one focused on a Romani family that had been living on the site for 25 years, and another on a camp of Romani families. The authorities took these steps without complying with the regulations that require them to offer these families decent housing, and continuity both socially, and, for their children, in schooling. L'Arlésienne's investigation demonstrated that this was not respected.

**Publishing these revelations brought the eviction proceedings to a halt.**

## MARSACTU

« A COMPANY BASED IN MARSEILLE PROVIDING PARTS FOR MACHINE-GUNS TO ISRAEL »

In March 2024, Marsactu and Disclose published a joint investigation into Euro-links' export of machine-gun parts to Israel. In addition to being picked up by many other media, 115 members of parliament contacted the President of the Republic, and 400 people demonstrated outside the factory in Marseille.

**Despite the Ministry's assurances that this equipment was intended solely for re-export, 11 NGOs, including Amnesty International, have taken the government to court to demand the suspension of these licences.**

The courts have so far rejected their appeals.

## MEDIACITÉS

« HE TOLD ME IT WAS GOD'S LOVE »: A WOMAN FILES A COMPLAINT AGAINST A PRIEST IN LOT

In March 2024, Mediacités revealed that a young woman had made an accusation of rape - with incidents dating back to 2013 - against the former parish priest of Gourdon.

**Within 24 hours of publication, the Bishop of Cahors announced that he had opened a canonical investigation and the suspension of the priest in question.**

Mediacités subsequently reported that the young woman had informed the Bishop in-person in 2015, and that a 17-year-old girl had contacted him in 2016 to report incidents of sexual harassment by the same priest, without eliciting any response.



# HEAR FROM THE WINNERS

## WHAT MODELS OF RESISTANCE?

HOW CAN THE GROUNDBREAKING INFORMATION THAT THE INDEPENDENT MEDIA PRODUCE EVERY DAY BE MORE EFFECTIVELY DISTRIBUTED?

Every year, the FPL supports development projects that enable newsrooms to improve their distribution networks, a key issue in an environment where competition for the public's attention is increasingly fierce. Four winners tell us about the strategic importance of their projects supported by the FPL.

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### HOW BETTER USER EXPERIENCE CAN HELP SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF A LOCAL INVESTIGATIVE MEDIA OUTLET IN FRENCH GUIANA

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« The new version of "Subscribe to Guyaweb!", supported by the Fonds pour une Presse Libre in 2023, has helped to upgrade our subscription model. The user journey - from the home page to the news and subscription pages - has been optimized, resulting in an increase in subscribers. Ultimately, our readers are contributing both to the funding and editorial independence of our investigative newspaper in French Guiana. Since the redesign, our subscriptions have increased by +15% ».

**KATYA LEÏ-SAM CLERY**  
Director of Guyaweb  
*Project supported in 2023*

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### LE PORTAIL DES MEDIAS LIBRES CURATES AND AMPLIFIES THE BEST OF THE INDEPENDENT MEDIA AND INFORMATION THE PUBLIC NEEDS

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« Our 'Free Media Portal' is an ambitious project that would have been very difficult to achieve without the loan from the FPL. It's a unique tool that will offer the public a 360° view of the wealth of independent press in France and around the world - without the biases, data mining and advertising agendas of platforms like Google News. And for Basta!, it's an opportunity to broaden our audience, online and for our newsletters. We're also working to strengthen our community of donors. »

**NICOLAS CAMIER**  
Head of development for Basta!  
*Project in progress*

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## **HOW CAN WE BETTER ASSESS AND VALUE THE IMPACT OF THE MEDIA ? TWO INVESTMENT MEDIA, DISCLOSE & REMBOBINE, JOIN FORCES TO CREATE A TOOL**

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« More and more French people are questioning the point of journalism - and the media need to react to this. Convincing people of the usefulness of journalism is a huge task, and that is exactly what the project "In search of impact" aims to do. We want to create a method, based on an experiment Disclose has already tested on its own investigations, and that Rembobine has taken up, for assessing the ripple effects of journalism, and then share them through a range of innovative formats in our respective publications. The aim is to identify in the press and in diverse kinds of public data the different kinds of impact - institutional, legal, public and in the media - that a journalistic investigation can have. The aim is to develop a method that is simple, reliable and relatively automated, drawing on what already exists, particularly in media outside France. The results of the project will be shared with the independent media ecosystem and will be used to test an impact monitoring service for third-party media, which Rembobine will offer from 2025. »

**TIMOTHÉE VINCHON**  
**Co-founder of Rembobine**  
*Project in progress*

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## **DEVELOP OUR OWN TOOL TO BROADCAST VIDEOS, BYPASSING YOUTUBE, AVOIDING ALGORITHMIC CENSORSHIP AND PROTECTING DATA**

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« We were able to implement everything we had planned: a systematic retransmission of our live shows on our PeerTube servers [a tool that allows you to create a website for hosting and broadcasting videos]. This experience proves that the media sector can now free itself from the tools of GAFAM. What's more, we played an active role in the specifications for the chat plug-in integrated into PeerTube, making it more professional: enabling an external site to be configured so it can connect to the chat, coordinating moderation, custom emojis, polls, etc. ».

**DAVID DUFRESNE**  
**Founder of Au poste**  
*Project supported in 2023*



2.

# CHANGING MEDIA, TOGETHER





# HOW WE PROTECT THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE PRESS

By Charlotte Clavreul - Director of the FPL

## 1. GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE INDEPENDENT MEDIA (EGPI)

In response to the General Assembly (États généraux) on Information called for by the French Presidency and launched [on 3 October 2023](#), more than a hundred media and other organizations (trade unions, journalists' groups, human rights NGOs) - led by the FPL - convened [the General Assembly of the Independent Press](#) (EGPI) in October and November 2023.

