

PRESS RELEASE

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Press publishers comment on the European Parliament's adopted Report on Strengthening Media Freedom and ask for competition to be restored in the online ecosystem

EMMA, the European Magazine Media Association and ENPA, the European Newspaper Publishers' Association which together represent tens of thousands of newspapers and magazines across Europe would like to comment on the report on *strengthening media freedom: the protection of journalists in Europe, hate speech, disinformation and the role of platforms* which was adopted by the European Parliament's Plenary today.

ENPA and EMMA welcome that the report recognises the importance of media freedom and media's essential role in European democracies, as brought forward by the COVID-19 pandemic, and includes several positive provisions.

It is important that the report also stresses that the legal framework created by the EU states should contribute to the creation of independent and pluralistic media, and that any actions of the state contrary to these values constitute a serious abuse of powers and go against the fundamental values of the EU. The document repeatedly condemns all attempts by the state to take over the media, especially if the state's actions are politically motivated, or shape the media landscape in such a way that it is exclusively beneficial to the ruling political force.

EMMA and ENPA are concerned however about the anonymity of competing information sources. In sharp contrast, for press publishers online and print, both the sender and the person legally responsible for the content are as a rule transparently disclosed.

Regarding the promotion of high-quality journalism and fact checkers championed in the report, press publishers across Europe are deeply concerned that the EU, Member States, gatekeeper platforms or third parties would decide which of our publications are trustworthy and promoted on gatekeeper platforms and which ones pushed to irrelevance, creating de facto a ministry of truth.

Overall, press publishers believe that the role of the gatekeeper mega-platforms which determine which media and which content has a chance on the respective reader and advertising markets and therefore determine the journalistic and editorial success or failure of a publication should be addressed.

This is why, press publishers across Europe call for obligations for mega-platforms to provide non-discriminatory access and fair terms and conditions for all legal publications and offerings as the best condition to strengthen media freedom.

Ilias Konteas, Executive Director of EMMA and ENPA says: "*In these particular times, to remain free, professional media do not need further regulation which might bring additional burdens on the sector. It is however necessary to introduce a strong DMA in order to restore competition in the digital market.*"

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***EMMA**, the European Magazine Media Association, is the unique and complete representation of Europe's magazine media, which is today enjoyed by millions of consumers on various platforms, encompassing both paper and digital formats. EMMA represents 15,000 publishing houses, publishing 50,000 magazine titles across Europe in print and digital.*

See: www.magazinemedia.eu/

***ENPA**, the European Newspaper Publishers' Association (ENPA) is the largest representative body of newspaper publishers across Europe. ENPA advocates for 16 national associations across 13 European countries, and is a principal interlocutor to the EU institutions and a key driver of media policy debates in the European Union. See: www.enpa.eu/*