

PRESS RELEASE

Brussels, 20 November 2009

Dangerous signal for the future of the free and independent press – EU agrees on mandatory information requirements in advertising

Brussels, 20 November - European newspaper and magazine publishers strongly criticise the agreement between the negotiators of the European Parliament, the Council and the European Commission to introduce mandatory information on the energy class in advertisements for household appliances and other energy related products.

With a severe and worrying side-effect to the press and media, negotiators of the European Parliament, the Council and the European Commission agreed on 17 November that any advertisement for an energy-related product has to include the energy efficiency class of the product when energy-related or price information is disclosed. Member States agreed on this dangerous signal for the press in yesterday's Coreper meeting.

“The negotiators and many Member States ignored the potential harmful effect of this additional requirement to advertising revenues of print and online newspapers and magazines” state the Directors Valtteri Niiranen (ENPA) and Max von Abendroth (FAEP), *“ENPA and FAEP are very disappointed that the negotiators decided to accept the amendment of the European Parliament to add an additional requirement for product information to be included in advertisements, - contrary to the original proposal of the Commission - and even go beyond the Parliament's amendment by extending the scope to the price criteria.”*

The agreement intensifies the European Commission's proposal on the indication by labelling and standard product information of the consumption of energy and other resources by energy-related products which did not foresee any mandatory information requirements for advertising. The proposal of the Commission retained the efficient and successful system to inform consumers in a profound manner before the purchase of a product.

According to the legislation in force, information relating to energy consumption has to be brought to the attention of the consumer by means of a fiche and a label directly in the show-room or indirectly by any means of distance selling.

This agreement will significantly hurt the advertising business and thus the newspaper and magazine publishers, which rely on advertising revenues. It is a dangerous signal for the free and independent press in print and online, which plays a key role in raising the awareness about environmental issues and climate change and is therefore an indispensable element of

every successful environmental policy. The press enlightens consumers about the damaging effects of non-energy efficient products like no other communication means. By introducing mandatory information requirements for advertisements Newspaper and Magazine publishers will lose vital revenue and thus citizens will lose rich editorial information about environmental issues.

“Given the current crisis in the advertising market, which has already led to massive drops in revenues for publishers, any further restriction of the freedom of commercial speech could have unpredictable consequences.” state ENPA and FAEP spokespersons.

Publishers across Europe call on the Members of the European Parliament to vote against the agreement in the second reading bearing in mind the negative effect of additional advertising requirements for the free and independent press that relies on advertising revenues.

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*The **European Newspaper Publishers' Association (ENPA)** is an international non-profit association, advocating the interests of the European newspaper publishing industry at different European and international organisations and institutions. ENPA represents over **5,200 national, regional and local newspaper titles**, published in 25 European countries. More than 150 million newspapers are sold and read by over 300 million Europeans every day, in addition to the millions of unique daily visits to online newspapers websites.*

*The **European Federation of Magazine Publishers (FAEP)** is a non-profit organization representing over 15.000 publishers throughout Europe publishing over **50.000 magazine titles in Europe**, reaching on average 80% of European adults. 300 million Europeans read magazines on a regular, consistent basis.*