The EGPI also successfully took place in Lille, Strasbourg, Lyon, Marseille, Toulouse, Bordeaux, Nantes, Montpellier, Clermont-Ferrand and Vire. This unprecedented mobilization was the result of collective effort by independent media, other organizations and the Fonds pour une Presse Libre.

It is rare to see such a large part of the profession come together to defend common values and a fundamental right - the freedom to inform - in other words, the right of everyone to be able to access information that is plural, independent and high-quality. The EGPI wasn't just about journalists talking to journalists. While the independent press is extremely diverse, and there are disagreements between them, this issue is so important that it made us come together to make citizens aware that there are an other journalism and news narratives. The EGPI matters to all citizens, as without reliable, in-depth, contextualized information, we can't have genuine democratic deliberation.

On November 30, 2023, after several weeks' work, we presented the resulting 59 proposed reforms of the information ecosystem at a major public event in Paris entitled [«Let's liberate our information ecosystem from politi-](#)

[tical power, hate media, and billionaires »](#).

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REPLAY LINK



## 2. HEARINGS IN PARLIAMENT & BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON INFORMATION


The FPL, accompanied by representatives of various independent media (Politis, Mediapart, Rue89 Strasbourg) and NGOs (Sherpa), gave evidence to several members of parliament and by various working groups of the General Assembly on Information (EGI). In each case, the Fund's role was to lay out EGPI's 59 proposed reforms, and to counter the intensive lobbying carried out by the owners of media captured by captains of industry and billionaire businessmen:

- **31st January:** Hearing with the Review of the 2016 Bloche law to strengthen the freedom, independence and pluralism of the media ([read the report](#))
- **1st February:** EGI Group 5 hearing on «The State and regulation».
- **16th February:** EGI Group 2 hearing «Citizenship, information and democracy»
- **7th March:** Hearing with MPs from the Presidential Majority Group on Media and

Information (MIMP)

- **19th March:** EGI Group 3 hearing «The future of the news media and journalism»
- **21th March:** Hearing with MP Sophie Taillé-Polian (Écologiste-Nupes), rapporteur for a [bill](#) to protect the editorial freedom of media seeking state funding

These hearings have encouraged the FPL team to continue and intensify this explanatory work. Many MPs - except those in the LR and RN parties - said they were aware of and concerned about the major crisis facing the media in France: first, the crisis of independence, second, the economic crisis, and third, renewed attacks on independent journalism (SLAPPs, attempts to undermine confidentiality of sources, etc.).



Eleven months ago, the Élysée launched a major project in the General Assembly on Information (EGI). The work of the EGI resulted in 15 timid proposals from the «Steering Committee» on 12 September. The FPL notes that these proposals bear little relationship to the rich reports of the EGI's working groups - which suggests to us a reluctance to shake up the political powers and the oligarchs who own France's biggest private media. Few of the measures enable support for the independent media, which are key players in the right to information and a force for change.

### 3. EVENTS AT RÉPUBLIQUE

At no point since Liberation has the French far right been so close to taking power, following the dissolution of the National Assembly in June 2024. We all know that the far right has always harboured a fierce hatred of journalism - and now it has freedom of the press in its sights. As part of its strategy to win power, it has turned the media into a special space, forcing its fake news and other anti-rights hobbyhorses into public debate.

In the face of these threats, the FPL has signed - alongside more than 100 independent publications - a collective appeal from «[Media United Against the Far Right](#)». The appeal calls urgently for the protection of a plural, free press, free from political pressure, and with journalists able to carry out their work with full freedom.

Building on this collective appeal, FPL and a coalition of thirty media and CSOs organized two major public events: [Libertés!](#) and [Toutes et tous à République!](#). This social and civic mobilization of a democratic front against the far right brought tens of thousands of people together both at the Place de la République in Paris and across France (thanks to live broadcasts). These two rallies opened new pathways and possibilities in respect of rights and social advances, after years of backsliding and repression. It also opens new paths towards hope, in a calmer and more plural public space, with greater focus on solidarity.

For without freedom of information, there can be no democracy.

Without it, no freedom. Without it, no Republic.

**REPLAY LINK**



The gathering was an initiative of the independent media, trade unions, associations and organizations:

#### MEDIA:

MEDIAPART - POLITIS - STREETPRESS - L'HUMANITÉ (+FÊTE DE L'HUMANITÉ) - REPORTERRE - REGARDS - ARRÊT SUR IMAGES VERT - BLAST - FAKIR - LA VISION - LA FRASQUE - RAP'ELLES - TRUSTMAG - MOSAÏQUE - INFLOW - RSF FRACAS - DISCLOSE LA DÉFERLANTE - AU POSTE - LE MÉDIATV - RAPLUME - SPLANN! - REFLETS.INFO - ALTERMIDI - MEDIAVIVANT - YOUNPRESS INVESTIGATE EUROPE - RAPPORTS DE FORCE - CLIMAX - ORIENT XXI - AFRIQUE XXI - REMBOBINE - LA FRICHE - GRÜNT LE ZÉPHYR - MÉDIACITÉS - LÀ-BAS SI J'Y SUIS - EN ATTENDANT NADEAU - WE REPORT - NATURA SCIENCES - RITIMO.ORG L'ARRIÈRE COUR - CHABE - FRACAS

#### UNIONS:

SM-CGT - SOLIDAIRES - FSU - UNSA - CONFÉDÉRATION PAYSANNE - UNEF - FAGE - UNION ÉTUDIANTE - CFTD-SNJ - CFTD-JOURNALISTES - SNJ-CGT - SAF US

