

PRESS RELEASE

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Press publishers welcome the EU Council Conclusions on safeguarding a free and pluralistic media system and warn against trust indicators and the promotion of public communications on mega platforms

European newspaper and magazine publishers across Europe welcome the EU Council Conclusions on *safeguarding a free and pluralistic media system* that were adopted by ambassadors earlier today. Press publishers consider the conclusions, a set of proposed actions to foster a sustainable, pluralistic and trustworthy media system throughout Europe, a clear recognition of the vital role the media plays in our European democratic system.

As COVID19 showed once more the real value of journalism with consumers turning *en masse* to high quality press products, profits are still declining. As advertising revenue took a dive due to the COVID-19 pandemic, publishers' business models are systematically undermined by giant tech platforms. The Council Conclusions call on Member States and the European Commission to ensure a legal and economic framework that allows media service providers to sufficiently monetize their content.

The Council Conclusion also emphasize that a few large gatekeeper platforms are increasingly influencing the user's access to media content and therefore calls on ensuring non-discriminatory access and equal treatment for media content providers on gatekeeper platforms.

In addition, press publishers disapprove the promotion of public communications and announcements, especially on gatekeeper platforms, as it only strengthens the quasi-monopolistic position of such companies at the expense of smaller providers.

A spokesman for the sector commented: "The Council recognizes the importance of beefing up Europe's press ecosystem during a time that is critical for the sector. As we're striving to bring original and high-quality content to Europeans every day, the right framework to compete with tech giants is needed now more than ever".

However, press publishers also warn against the suggested development of indicators for trustworthiness of news and media outlets as well as the promotion of fact-checkers by the EU or Member States. Such indicators, that influence algorithmic decisions on a platform, could have catastrophic consequences for the availability of content and could potentially deprive large groups of society from their news sources.

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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. 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/

EPC, the European Publishers Council is a high level group of Chairmen and CEOs of leading European media corporations actively involved in multimedia markets spanning newspaper, magazine, book, journal, internet and online database publishers, and radio and TV broadcasting. See: <http://epceurope.eu/>

NME, News Media Europe (NME) represents the progressive news media industry in Europe – over 2200 European titles of newspapers, radio, TV and internet. NME is committed to maintaining and promoting the freedom of the press, to upholding and enhancing the freedom to publish, and to championing the newsbrands which are one of the most vital parts of Europe's creative industries. See: www.newsmediaeurope.eu/