

**EPC**European
Publishers
Council

A FREE AND INDEPENDENT PRESS IS A NECESSITY, NOT A LUXURY, SAYS PUBLISHING CEO AND CHAIRMAN OF THE EPC

Statement by Christian Van Thillo, CEO of de Persgroep and Chairman of the European Publishers Council on World Intellectual Property Day, 26 April 2017

www.epceurope.eu

"Today, on World Intellectual Property Day, I appeal to everyone: regulators and politicians, businesses and consumers to take a minute to celebrate creativity and to acknowledge the value to us all of a system that promotes the widest dissemination of things we enjoy from up-to-date news and analysis, to your favourite TV drama, music or the latest films together with wonderful images or books that capture our imaginations and sometimes change our perceptions.

"For publishers, copyright is the cornerstone of recognising that we own what we publish and that if other businesses wish to reuse any of our content, they need our permission. As an owner of newspapers in Europe, I take pride in what we finance. We take the risks, we pay the journalists, we are responsible and answerable for the content we produce on every platform and device.

"Right now our potential to invest in professional journalism is undermined by a situation whereby publishers bear all the costs and responsibilities of producing what our readers enjoy, while other commercial operators help themselves by systematically scraping our websites and reaping the financial rewards. Copyright is not working online.

"With the EU copyright reform underway, regulators in Brussels and in national governments have the opportunity to act. I call on MEPs and national ministers to

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support the proposal for a neighbouring right, known as the Publisher's Right, that would make it clear in law that publishers have control over the intellectual property rights in the content they publish. This would help publishing and professional journalism continue to play a valuable role in promoting cultural diversity, entertaining, informing, holding our leaders to account and upholding our precious democracy. A free and independent press is a necessity, not a luxury in a democratic society and our regulators have the opportunity, and indeed the responsibility, to safeguard its future."

Ends

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For further information, please contact Heidi Lambert on Tel: +44 1245 476 265 or EPC Executive Director Angela Mills Wade on Tel: +44 1865 310 732.

Note to Editors:

The publisher's right will not change the way readers are encouraged by publishers to share links to articles.

Mythbuster and FAQs: <https://www.publishersright.eu/mythbuster>

European Commission news release on the Copyright reform package: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-16-3010_en.htm

World Intellectual Property Right Day: <http://www.wipo.int/ip-outreach/en/ipday/>