#### NGOS AND ORGANISATIONS:

SHERPA - ATTAC - OXFAM - #NOUSTOUTES - CIMADE - FASTI - CSP75 - SOS RACISME - FONDS POUR UNE PRESSE LIBRE - FONDATION ABBÉ PIERRE - RAAR GOLEM - GUERRIÈRES DE LA PAIX - LA FÉDÉRATION DES TUNISIENS POUR UNE CITOYENNETÉ DES DEUX RIVES (FTCR) - COMITÉ POUR LE RESPECT DES LIBERTÉS ET DES DROITS DE L'HOMME EN TUNISIE (CRLDHT) - LE RÉSEAU EUROPÉEN DE SOLIDARITÉ AVEC L'UKRAINE (RESU) - UNION MAINTENANT - FUTUR MOINS CON - AFPS - PLANNING FAMILIAL - LDH - UN BOUT DES MÉDIAS - ARTY FARTY - ENERCOOP - GREENPEACE - LES AMIS DE LA TERRE - CNDP - FEMMES ÉGALITÉ FONDATION DES FEMMES - INVERTI.E.S - COLLECTIF INTERSEXE ACTIVISTE - CLIMAT MÉDIAS (POUR PLUS DE CLIMAT DANS LES MÉDIAS) - VOXPUBLIC - COLLECTIF TRANSITION CITOYENNE - UFISC - CAC COLLECTIF DES ASSOCIATIONS CITOYENNES - COLLECTIF STOP BOLLORÉ - FOODWATCH FRANCE - ARTICLE 34 - LES CONVOIS DE LA VICTOIRE - CITÉCOOP

# EGPI'S 16 KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

During the General Assembly of the Independent Press, the hundred or so media and organizations that came together devised 59 proposals for reforming the press. The proposed reforms - drawn up by four working groups - were discussed and amended collectively, after which stakeholders voted on their favorite proposals.

The following 16 proposals represent the essence of this major project to change our information system.

## CONCENTRATION, SHAREHOLDING, RIGHTS OF NEWSROOMS

**1.**

Completely overhaul the 1986 law. Reinforce and lower media concentration thresholds, include all print and digital media in their calculations, and abolish the 'periodicity' criterion.

**3.**

These thresholds limiting media concentration must be applied at both national and regional level to ensure pluralism of local information.

**6.**

Give a media outlet's editorial team a legal status, conferring the right to oppose challenges to its editorial independence from a shareholder, management or advertiser. This collective right would be in addition to the individual rights of journalists: clauses supporting conscience clause, of.

**9.**

Access to public funding should be subject to compliance with the right of approval given to editorial teams on the appointment of editorial management or the editor-in-chief.

**11.**

Publication of the names and interests of direct and indirect shareholders, senior executives and individuals controlling them. The publication of shareholder's agreements must be encouraged. This information must be easily accessible to the public.

## STRENGTHEN THE RIGHT TO INFORMATION



**17.**

Press offenses have no place in commercial courts. Immunity from civil proceedings must be provided (in particular for commercial disparagement and business secrecy), and summary proceedings aimed at censoring journalistic content prior to publication must be prevented.

**21.**

Enshrine and extend a right of access to information of general interest including when they are privately owned.

**25.**

Redefining the notion of secrecy business and restrict its scope in broadening the scope of exceptions to secrecy, and clearly warning its use against journalists.

**27.**

Limit the scope of exceptions to the secrecy of sources (« overriding imperative of public interest » in the 2010 law, or « national security » in the European Media Freedom Act).

## AGAINST THE CASUALIZATION OF JOURNALISTS

**31.**

Compel press companies to comply with employment law (late payment, use of self-employment or fixed-term contracts, use of casual work, etc.), in particular by increasing fines for companies practising these forms of concealed work. Requiring, in the case of use of more than of 4 months, the reclassification on an automatic permanent contract.

**34.**

Examine the situation of freelance foreign correspondents. Support the work in progress following the seminar held in the Senate and vote on the proposed amendment following this work

**35.**

Increase the minimum rates for freelance work in all branches of the press and impose decent minimum rates in branches where there is no grid, in particular the web. For magazines, an initial proposal suggests a minimum rate of €65 or €70 gross per sheet, compared with €53 gross today.

**43.**

Make training compulsory for all line managers on racist, LGBTphobic and sexist discrimination (on the model of the CNC).<sup>1</sup> A number of resource associations exist, such as AJAR<sup>2</sup>, Prenons la Une, Association des Femmes Journalistes de Sport and AJL.<sup>3</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Centre National du Cinéma

<sup>2</sup> Association des Journalistes Antiracistes et Racisé-e-s

<sup>3</sup> Association des Journalistes Lesbien, gays, bi-e-s, trans et intersexes



## REFORM PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR THE PRESS

**46.**

Media that do not comply with legal obligations (penalties are currently light or non-existent) are not eligible.

**51.**

Withdrawal of press subsidies for media convicted of sexist, racist, LGBTphobic and discriminatory comments

