

PRESS RELEASE

European Press Publishers welcome the Commission's decision to take action in Google anti-trust case

Brussels, 15th April 2015 – European Press publishers welcomed today's decision by the European Commission to take action in the ongoing EU anti-trust investigation into Google's business conduct.

Press publishers fully expect that the Commission will use the action in the context of comparison shopping services as a precedent for the ongoing legal proceedings regarding the other sectors prejudiced by Google's abuse of dominant position.

European Newspaper Publishers' Association (ENPA) and European Magazine Media Association (EMMA) have long been calling for an end to Google's anti-competitive behavior, which is detrimental to the sustainability of the independent press sector and future innovation. The European press organisations are actively supporting their members who are direct complainants in the case: the Spanish Association of Daily Newspaper Publishers (AEDE), the Federation of German Newspaper Publishers (BDZV) and the Association of German Magazine Publishers (VDZ).

ENPA and EMMA consider the announcement of a Statement of Objections by EU Commissioner Vestager to be an important first step in the process of restoring genuine competition to online search services and the European digital market, to the benefit of consumers and businesses. The outcome of this case will have a strong impact on citizens' access to information, media pluralism and press freedom in Europe.

In the ongoing competition case, European press publishers specifically call for:

- the ban of preferential treatment of own services and products within Google's quasi-search monopoly, including Google's own services and content introduced through Google's Knowledge Graph;
- no use of content from press publishers (newspaper, magazine and online publishers) beyond what is truly indispensable for navigation purposes in the horizontal search without prior consent;
- an option to mark information on an item-by-item-basis in a machine-readable way in order to express permissions and restrictions for use of that respective content;
- no direct or indirect punishment of websites that restrict the use of their content; and
- no preferential treatment of news aggregators compared to online press portals.

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