

Position paper

Maximising the potential of AI while ensuring fair competition in media

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is reshaping media production, distribution and consumption, presenting both transformative opportunities and profound challenges for independent journalism and innovative media.

The rise of AI-powered tools and the transformation of the information landscape that brings with it present new ways to connect with citizens, personalise content, and improve operational efficiency. However, these advancements must not come at the cost of intellectual property, freedom of the press, or the core democratic values that underpin a free and pluralistic media environment.

EIMP envisions a complementary relationship between AI and the media—one in which publishers continue to provide trusted content, contextual expertise, and editorial responsibility, while AI systems give media publishers the tools to increase operational efficiencies and focus more on media content production. This is particularly valuable for independent and smaller publishers with limited resources. Realising this vision requires a fair, rules-based, clear ecosystem that upholds the principles enshrined in EU legislation, safeguards media pluralism, and supports innovation through responsible AI integration.

Our position on AI and media is structured around three key messages:

- Maximising the potential of AI in newsrooms and media businesses;
- The evolution of reader behaviour in consuming media requires cutting edge solutions;
- Protect intellectual property, enable innovation and competitiveness, and follow better regulation principles.

Maximising the potential of AI in newsrooms and media businesses

AI has the potential to boost editorial capacity, enhance multilingual reach, and support operational efficiency in newsrooms, particularly for small and independent media publishers. AI should serve as a tool to support journalists and media entrepreneurs, not replace them. It can enhance storytelling, automate routine tasks such as transcription and subtitling, and increase accessibility through translation and other tools. It is the responsibility of publishers and newsrooms to deploy AI responsibly, maintaining editorial control over content production and dissemination.

In EIMP, our members are continuously testing AI solutions in their day to day business operations. Some of these solutions are already offering important advancements, such as for example AI used in the creation of podcasts based on original written content. This was unimaginable until recently. Similarly, the use of AI to create images that accompany written articles is a welcome resource, continuously developing and improving.

On the backend, integrating AI in CMS systems, coding, improving keyword extraction, further optimising SEO, and managing social media presence are areas where AI is already helping our membership gain efficiencies. This allows small and newer publishers do what they do best: chase stories, write content for their audience, and reach new readers.

In testing and trialling various AI applications, EIMP members have also observed the limits of AI. For example, AI text generation and summarisation can only go so far in improving output quality. For

instance, the title of a well-written article should already give a mini summary to potential readers. The first paragraph should – if it's a well-written article – give further detail in the form of a concise summary of the content. Adding AI-generated text on top of this becomes redundant.

AI use in media is therefore not a solve-it-all, but a welcome new tool that can help smaller and newer media publishers compete and grow. The relative benefit smaller newsrooms can get from using AI solutions in a smart way is huge compared to well-established, long-standing media newsrooms. In both cases, the responsible use of AI is on the publishers in question, which must continue to maintain editorial responsibility and accountability, also in informing its readership of how AI is used in the content they consume.

We therefore call on increased dialogue between media publishers and technology companies, to increase the uptake of AI in media and support responsible AI use and deployment. At the same time, we call on any regulation on AI to not limit the benefits of this transformative technology in media businesses. European publishers must be able to compete, also globally. To do so, we need to be able – and encouraged – to experiment and deploy cutting edge solutions, maintaining responsibility and transparency in the process.

The evolution of reader behaviour in consuming media requires cutting edge solutions

Reader behaviour in consuming media is rapidly and continuously evolving. We witnessed this long before the roll out of AI services on the market, which was most prominent with the release of OpenAI's ChatGPT in late 2022. The way readers want to consume media has been changing for years, driven by differences in behaviour between generations, the ever-increasing centrality of mobile devices in every-day life, and the continuous connection to the internet people have grown accustomed to. This is also acknowledged in the European Commission's latest [European Media Industry Outlook](#).

This trend has led to media content being discovered, delivered and consumed through different channels. Decreasingly printed newspapers or magazines, television, and radio, and increasingly online platforms, such as search engines and social media, and for a large part through mobile devices. We are in a moment in time where AI might be disrupting reader behaviour again.