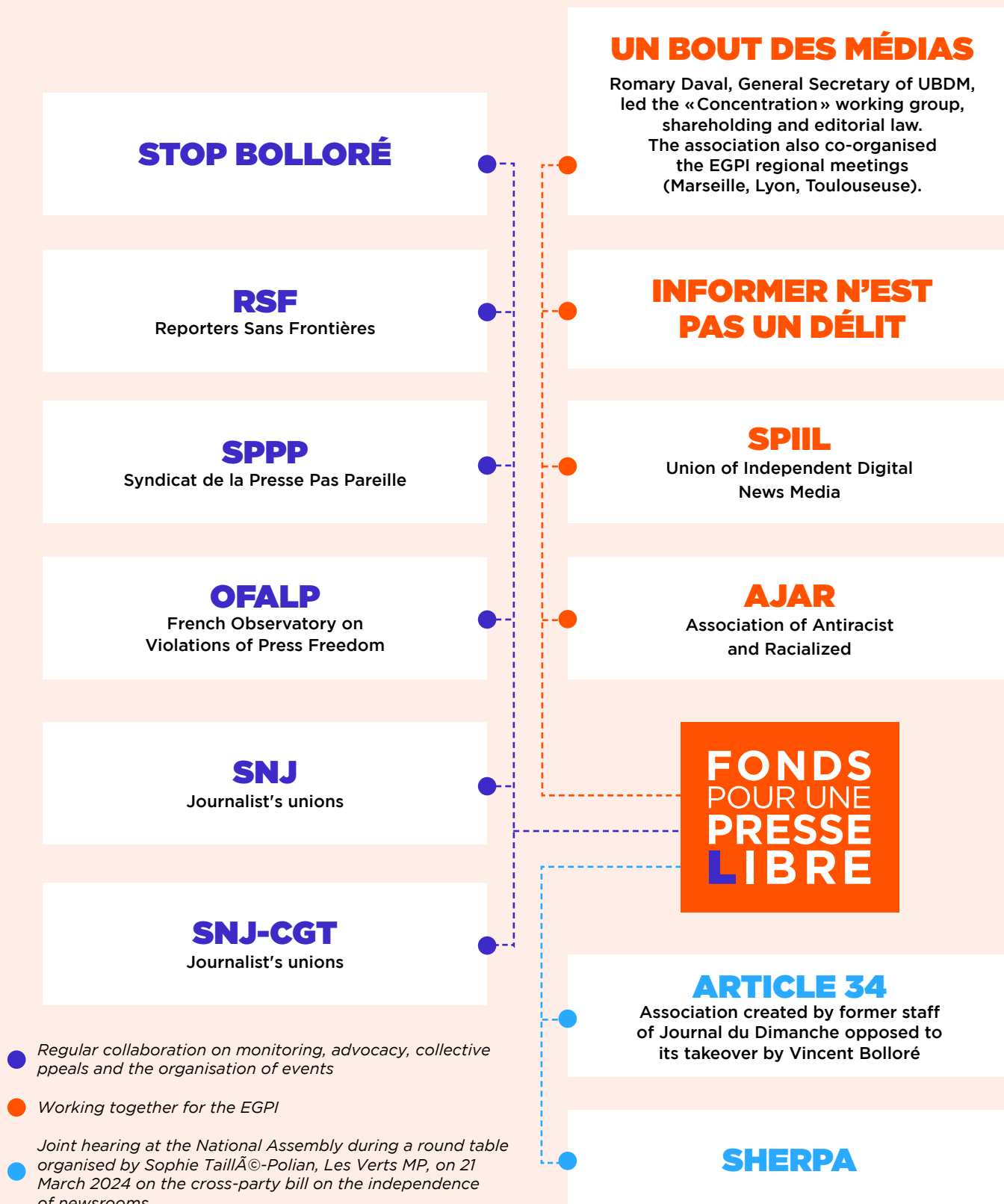
**57.**

Direct public aid to the press must be earmarked exclusively for independent media, i.e. media controlled by their own staff or not owned by a group whose main activity is not news.

**DOWNLOAD THE 59 REFORM  
PROPOSALS DOCUMENT**



# WE REGULARLY WORK WITH...





# FREEDOM TO INFORM, **THE LONG-STANDING ENEMY OF THE FAR-RIGHT**

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Here is the text spoken by several journalists from independent media outlets on Wednesday 3 July at the rally against the far right held on Place de la République in Paris.

**Information. Reliable, verified information. Information as indisputable as 1+1 is 2. That's one of the best weapons against the far right and the Le Pen family. And that's why, for forty years and its first electoral successes in Dreux, the RN has had a fierce hatred of journalism.**

It was journalists who unearthed the sulphurous photos, those of Gud leaders who are friends of Marine Le Pen, of Axel Loustau doing the Hitler salute, and of all the identitarian and ultra-rightist activists linked to the far-right party.

It was journalists who, just before the first round of parliamentary elections, unearthed the racist and anti-Semitic posts made by many of its candidates on social networks.

Finally, there are the journalists who, year after year, have asked questions that have always gone unanswered, debunked false figures and exposed blatant untruths.

Yes, long before Trump, the French far right invented fake news and alternative truths. Under Le Pen father, this propaganda was done with fists and insults when necessary. Under Le Pen's daughter, it is done through social networks, thanks to the Bolloré media which have become hate media, thanks also to outrageous complacency news channels.

The RN has consistently denied this fundamental freedom - the right of everyone to access free, pluralistic and high-quality information - in its speeches and actions. Blacklists of journalists, refusal of accreditation, media bans in these political events, harassment on social networks, threats, hunting for journalists led by ultras.

We have all experienced the pressure and aggression that are designed to prevent us from doing our job, which is to inform you.

Yes, we've heard the invective: « Gauchisses and journalopes ». They are also aimed at the whole of public broadcasting, which the far right is promising to privatise tomorrow. Sell France2 to Bolloré, RadioFrance to Bernard Arnault ?

All the fundamental European texts say it: the power of public broadcasting is a key indicator of democracy. Destroying this public information service means destroying our public space, giving the keys to the propagandists of the worst.

**We journalists here today will fight. But it is all of us, as citizens, who must fiercely defend this freedom to inform.**

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***Sans elle, pas de démocratie.  
Sans elle, pas de liberté.  
Sans elle, pas de République.***

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# INFORMATION UNDER THREAT: HOW OLIGARCHS CAPTURED THE MEDIA

In the last two years, billionaire businessmen have accomplished their takeover of the private media. We have seen exits, like Patrick Drahi and Arnaud Lagardère, and entrants, such as Daniel Kretinsky and Rodolphe Saadé. But it's journalists and citizens who lose out.

*By François Bonnet - President of the FPL*





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## «The key to a people's civil liberties lies in the freedom of the press»

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As Emile Brachard, a member of parliament, said in 1935 when he defended the adoption of the first professional status for journalists before the National Assembly. Why this reference? Because the situation in France today has a lot in common with that of the inter-war period (1919-1939), which saw the heyday of the «industrial press». A press controlled and enslaved by the great fortunes of the time, engulfed in corruption, and which was about to tip over into collaboration.

