

Ms Ursula von der Leyen
European Commission President
Rue de la Loi, 200
Brussels
B – 1049

Brussels, 5 October 2020

Dear President,

As the recently re-elected President of EMMA (European Magazine Media Association) and the newly-elected President of ENPA (European Newspaper Publishers' Association), we represent and speak on behalf of the vast majority of European press publishers, in both digital and print.

In your Political Guidelines at the beginning of your mandate as well as in your recent first State of the Union speech, you have defined as a priority the need for Europe to lead the transition to a new digital world. In your State of the Union, we welcome that you have recognized press freedom as part of the European values that define the European Union.

The press has been striving to adapt to the new digital world. However, it has been confronted with risks and imbalances in the digital markets related to the gatekeeping role of market dominant platforms and the enormous amount of data and advertising share they have.

The coronavirus pandemic has led to a situation where the press has been enjoying increased digital readership while being confronted with decreasing advertising revenues across Europe. The continuing crisis puts the future of a free and independent press, without whom press freedom cannot exist, at stake, lacking support and action from the European Union.

This is why we have welcomed the European Commission's commitment in its communication on shaping Europe's digital future to propose an asymmetrical ex-ante regulation for market dominant platforms as a separate proposal in its upcoming Digital Services Act package. We have outlined our detailed vision for this ex-ante asymmetrical regulation in our response to the Commission public consultation to the Digital Services Act. We urge the Commission to present this proposal before the end of the year.

The current crisis makes it essential to protect the digital competitiveness of the European economy as much as private life and personal data in electronic communications. This applies also to the data-based business model of the free and independent press that should not be further weakened in any future European privacy regulation to the benefit of the gatekeeping mega-platforms that would get to decide to what extent we are allowed to carry out the necessary data processing for the financing of our business model.

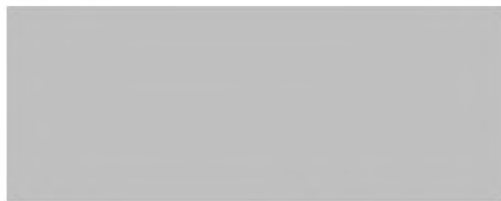
The crisis has also demonstrated that the best means to fight against false and misleading information is a free and independent press providing true and accurate information, free of any state regulation, influence and content-related restrictions.

Together with a high-level delegation of press publishers from across Europe (that you will find as annex to this letter), we would welcome the opportunity to discuss with you the challenges we have described as well as the historic opportunity for the European Commission to act in order to ensure the future of a free and independent press.

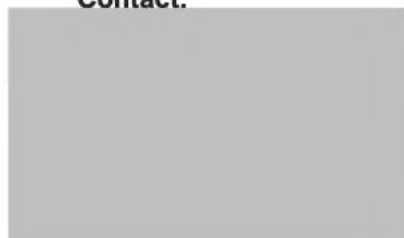
The EMMA and ENPA staff is at the disposal of your cabinet to arrange the practicalities and the format of such a meeting.

We are looking forward to receiving your response to our request.

Yours sincerely,



Contact:



Annex (EMMA-ENPA delegation)

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