



**EPC** | European  
Publishers  
Council

## Press Release

### Europe's leading publishers call on EU to stem yet more erosion of press freedom in Hungary

The European Publishers Council (EPC) is calling on the European Commission to challenge Hungary's new controversial advertising tax that would further erode press freedom and cripple Hungary's media industry.

Prime Minister Orban's government is quoted as saying that much commercial media output, particularly on TV, is damaging to society. The new levy amounts to 40% of advertising revenues and will have a devastating impact on independent news providers. The law is one of a series of media clampdowns instigated by Orban. In 2010, Hungary's Parliament passed a law that threatened fines on media who engage in "unbalanced coverage". The EU threatened legal action and Budapest gave assurances that it would amend the controversial media law in line with EU norms.

EPC Executive Director Angela Mills Wade said: "This is another attempt by the Hungarian Government to undermine the freedom of the press, a freedom that is highly prized by Europe's democratic Member States. A free, independent and pluralistic media relies on the income from advertising to invest in programme production and quality, authoritative, accountable journalism. We are also extremely concerned to hear reports of pressures brought to bear on journalists and media outlets who have written unfavourable articles about politicians, and we will be asking the European Commission to take appropriate action to stem these blatant erosions of press freedom."

**Ends**  
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