Emile Brachard, defending the status of journalists, strongly attacked «these groups that control the newspapers, in other words the capitalism of the press», which despised independent journalism and the journalists who produced it. Ten years later, at the Liberation, Albert Camus, head of the Combat daily, which had emerged from the Resistance, sounded the alarm in an editorial: «Any moral reform of the press would be futile if it were not accompanied by political measures to guarantee newspapers real independence from capital».

In the 1960s, it was Hubert Beuve-Méry's turn to sound the alarm. Asked about the creation of the daily Le Monde in 1944, he replied: «There was a chance of avoiding for the future the rotteness I had seen in the past». Beuve-Méry had begun his career between the wars, working at Le Temps, a newspaper that was banned from re-publishing after the Liberation.

Above all, he had observed the venality and manipulation of these newspapers, which were in the hands of the country's big businessmen. The «industrial press» is back. In less than twenty years, and the process has accelerated even further in the last two years, almost all the private media have fallen into the hands of billionaire businessmen. This is a French peculiarity, which has no equivalent in Europe (with the possible exception of Hungary). And successive political leaders (the Sarkozy, Hollande and Macron presidencies) have found nothing to say against it, if they haven't directly encouraged this media monopoly.

**THE SYSTEM IS NOW PERFECTLY LOCKED. 90%\* OF THE NATIONAL AND REGIONAL DAILY NEWSPAPERS AND ALL THE PRIVATE TELEVISION CHANNELS ARE OWNED BY SEVEN MAJOR INDUSTRIAL AND FINANCIAL GROUPS, WHOSE INTERESTS ARE NOT IN THE INFORMATION BUSINESS.**

Bouygues (building and civil engineering) control TF1, the country's leading television channel, and six other channels. Arnault (LVMH, the world's leading luxury goods group) owns two national

dailies, a radio station and several magazines. Bolloré (Vivendi) owns a television empire (Canal+ and four other channels), France's leading magazine group (Prisma), a major radio station and two weeklies. Niel (telephony) controls Le Groupe Le Monde, regional dailies and several weeklies. Dassault (aviation and armaments), owner of Le Figaro, France's leading conservative daily. Latest arrivals: Saadé (CMA-CGM group, 3e world shipping company) which, in addition to a regional daily, a business daily and a weekly, has just bought from Drahi (telecommunications) its seven television channels and a major radio station. And finally Kretinsky who, in addition to Elle, Femina, Marianne, Franc-Tireur and Loopsider, has obtained a channel on TNT.

These seven players are joined by a bank, Crédit Mutuel, which, through its Ebra group, controls the nine regional dailies in eastern France and claims to be the largest newspaper publisher in France. «France's leading press group».

Even more than the phenomenon of media concentration, it is this structure of ownership of the media that needs to be debated. These oligarchs intend to use and abuse their media as levers of influence to promote their economic interests and political positions. Vincent Bolloré, who has mobilized all his media power to promote the far right, should not be allowed to forget the repeated pressions of Bernard Arnault, Rodolphe Saadé or Daniel Kretinsky on their editorial teams.

These same oligarchs have mobilized their powerful APIG (Alliance de la presse d'information générale) lobby to torpedo any measures aimed at restoring a semblance of balance between media shareholders and editorial staff. The many proposals that emerged from the [General Assembly of the Independent Press](#), organised by the Fund for a Free Press at the end of 2023, have been the subject of a methodical barrage since the interest shown by several members of parliament in reforming the press.

The results are unsurprising. Year after year, [the La Croix-Kantar Public barometer](#) on trust in the media shows the extent of the rift between the French and their information system. At the end of 2023, only 34% said they had «confidence in what the media say about major current affairs». 59% considered that journalists were not «reliable». 56% felt that they did not resist «the pressures of money».

*\*this figure refers to the overall audience for these media*

# AID FOR THE PRESS IN FRANCE: AN UNFAIR DISTRIBUTION

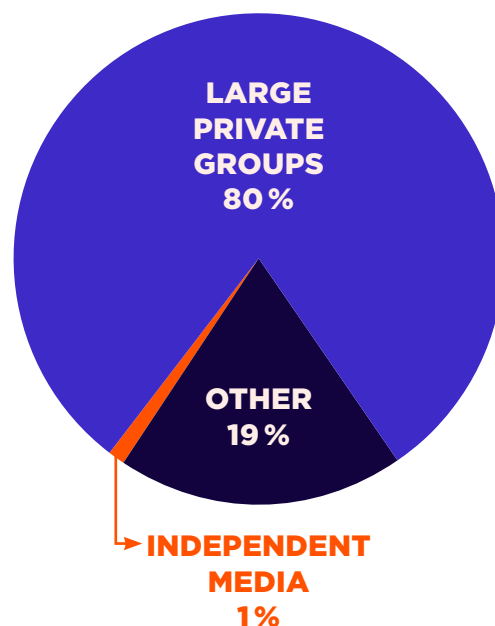
Independent media are read, listened to and watched by millions of people every day. But their financial fragility remains immense: access to bank loans is virtually impossible; granted by the digital giants to the biggest media outlets are creating unfair competition; and lastly, public support for the press is essentially confiscated by the big traditional media.

In 2021, the total amount of direct aids to the press was 92.8 million. However, 15 private groups shared 80% of these aids. Media companies owned by four billionaires - Bernard Arnault, the Dassault family, Xavier Niel and Patrick Drahi - received €37.7 million, or 40% of the total.

By way of comparison, that year, among independents, La Déferlante received €40,000, Vert €25,140 and Rue89Lyon €5.300.

In addition, in 2022, 30 million euros were granted to press companies to support them in the face of the paper crisis... at a time when the circulation of the main press titles - including those owned by large private groups - is collapsing.

