

Turning ideas into action: the launch of Maison du MédiaLab

January 2025



Dear friends in the European media community,

We are delighted to send you this first newsletter about the Maison du MédiaLab, which is now fully operational. The programme provides journalists from Eastern Europe with a space for professional development, networking, and innovation. Each month, we will share updates on life at La Maison, the correspondents hosted and working there, as well as the events being organised.

Ensuring professional working conditions for the journalist, connecting them with the press corps, EU and NATO institutions, and key figures essential to their editorial work, the Maison du MédiaLab programme has been lunch. They receive strong and regular support from us, as well as from coaches who are media specialists, and experts on the EU and NATO.

As you will see, January—the first month in which all six correspondents settled in—was filled with meetings and editorial production.

If you would like more specific information about the work being carried out, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Stay connected with us on LinkedIn: [Europe MédiaLab \(Stars4Media\)](#) and [Christophe Leclercq](#).

Warm regards,

Europe MédiaLab Team

Christophe Leclercq
Chair, Europe MédiaLab
+32 497 46 89 38
fondateur@europemediaLab.eu

Thierry Leroy
Secretary General
+32 2 615 06 53
secgen@europemediaLab.eu

Sharon Leclercq-Spooner
Co-initiator Maison du MédiaLab
+32 (0) 497 55 01 34
coinitiator@europemediaLab.eu

Aliaksandr Babiy
Programme coordinator
+32 (0) 2 615 06 57
stars4media@europemediaLab.eu

Mélie Carcenac
Communication manager
+32 (0) 2 615 06 57
communication@europemediaLab.eu

And residents,

Tetyana Vysotska
European Pravda, Espresso
TV

Valeriia Pashko
Suspilne, Public Broadcaster

Iulia Sarivan
Jurnal TV, and Deutsche Welle

Elena Zagnat
Agora.md

Vazha Tavberidze
Radio Free Europe/ Radio
Liberty, and Georgia Today

Beqa Beriashvili
Interpressnews, Palitra News

Stars4Media Day XI: "Democracy & Maison du MédiaLab"

Stars4Media Day XI, marked the launch of the Maison du MédiaLab to support Eastern European journalists. Ambassadors from Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, and Armenia highlighted the critical role of this initiative in strengthening EU and NATO coverage.

The event brought together policymakers and media professionals to address democratic and media economic resilience challenges. Discussions centered on the implementation and impact of key EU regulations, including the DSA, DMA, and the Media Freedom Act.

Věra Jourová, Vice-Rector at Charles University in Prague and former EU Commission Vice President, stressed the need for strict enforcement, stating: "Please enforce all the rules in full. My message to Brussels: enforce all the rules in full. I wouldn't want to see any kind of digital appeasement."

Among the distinguished speakers and panellists were EU Enlargement Commissioner Marta Kos, European Parliament First Vice President Sabine Verheyen, and representatives from the European Federation of Journalists (EFJ), International Press Association (IPA), European Digital Media Observatory (EDMO), Reporters of Hope, Reporters Without Borders (RSF), Euractiv, and Politico Europe.

The event was made possible through the support of 25 registered journalists, four Ambassadors, and the patronage of the European Parliament. Its success reflects the collaborative efforts of numerous partners, donors, and advocates for media freedom like FTI consulting Europe.

Moving forward, efforts will focus on expanding the reach and impact of Maison du MédiaLab, fostering new partnerships, securing funding, and strengthening mentorship opportunities for resident journalists.

Relive the highlights of the event:

- Watch the [highlight video](#) of the event
- Read our article on [LinkedIn post](#)



Resident Updates & Featured Work

Maison du MédiaLab journalists are actively working, covering EU and NATO affairs, tackling pressing issues in European media and democracy. From investigative reports to cross-border collaborations, their projects are already shaping meaningful discussions. You can find below some of their published work.

To provide regular updates on their progress, we will be featuring some of the work of two journalists every months, ensuring that each resident's contributions are highlighted.

Here is the first published work from two of our six resident journalists and a full overview of the current group, you can find a gallery of profiles below.

MD Elena Zagnat Agora



In recent weeks, key developments regarding Moldova's EU accession and energy security have taken center stage in Brussels. [AGORA has become one of the first Moldovan media institutions](#) to establish a correspondent in the EU capital, strengthening coverage of critical events. [The first screening session for Moldova's EU accession negotiations](#) officially began in January, with European Commission experts expressing hopes for an [intergovernmental conference in April](#) to advance the process. Meanwhile, geopolitical tensions persist, with [French Foreign Minister warning](#) that Moldova is facing [energy asphyxiation from Russia](#), a concern echoed by Baltic Foreign Ministers, who condemned Moscow's use of energy as a political pressure tool. In response, the EU has reaffirmed its support, with [European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen announcing a €30 million aid package](#) to ensure energy supply for Transnistria and restore access to electricity and

