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European Press Publishers Call for EC Measures Against Google's "Site Reputation Abuse" as it endangers the Free Press

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[Brussels] — European Press Publishers' Associations ENPA, EMMA, EPC and NME urge the European Commission to take immediate measures against Google's "Site Reputation Abuse."

At a critical moment for the European media industry, press publishers are uniting to express profound concerns over Google's practices relating to its so-called "Site Reputation Abuse" (SRA) policy - a measure that penalises websites in the ranking of Google Search for cooperating with third-party content providers, regardless of the website's editorial oversight over such content or its respective quality. While despite mounting evidence of significant harm, many media organisations remain silent out of fear of retaliation, as publishers' associations, however, we are coming together to voice our industry's collective concerns over what we view as a clear abuse of dominance by Google and violation of the Digital Markets Act.

In recent months, compelling evidence has emerged indicating that Google has been systematically diminishing the reach of media websites through non-transparent manual penalty adjustments and inconsistent policy enforcement. These measures have resulted in severe traffic losses, reduced revenue, and increased editorial uncertainty for European publishers.

Since the rollout of Google's SRA enforcement in January 2025, media outlets in France, Germany, Poland, Spain, Italy, and other European countries have reported sharp drops in search rankings - particularly for pages featuring content produced by reputable commercial partners or freelance contributors. Legal experts have warned that this could result in the effective invisibility of freelance journalism, undermining both the entrepreneurial freedom of media houses and the diversity of voices essential to democratic discourse.

Google's unilateral removal of press content from its services is yet another move that hinders users from accessing relevant content and reaching publishers' websites. This poses a direct threat to the financial sustainability of journalism in Europe and weakens democracy itself.

Several affected parties have already lodged formal complaints with the European Commission, raising serious concerns about Google's policy. In support of these complaints, we urge the Commission to take immediate action to prevent further irreparable harm to the press sector. It is precisely for situations like this that the Digital Markets Act was enacted. And it is precisely for cases like this that the Act calls for interim measures.