This is why reforming aid to the French press is a priority for the Fund for a Free Press, and why proposals were put forward at the General Assembly of Independent Press.



Source: Ministry of Culture

[INFOGRAPHIC LINK](#)



# HOW TO SILENCE JOURNALISTS


In recent years, there have been more and more examples of attacks on journalists. The means used are varied: abusive legal proceedings known as «SLAPP procedures» and indiscriminate police repression; pressure and censorship from media shareholders.

What is most worrying is the marked tendency to circumvent the 1881 law on freedom of the press, a great liberal and republican law, by relying on provisions present in other pieces of legislation (anti-terrorism laws, law against separatism, law on the business secrecy, etc.). Here are three examples.

## THE FRENCH STATE HUNTS DOWN ARIANE LAVRILLEUX'S SOURCES

On 19 and 20 September 2023, investigators from the DGSI (General Directorate for Internal Security) searched the home of journalist Ariane Lavrilleux for ten hours and then held her in custody for 39 hours.

A journalist for [Disclose](#), an investigative website (which the Fund for a Free Press supported in 2021 and 2024), Ariane Lavrilleux is the co-author of a [series of investigations into French arms sales abroad](#). In particular, she was involved in the revelations about the [Sirli military operation in Egypt](#).



In November 2021, Disclose journalists used several hundred «confidential defence» documents to document a campaign of arbitrary executions orchestrated by the Egyptian dictatorship of Marshal Al-Sissi, with the complicity of the French State.

For the Disclose team, the offensive by the French services, as part of a judicial investigation for compromising the secrecy of national defence, has a major impact. Primary objective: «to identify our sources». The obstinacy of the Ministry of the Armed Forces, which has filed a complaint against the Disclose team, «represents an unprecedented attack on the protection of the confidentiality of journalists' sources», said more than [40 journalists' associations in a joint statement](#).

## A COMMERCIAL COURT VIOLATES THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF JOURNALISTS' SOURCES FOR THE «POULPE»

At the end of 2022, the Commercial Court of Rouen ordered bailiffs to search the emails of a company accused of passing on information to the newspaper [Le Poulpe](#). In 2022, this website, which provides information about the Rouen area and Normandy, published [an investigation documenting](#) serious suspicions about

the quality of the clean-up work carried out by Valgo on the site of the former Petroplus refinery, where Amazon has decided not to set up, partly because of the newspaper's revelations.

Valgo chose not to attack «Le Poulpe» directly but a competitor, Troletti, accused of unfair competition and denigration. As a result, it was able to bring the case before the Rouen Commercial Court. At the end of a non-adversarial procedure, the Court essentially adopted Valgo's arguments and ordered bailiffs to seize documents, correspondence and emails from the Troletti company. The aim is clearly to try to identify the journalists' sources.

## COURTS REINSTATE CENSORSHIP PRELIMINARY FOR REFLETS.INFO AND MEDIAPART

These two incredible court decisions were finally overturned on appeal in early 2023. But they say the violence of the attacks on investigative journalism.

On 6 October 2022, the Nanterre Commercial Court issued an interim injunction against the independent investigative media [Reflets.info](#), which specializes in investigations into the French economy, on behalf of the Altice Group, owned by billionaire Patrick Drahi. The court ordered Altice to pay Patrick Drahi's Group €4,500 for the publication of digital content, open source data and leaks. Above all, it ordered «not to publish any new information» about Altice.

This a priori censorship of articles that have not even been published is based on

the [2018 Law](#), championed by Emmanuel Macron, protecting business secrecy. This law makes it possible to circumvent the 1881 press law, which is what Altice did when it brought the case before the Nanterre Commercial Court.

The newspaper [Mediapart](#) was the victim of a similar manoeuvre. In an order handed down on 18 November 2023, the Paris Court of First Instance ordered Mediapart not to publish any new revelations about the political practices of the mayor of Saint-Étienne, Gaël Perdriau. This decision was taken at the end of a procedure that once again circumvented the 1881 law and press law, a procedure that made it possible to avoid an adversarial debate before the judges





Antoine Champagne répond à passelemonolstp: «Est-ce qu'ils cr des poursuites juridiques coûteuses?». [twitch.tv/daviduf](https://twitch.tv/daviduf), RÉVÉLATIONS sur la fortune de #Drahi et le groupe tentaculaire / HACKING INFO ce matin avec @\_Kitetoa\_ de @\_reflets\_ 1738 gardés à vue



Depuis le lancement le 7 novembre de notre plateforme d'enquête dédiée à l'extrême droite, nos journalistes font l'objet de menaces quotidiennes. Nous refusons de passer sous silence ces faits graves et nous ne céderons pas.

Rue89Lyon

S'abonner

En ce moment : Élections législatives 2024 Extrême-droite Perforances

## Convoqués au commissariat ! L'ex-président de l'OL Jean-Michel Aulas attaque Rue89Lyon

Début mai, notre rédaction a appris que Jean-Michel Aulas et son fils, Alexandre, ont porté plainte contre Rue89Lyon pour diffamation. L'ancien patron de l'Olympique lyonnais nous reproche une enquête parue en octobre sur ses investissements à travers plusieurs paradis fiscaux dans un terminal de luxe pour jets privés à Miami, dont il est le co-fondateur.



