

PRESS RELEASE

ENPA



EUROPEAN NEWSPAPER PUBLISHERS' ASSOCIATION

Commission's proposals on audiovisual commercial communications will affect editorial independence for all media – warn Europe's newspaper publishers

SUMMARY: ENPA informs MEPs of newspaper publishers' two key messages on the first day of official Parliamentary Committee discussions on the revision of the "Television without Frontiers" Directive. 1) Keep electronic newspapers out of the scope of the proposal. 2) Product placement is a technique which erodes editorial independence and should not be further liberalised.

ENPA – the European Newspaper Publishers' Association is again calling on MEPs in the Culture and Education Committee as well as the Committee on Internal Market and Consumer Protection - both discussing the revision of the Directive for the first time this week - to carefully consider the following:

- ENPA supports the Commission's decision to exclude electronic newspapers from the scope of the proposal as stated in recitals 14 and 15. MEPs should call for the confirmation of this exclusion for newspapers to appear in the articles of the proposal too.
- ENPA calls for maintaining the status quo for product placement as found in the 1989/1997 "Television without Frontiers" Directive – that is, the product placement technique is currently classified as surreptitious advertising in most EU countries and is therefore banned – this power for Member States to ban the technique must be safeguarded.
- ENPA believes that there are other advertising techniques (but NOT product placement) – which better respect editorial independence and have less impact on other media - which should be promoted for broadcasters.
- The Commission's proposal deletes the Directive's principle of separation between advertising and editorial content, in order to allow product placement. The number of product placements within a programme has not been limited by the Commission either, which could greatly diminish the editorial integrity of the programme. ENPA warns that this relaxation of conditions for audiovisual commercial communications will have consequences for the general public's confidence in editorial independence for all media.

ENPA is a non-profit organisation of 5100 titles from 24 European countries (plus one observer member), representing the interests of newspaper publishers to the European Institutions. More than 120 million copies of newspapers are sold each day and read by over 235 million people in Europe. For more information, please contact ENPA on +32.2.551.01.90. Please find ENPA's position paper accompanying this Press Release.