

# Media Capture in the Western Balkans: From captured states to captured media

## Key findings

Media capture is quite visible in all Western Balkan countries. It affects media pluralism and media freedom, as well as the **quality of democratic institutions** in the countries. As a result, media capture impedes EU membership prospects in the Western Balkans.

01

The governments are the main direct and indirect captors in the Western Balkans. They often abandon or abuse their role of media regulation, ownership transparency, and protection of competition, causing **media ownership concentration**.

02

Weak media laws are not providing sufficient independence to media regulatory bodies. In the Western Balkans, the tight political grip on these bodies is further undermining their independence, creating a fertile ground for media capture.

03

Public broadcasters are in constant financial struggle, dependent on government funding, which puts them in a position of political subordination. In many cases, **managerial or key editorial positions are directly chosen or influenced by political representatives**, leaving more room for influence.

04

One of the consequences of media capture is the **widespread disinformation, which threatens the consolidation of democracy in the Western Balkans**.

05



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