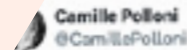
19 JUIN 2024 DIRECT-REPORTING

## « UNE BALLE DANS LA NUQUE » : DISCLOSE S'ASSOCIE AU DÉPÔT DE DEUX PLAINTES POUR MENACES DE MORT

R.F. REPORTERS SANS FRONTIÈRES

DÉTENTIONS ET PROCÉDURES ARBITRAIRES VIDÉO

## Témoignage vidéo : deux journalistes placés en garde à vue abusive en marge des Jeux olympiques en France



La censure nous a été notifiée par huissier et par surprise, vendredi après-midi. La justice interdit - par avance - la publication de nouvelles révélations de [mediapart](https://www.mediapart.fr) sur les pratiques politiques du maire de Saint-Etienne, à la demande de l'intéressé



## Mediapart, Reflets : quand la censure de presse s'invite au tribunal

Par David Pargamin le 30.11.2022 à 13h30, mis à jour le 30.11.2022 à 15h51

ABONNÉS

Les deux médias étaient convoqués mercredi devant la justice à Paris et Versailles après avoir vu plusieurs de leurs articles empêchés de paraître. Verdict ? Mediapart pourra bel et bien publier son enquête, a tranché le tribunal.



Après 39 heures de garde à vue, notre journaliste [@AriaLavrilieux](https://twitter.com/AriaLavrilieux) vient de sortir de l'hôtel de police de Marseille, où elle était entendue par la DGSJ.

Le Monde

ÉCONOMIE - MÉDIAS

## Convoqués après une plainte contre X, les dirigeants du média « Le Poulpe » dénoncent « un contournement du droit de la presse »

Le directeur de la publication et le rédacteur en chef du média indépendant, Gilles Triolier et Manuel Sanson, sont auditionnés jeudi 27 juin après le dépôt d'une plainte par l'ex maire de Cantelau (Seine-Maritime) Mélanie Boulanger, actuellement jugée pour complicité de trafic de stupéfiants.

LE POULPE

MÉDIA INDÉPENDANT & INVESTIGATEUR

Enquête Cyberespace Essentiel Podcasts Notre manifeste



Se connecter

## « Non, un tribunal de commerce ne peut pas violer le secret des sources des journalistes »

3

Le tribunal de commerce de Rouen a ordonné à des huissiers de fouiller les mails d'une entreprise accusée d'avoir transmis des informations au journal « Le Poulpe ». Dans un appel commun, médias et organisations de journalistes dénoncent cette atteinte manifeste au secret des sources.

3.

**HOW IT  
ALL WORKS**



# WHO FINANCES OUR WORK?

**FACED WITH A DAMAGED, COMPROMISED & DISCREDITED MEDIA ECOSYSTEM, WE URGENTLY NEED TO REBUILD JOURNALISM IN A WAY THAT MAKES IT TRULY INDEPENDENT. THIS IS ONLY POSSIBLE THROUGH YOUR DONATIONS.**

- It is your donations that make the work of the FPL possible. Every euro we raise goes directly to the independent media selected through our annual call for projects. 100% of the grants we are able to give to independent media depends on the continued support of donors joining us in the fight for a free press.

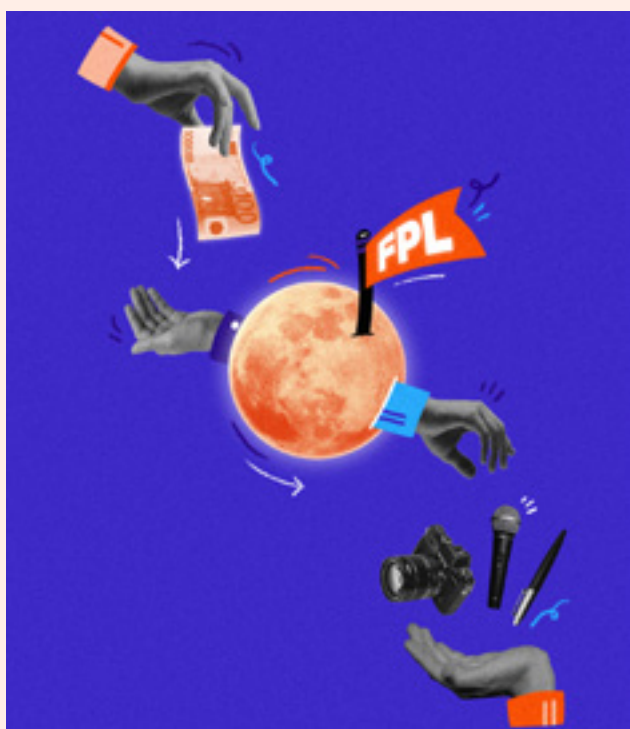
- Our annual operating costs - the administrative and personnel costs involved in managing the Fund - are covered by the dividends that Mediapart pays, rather than by your donations. The Fund cannot receive any form of public subsidy. And we refuse any donations from organizations or individuals over whose commitment or the origin of whose funds we have concerns (e.g. illegality, tax havens).

For the past two years, we have been supported by a number of foundations whose values we share.

**THE LATEST AUDITOR'S  
REPORT**



**ANNUAL BUSINESS  
REPORT 2023**



**LES FONDATIONS QUI  
SOUTIENNENT L'ACTION  
DU FPL :**



**fonds de dotation**

*agnès b.*

# HOW IS FUNDING AWARDED?



## THE ROLE OF THE STRATEGIC BOARD

We start by collecting your donations for independent media and offering you a 66% tax reduction.

Then the responsibility passes to the team of experts who make up our [Strategic Board](#).

**These are academics, publishers, digital and media professionals, and journalists - they participate on an entirely voluntary basis, and are required to be totally independent in their decisions. They are not permitted to take any form of payment for this work. This pool of knowledge is one of the FPL's greatest assets.**

Their job is to uncover ambitious projects, select those that will receive our financial support, and to provide all media applicants with advice and support on their journey towards financial independence.

**Because financial support alone is not enough, our team also works to help each media outlet find and build its own business model. After all, editorial independence is only possible with financial independence.**

## THE SELECTION PROCESS

In the first phase, applications are shared out for assessment among four pairs of Strategic Board members for assessment. The Board then holds a long meeting at which they discuss every single project, with the aim of getting to a shortlist. Using this process, 14 projects were shortlisted in 2024.

