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Publishers
Council

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News Release

Publishers Applaud MEPs For Taking Responsibility For The Future Of A Free And Independent Press: First European Parliament Committee Votes In Favour Of The Press Publisher's Right

European Publishers Council's Executive Director Angela Mills Wade said: "Today, Thursday, 8 June, MEPs voting in the European Parliament's Internal Market and Consumer Protection Committee (IMCO), took a golden opportunity to do the right thing and vote for a copyright proposal that acknowledges the role that press publishers play in our precious democracy by investing in a free and independent professional press".

Angela continued: "We welcome the additional amendments adopted MEPs which improve the right by extending the protection to print, including rental and lending of press publications and by adding a stronger reference to the investment of press publishers and pointing to the fact that news aggregators and search engines are developing their activities on the basis of the investment by press publishers without licences."

MEPs in the IMCO committee are the first of five committees to vote on the European Commission's draft EU proposal for a directive on Copyright in the Digital Single Market which includes a proposal for a neighbouring right for press publishers. A new neighbouring right for publishers, something already enjoyed by music and film producers and broadcasters would make it:

- easier to prevent the routine copying, re-use and monetisation of publishers' content without permission
- easier for start-ups to base their business model around using content legally
- easier to bring companies wishing to use publishers' content to the table to negotiate agreements
- easier to prove to tech giants that publishers' content is not theirs for the taking without agreements

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- easier to take legal action against copyright infringers

Without a publisher's right, third parties will continue to be able routinely to divert revenue-earning opportunities to their own platforms and services. Without a publisher's right, publishers' ability to invest in digital innovation and professional journalism is severely undermined.

Angela continued: "EPC welcomes the recognition by MEPs that the publisher's right would help create a fairer digital eco-system whereby consumers can access and enjoy our content 24/7 on multiple platforms and where tech companies and other businesses can use and distribute our content - with a licence - that may not always require payment, but should always require permission. The Publisher's Right is crucial: publishers need to be economically viable to perform their essential role in society."

Next steps: two other committees - CULT and ITRE are due to vote on their opinions on 21 June and 10/11 July. LIBE is voting end of June but only addressing article 13 (value gap) and not the publisher's right. Final vote in JURI - the lead committee where the Rapporteur is Theresa Comodini-Cachia is scheduled for end of September.

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