UA Valeriia Pashko Suspilne Public Broadcaster



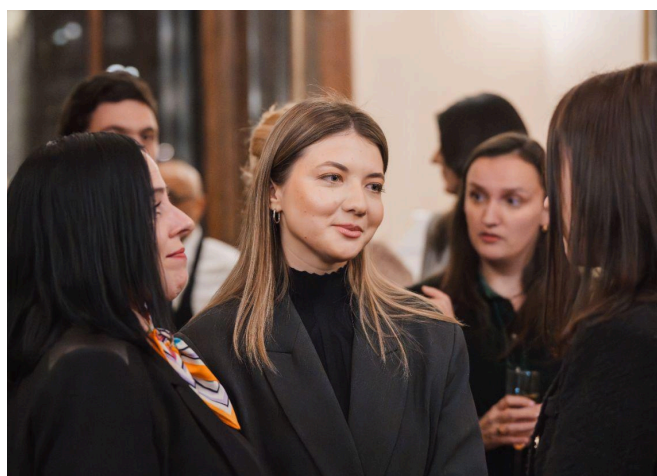
In recent weeks, key diplomatic, economic, and security events have shaped the European and global landscape. [President Zelenskyi met with EU leaders](#), UK representatives, NATO Secretary General, and top EU officials to discuss pressing geopolitical issues. [The EU Council convened soon after](#), followed by [Christmas celebrations](#). As the new year began, [Poland assumed the Presidency of the Council of the EU](#), while [Russia terminated gas transit through Ukraine and later cut off supplies to Transnistria](#), further escalating energy concerns. Meanwhile, reports surfaced [regarding the distribution of fake military summonses to Ukrainians](#), adding to regional tensions. [The European Commission held key briefings](#), and the [Ramstein Meeting \(Ukraine Defense Contact Group - UDCG\)](#) convened, focusing on military support for Ukraine. January also saw [Stars4Media Day XI: "Democracy & Maison du MédiaLab"](#), highlighting the role of media and democratic resilience. In security affairs, the [Military](#)

heating. [As EU officials denounce Russia's energy tactics](#), they also stress their commitment to accelerating Moldova's integration into the European Union.

[Committee in Chiefs of Defence Session took place](#), while the [World Economic Forum in Davos](#) gathered global leaders to discuss economic and geopolitical challenges. The month concluded with high-level EU meetings, including the [Foreign Affairs Council](#) and [General Affairs Council](#), reinforcing Europe's commitment to stability and cooperation.

Iulia Sarivan

Jurnal TV/ Deutsche Welle



Tetyana Vysotska

European Pravda/ Espresso TV



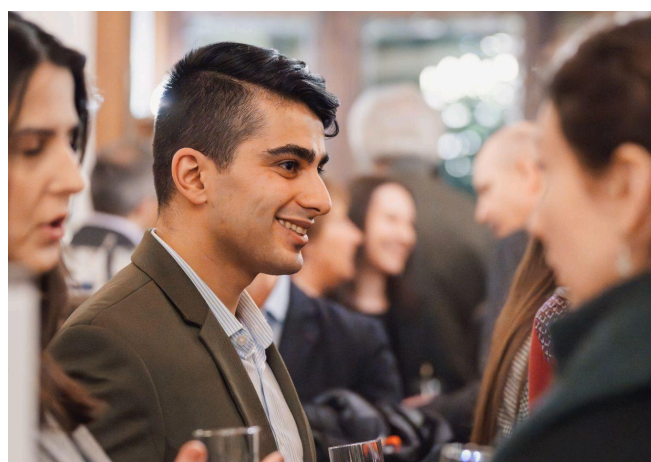
Vazha Tavberidze

Radio Free Europe/ Georgia Today



Beka Beriashvili

Interpressnews/ Palitra News





NATO Visit

As part of the Maison du MédiaLab programme, our resident journalists had the opportunity to visit NATO headquarters for an in-depth briefing on the alliance's current priorities and partnerships. The day began with an overview of NATO's global partnerships, presented by Krisztian Meszaros, Director of the Partnership and Global Affairs Directorate, followed by a session on the current NATO agenda, led by Beata Patašova from the Public Diplomacy Division. The journalists engaged in discussions on security policy, strategic communications, and NATO's evolving role in global affairs. This visit provided a unique behind-the-scenes perspective, equipping journalists with a deeper understanding of NATO's work and its impact on European security.

EURACTIV

POLITICO

Euractiv & Politico Europe Newsroom's study visits

As part of the Maison du MédiaLab programme, our resident journalists visited the newsrooms of Euractiv and Politico Europe, engaging in discussions on EU and NATO coverage from both Brussels-based and Eastern European perspectives. At Euractiv, they explored the challenges of policy-driven journalism, multilingual reporting, and the impact of EU decisions on their home regions. At Politico Europe, discussions centered on political reporting, EU decision-making, and the challenges of covering Brussels from both Western and Eastern European perspectives, highlighting differences in media narratives and audience engagement across regions. These exchanges provided valuable insights into press freedom, cross-border journalism, and the role of independent media in shaping European democracy.