Then we move to the second phase, in which each project team is interviewed by two or three members of the Strategic Board for at least an hour. The Board's job in this case is essentially to assess whether the proposed project can help to promote, grow or consolidate that media outlet's business model.

After the interview phase, the Strategic Board meets again to go through all the assessments and information together. Our unwritten rule for the discussions that follow is to try as far as possible to reach a consensus on the final choice of awardees. Finally, the FPL's Governing Board approves these choices and adjusts the final grant sizes. In the end, the Fund supported nine projects this year.



# THE FPL TEAM



**CHARLOTTE CLAVREUL**  
Directrice du FPL

## BOARD MANAGEMENT



**DOMINIQUE CARDON**  
Sociologue des médias



**ISABELLE ENJALBERT**  
Ancienne professionnelle  
à la Caisse des Dépôts



**MATHILDE LARRÈRE**  
Historienne



**MATHIAS THÉPOT**  
Journaliste à Mediapart



**KARINE PARROT**  
Professeure de droit



**OLIVIA PLECTY**  
Cheffe de produit web à Mediapart  
et trésorière du FPL



**FRANÇOIS BONNET**  
Journaliste et président du FPL

## BOARD STRATEGIC



**KAREN BASTIEN**  
Cofondatrice de  
l'agence Wedodata



**EDMOND ESPANEL**  
Directeur général  
de Brief.me



**AGNÈS ROUSSEAU**  
Directrice de Bastamag  
et Politis



**LISA CASTELLY**  
Journaliste et membre du  
comité de direction à Marsactu



**NIKOS SMYRNAIOS**  
Maître de conférences  
à l'université de Toulouse



**SOLINE LEDÉSSERT**  
UX-UI designer au Consortium  
International des Journalistes  
d'Investigation

# A WORD FROM EDMOND ESPANEL



## EDMOND ESPANEL

Member of the FPL Strategic Board  
Co-founder of **Brief.me**

« Over the last four years, I've had the opportunity to support the development of the Fonds pour une Presse Libre (FPL) as a member of its Strategic Board. Alongside the other members, I evaluated applications for subsidies or repayable loans for projects from a range of media. Every year we dedicate several days to poring over the applications, interviewing the shortlist and making our final recommendations.

As an independent press publisher, I hugely appreciate how useful the role played by the FPL is, especially in two major aspects. Firstly, editorial independence is inseparable from financial independence. In this respect, the support offered by FPL is essential, whether by strengthening existing projects or helping new independent media at key stages in their development. Repayable loans, for example, are an invaluable tool for supporting publishers with financing at crucial times, particularly when access to finance from banks proves difficult.

This also builds a virtuous cycle: loans that are repaid strengthen the FPL's capacity to provide financial support.

Secondly, there is a real pluralism of editorial outlets in France, as demonstrated by the hundreds of independent media, at both national and local level. But these media really struggle to reach their audiences. They need support to do this, while legacy print publishers still receive the bulk of public funding (which is still focused on paper-based media). At the same time, the dominant digital platforms, with untransparent, biased algorithms, downrate the dissemination of news content. By contrast, the FPL's support fosters initiatives that benefit the whole ecosystem or help independent media to grow their audiences. »

# A FINAL WORD

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## TOGETHER, WE CAN CHANGE THINGS

In the five years of its existence, the FPL has been able to provide almost 700,000 euros in grants to 37 independent media. This represents more than 10,000 individual donations that have financed projects from media outlets with different editorial lines, but always with the same objective: to inform us freely by doing quality public interest journalism.

Thousands of donors have placed their trust in the Fund and its expertise, and the entire FPL team thanks them all for their support. It's thanks to you that we've been able to help the Fund have an impact on the media landscape, to make it a player in the independent media sector, and to show, thanks to the diversity of these local, national and international news media, that exists another journalism with news narratives.

The results of the recent European elections and the early parliamentary elections in France have made it clear that each and every one of us needs to commit to defending the freedoms that underpin our society. The mobilization we witnessed this time proves that, collectively, we have the power to give rise to new hopes and new visions for a society that is more just, more equal and that shows greater solidarity.

Mobilizing citizens has become an essential part of countering the capture of information and media outlets. The media landscape has been hugely degraded in recent years, and it is our civic duty to take action. We must come together. We must take immediate collective action to restore balance to the media, to restore journalism to its rightful place and to nurture democratic debate.

By supporting our work, you can take concrete action to defend free, high-quality information. Join us, and together, we will make a difference.

**CHARLOTTE CLAVREUL**  
Director of the FPL



# FONDS POUR UNE PRESSE LIBRE

*On the day after Liberation, the National Council of the Resistance made  
«the independence of the press from economic power» a democratic imperative.  
Today, we must take up this demand once again.*

[www.fondspresselibre.org](http://www.fondspresselibre.org)

**ART DIRECTION & ILLUSTRATIONS:**  
Caroline Varon - [instagram:varo.caro](https://www.instagram.com/varo.caro)

**REPORT DESIGN:**  
Sans Tête - <https://sanstete.com/> - Paul Saïssset - Apolline Bazin

The Fonds pour une Presse Libre is a non-profit organization, in the form of an endowment fund. Its main mission is to support press pluralism and independent journalism, and it is recognized as being in the public interest.

**HEAD OFFICE :**  
31-35 rue de la Fédération, 75015 Paris, France

**EMAIL:** [contact@fondspresselibre.org](mailto:contact@fondspresselibre.org)

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THE FONDS POUR UNE PRESSE LIBRE  
BY MAKING A DONATION  
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→ [www.fondspresselibre.org/faire-un-don](http://www.fondspresselibre.org/faire-un-don) ←

*CB or bank transfer possible*

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→ [charlotte.clavreul@fondspresselibre.org](mailto:charlotte.clavreul@fondspresselibre.org) ←

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