

PRESS RELEASE

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European Press Publishers welcome the launch of a competition investigation on Google's conduct in the online advertising and data market

The European Newspaper Publishers Association (ENPA) and the European Magazine Media Association (EMMA) welcome today's launch of an antitrust investigation by DG Competition to assess whether Google's position in the advertising market constitutes a violation of competition law.

In particular, the European Commission will focus on whether Google is distorting competition by restricting access by third parties to user data for advertising purposes on websites and apps, while reserving such data for its own use. This investigation follows subsequent announcements from Google that they would phase-out third party cookies, suggesting to replace them with their own Privacy Sandbox. This tool would only allow targeting users through cohorts made within the browser itself, creating a black-box that would further reinforce the reliance of service providers on Google's intermediation and its gatekeeper role.

European press publishers share the Commission's concern that Google might retain privileged access to users' data through the log-ins on its own platforms and its presence at all stages of the online advertising supply chain. Since online publications depend to a large extent on revenues from online advertising, any unilateral restriction affecting users' targeting has a direct impact on the financing possibilities of the free press. Phasing out third party cookies would already disproportionately affect press publishers, that would no longer be able to process users' data in a meaningful way.

Ilias Konteas, EMMA – ENPA Executive Director, said: "We already highlighted our concerns over the fact that a dominant private company competing in the advertising market could impose its own policies on all the other players. This investigation is a timely initiative that would look into the dynamics of the advertising market and ensure the respect of the level playing field. With the upcoming DMA, there is an opportunity that should not be lost to restore online competition that has been distorted by those gatekeepers and guarantee that press publishers can continue to offer their services online on a fair and non-discriminatory basis".

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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. EMMA represents 15,000 publishing houses, publishing 50,000 magazine titles across Europe in print and digital.

See: www.magazinemedia.eu/

ENPA, the European Newspaper Publishers' Association (ENPA) is the largest representative body of newspaper publishers across Europe. ENPA advocates for 16 national associations across 13

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/