Reader attention spans are decreasing and consumers want to discover and consume content more quickly, including in new formats, such as short videos or podcasts. Competition to reach readers is becoming fiercer as reader attention spans decrease. This requires media publishers to continue offering the best, most engaging content for their readers, while at the same time maintaining a high standard of content quality and also finding new readers and being discoverable to new audiences.

To do this, media publishers are continuously on the hunt for new tools and solutions to improve their content, increase readership, and increase business. The market is rapidly evolving, which requires publishers to be alert to what new tools are on offering, such as AI, to stay competitive. Looking forward, media consumers may also increasingly expect their trusted sources of information to provide them with AI solutions they can use themselves to find the most relevant information. EIMP members do not only compete across Europe, but globally too, since content online travels across borders. Independent digital media publishers play a key role in offering diverse viewpoints. As media consumption shifts, policies must protect pluralism and ensure discoverability of smaller outlets on digital platforms and elsewhere.

Protect intellectual property, enable innovation and competitiveness, and follow better regulation principles

Over the last years, AI policy and political developments in Europe have been focused on the recently adopted EU Artificial Intelligence Act (AIA). Primarily a product safety regulation, the AIA was never the appropriate framework for addressing new dynamics or concerns raised by the roll out of AI in the media sector. We have indicated this [earlier](#). Despite this, the final negotiation stages of the AI Act saw new inclusions in relation to copyright law, and the drafting process of the recently published [EU Code of Practice on General-Purpose AI](#), which was mandated by the AI Act, was heavily influenced by issues surrounding AI and copyright.

As we have already raised in the past, EIMP believes that any review of existing rules in relation to copyright require a thorough regulatory process, including adherence to the European Commission's own Better Regulation guidelines, which envision public consultation, impact assessment, and stakeholder input. In this context, we urge regulators to also hear from media SMEs, independent media organisations, and digital native publishers.

Article 4 of the [2019 Copyright Directive](#) is clear in providing rightsholders with the legal right to opt-out from any text and data mining activities. Any use of journalistic content for text and data mining purposes for which the Article 4 opt-out has been exercised is unacceptable. An area where policymakers can offer support, in this context, is facilitating how the opt-out mechanism should be implemented in practice.

We should strive towards a global, standardised approach, which limits possible disparities of technological advancements between global regions. This will likely lead to a broader discussion about licensing practices and bilateral or collective deals between rightsholders and technology companies. Here, we warn about the risks we have witnessed in some European jurisdictions, where smaller publishers were muscled out by larger publishers in collective licensing bodies, ending up with worse deals.

Moreover, while the question on input copyright is legitimate and requires a workable solution, it also needs to be assessed in a broader sense. As Europe, we must not limit the development of AI solutions and cutting-edge technologies on our continent. AI development will push ahead regardless of legal rules we may or may not introduce in Europe, it will just happen elsewhere in the world, for instance in the US or Japan. If we want European languages, views, and values reflected in the AI tools consumers and businesses will inevitably want (and need) to use to compete globally, we must onshore as much AI development as possible in Europe.

EIMP is convinced that AI and independent, small, and digital native media can thrive together, provided that innovation respects intellectual property, press freedom, and democratic values. A fair, transparent regulatory framework, built through inclusive dialogue and grounded in existing legal principles, is essential to harness AI's potential without compromising trusted journalism and media plurality. We urge policymakers to approach possible copyright reform without rushed changes in unrelated legislation, and to support and entice investment in AI solutions in Europe. By working together, we can ensure AI strengthens media pluralism and sustains a vibrant, independent European media landscape.

For more information and to remain up to date with latest developments, keep an eye our [website](#) and follow us on [X](#).

About EIMP

The European Independent Media Publishers association – EIMP, is a pan-European association consisting of national associations of media publishers and individual publishers that are active in the sector of media publishing in Europe. EIMP represents innovative, independent, local and regional outlets that rely on online channels to grow and reach audiences, and promotes media pluralism and an ecosystem that fosters growth for small, independent and innovative

*(digital-native) media publishers. EIMP was established in 2015 when the European Commission launched its copyright reform, in order to take part in the debate and ensure the new rules support our members. EIMP represents over 1000 media outlets across Europe. **Contact:** secretariat@eimp.eu*

EIMP is a registered non-profit organization under Belgian law ('Association sans but lucratif' – ASBL), and is registered in the EU Transparency Register, identification number 302233747610-65.