

PRESS RELEASE

EMFA: Council General Approach does not fully address publishers' concerns

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In light of adoption of the Council's negotiating mandate ("General Approach") on the European Media Freedom Act (EMFA), EMMA and ENPA, representing the vast majority of European publishers, regret that Member States have missed an important opportunity to readdress the current imbalance between media companies and the large online platforms distributing their content, allowing the latter to continue dictating the criteria under which their content moderation is carried out.

Despite certain improvements to the Commission's original proposal, the adopted mandate does not take due account of Member States' different regulatory and self-regulatory approaches. In particular, the adopted proposal would bring the press under the purview of European media authorities via the new European Board for Media Services.

EMMA-ENPA now call upon on the European Parliament negotiators to seek to address the shortcomings of the Council's position and ensure that Parliament's EMFA negotiating mandate further improves the protection of press freedom ensure a positive outcome in the forthcoming trilogue negotiations.

Xavier Bouckaert President of EMMA said: *"The Council's mandate unfortunately fails to address many of the shortcomings of the Commission's proposal and to ensure that well-functioning national media systems are not compromised. Also, any form of media oversight introduced via the Board must secure for the press independence from both Member States and the Union."*

Jean-Pierre de Kerraoul, President of ENPA said: *"Moreover, the text allows very large online platforms and search engines to continue restricting access to lawful media content, based on unilaterally imposed terms and conditions instead of the existing limits to press freedom and freedom of speech imposed by the law. Of course, we must fight against fake news and disinformation, but we cannot entrust VLOPs with the responsibility of qualifying a press publication, even less recognizing their right to censor its content."*

For further information, please contact:

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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. See: www.magazinemedia.eu/

ENPA, the European Newspaper Publishers' Association (ENPA) is the largest representative body of newspaper publishers across Europe. ENPA advocates for 14 national associations across 14 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/