

For immediate release:

Press publishers join forces to safeguard democratic values in Europe by making the case for a strong European copyright

Brussels – 27 September 2016. “Empower Democracy” (www.empower-democracy.eu), officially launched today, is a cross-border alliance initiated by Europe’s press publishers to raise awareness about the crucial democratic role of the press, the need for a free, independent, pluralistic and vibrant press sector in Europe is acknowledged in the ongoing copyright reform.

Europe’s media landscape is unique in its diversity. *“We have to recognise the fundamental conditions for media pluralism and freedom and to defend them, also taking responsibility for the new framework in this area: regulatory and non-regulatory. We need trustworthy media.”* says **MEP Michal Boni**.

“It is crucial that the contribution made by press publishers to media diversity, freedom of speech and European pluralism must be properly valued” says **Mark Dekan, CEO of Ringier Axel Springer** publishing newspapers and magazines online and print in Poland, Hungary, Slovakia and Serbia. *“A strong media sector needs a strong legal framework: a Europe-wide publisher’s right. With such a right, press publishers will be able to defend their intellectual property against unauthorised use, thereby protecting the value of their work. We call upon the European Parliament and the European governments to fully support this important regulatory initiative that was presented almost 2 weeks ago!”*

The website www.empower-democracy.eu underlines the importance of the publisher’s right in helping to maintain independent, pluralistic media in Europe.

By introducing a publisher’s right, publishers would be given the right to legally protect what is theirs, which would help to address some of the key challenges that publishers are facing in a digitized media world. Publishers would then effectively be treated the same way as other content producers like broadcasters, film producers, and phonogram producers.

“Press publishers are essential to the European economy and are subject to worldwide competition” states **Xavier Bouckaert, CEO of Roularta Media** in Belgium. *“In recent years we have heavily invested in digital business models and innovation. By constantly improving the ways of communicating content to our readers, we shape and frame our digital environment – and pave the way for a future European digital single market. For Europe to become a strong player in the digital sphere, we need a clear regulatory framework to foster growth and unlock Europe’s creative potential.”*

In the name of the initiators of the alliance **Carlo Perrone, President of ENPA** and Italian publisher explains: *“The Commission’s proposal represents an historical and significant step by providing a right for press publishers at EU level. This right neither creates a tax on links nor prevents the sharing of links between individual users. It will enable press publishers across Europe to value and protect their editorial content in the digital environment which would highly benefit media pluralism, press freedom and cultural diversity.”*

The website www.empower-democracy.eu was introduced to the public on the 27th of September 2016 during a “Future Media Lounge” debate on the press freedom situation in Europe in the European Parliament.

Contact:



Max von Abendroth
Executive Director, EMMA
max.abendroth@magazinmedia.eu
www.magazinmedia.eu



Angela Mills Wade
Executive Director, EPC
Angela.Mills-Wade@epceurope.eu
www.epceurope.eu



Sophie Scrive
Deputy Executive Director, ENPA
Sophie.Scrive@enpa.eu
www.enpa.eu

NEWS MEDIA EUROPE

Wout van Wijk
Executive Director, NME
wout.vanwijk@newsmediaeurope.eu
www.newsmediaeurope.eu/