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NEWS RELEASE

European press publishers welcome the Australian Government's decision to develop a mandatory code of conduct to govern the relationship between digital platforms and media companies.

On 19 April, the Australian Treasurer has directed the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) to develop a mandatory code of conduct that would address the market imbalances between digital platforms and media companies.

After a Digital Platforms inquiry conducted by the ACCC, which concluded that there is a need to update and modernise the Australian media laws, the government took the wise decision of developing a mandatory code, rather than a voluntary one, to govern the complex relationship between the media and digital platforms. Such a code of conduct would contain the following obligations for digital platforms:

- Will require companies to negotiate in good faith on how to pay news media for the use of their content;
- The digital platforms would be obliged to advise news media in advance of algorithm changes that would affect content ranking;
- will have to favour original source news content in search page results;
- Digital platforms will share data with media companies.

The code will also include penalties and binding dispute resolution mechanisms for negotiations between digital platforms and news media companies. The code is set to be finalised at the end of July 2020 and officially endorsed by November 2020.

Together with the decision of the French Competition Authority against Google, Australia provides yet another necessary precedent that underlines the necessity for a European-wide discussion on the platforms' misuse of their market power in every aspect of their relationship with the press sector.

EMMA and ENPA strongly encourage the European Commission to urgently adopt the necessary legal measures to counter the abuse of market-dominant internet mega-platforms.

Ilias Konteas, Executive Director of EMMA and ENPA said: *«The Australian Government has proven to have a deep understanding of the need to level the playing field by protecting the press in front of the giant digital platforms' behaviour which clearly stems from an abuse of their dominant position. It is urgent for Europe to react, as the problems that the press is facing towards these giants are global and similar across the world».*

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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/

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