

VOCER initiative #RefoundingDemocracy2025 for resilient journalism presented to the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media



Photo credit: VOCER-Institute/Ahmad Alrifaae

BERLIN, July 11, 2025 – On July 10, the initiative *#RefoundingDemocracy2025*, supported by more than 100 contributors from journalism, civil society, academia, and media education, was presented during a high-level expert dialogue at the **Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media (BKM)**. The delegation, led by Dr. Stephan Weichert (VOCER Institute) and Dr. Leif Kramp (VOCER, ZeMKI, University of Bremen), officially handed over the policy paper to senior representatives of the BKM.

The policy paper calls for a **future-oriented media policy that strengthens democratic resilience**. Key demands include:

1. Legal recognition and funding of nonprofit journalism
2. Targeted programs for journalistic training and continuing education
3. An ethical framework for the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in media
4. Support for alternative, decentralized platforms such as the Fediverse
5. Structural resilience for local and innovative journalism

Press Release



The conversation with **Ministerial Director Dr. Jan Ole Pueschel, Dr. Nadine Plath, and David Nejjar** from the BKM team was constructive, open, and forward-looking. Special attention was given to the issues of news literacy, journalist training, and the fight against disinformation.

„Our meeting was an overall success. Our demands were thoroughly discussed and will now be reviewed for alignment with the new federal government's policy agenda. The exchange on journalistic training and news literacy was particularly dynamic – all participants saw major opportunities for collaborative media strategies to enhance democratic resilience.“ – **Dr. Stephan Weichert, Founder and Director of the VOCER-Institute for Digital Resilience.**

A follow-up dialogue with the BKM and partners of the VOCER-Institute such as *Journalismus macht Schule*, *UseTheNews*, *Deutscher Journalisten-Verband*, and the *Save Social* campaign is already in preparation. The goal is to develop a coordinated **media policy to counter news fatigue, digital disempowerment, and democratic disengagement.**

„We are very pleased about the courteous professional exchange with the responsible department of the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media. We particularly welcome the willingness to remain in contact and to obtain specific expert input on the challenges addressed in order to provide well-founded support for the media policy work between the federal and state governments.“ – **Dr. Leif Kramp, Research Coordinator ZeMKI, University of Bremen and Founding Board Member VOCER**

The **policy paper #RefoundingDemocracy2025** includes recommendations for action in the field of media policy. The paper addresses ministries, state representations, but also media houses and foundations. It contains also a well a concrete roadmap for the new federal government (Bundesregierung), with concrete deadlines and priorities up to 2029 (short, medium and long-term goals for journalism and media funding). The paper is available to download free of charge from the VOCER-Institute for Digital Resilience website.

The **VOCER-INSTITUTE FOR DIGITAL RESILIENCE** is Germany's leading think & do tank at the interface of journalism, technology and social innovation. As a creative ideas platform and “Dritter Ort”, VOCER offers practical training, campaigns and in-house formats for media professionals, organizations and civil society. It thus strengthens democratic values and promotes resilient media structures – against disinformation, exhaustion and polarization.

Press Contact:

VOCER-INSTITUTE FOR DIGITAL RESILIENCE

Dr. Stephan Weichert

Mail: weichert@vocer.org

Phone: +49 (0) 170 310 51 38

Download policy paper in full: <https://digitale-resilienz.org/portfolio/policy-paper-refoundingdemocracy2025/>