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Europe becomes a model for the rest of the world in regulating Artificial Intelligence

The Federation of European Publishers (FEP) welcomes the adoption of the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Act by the European Parliament today, with a large majority. The EU now has rules that will be a model for the rest of the world.

The AI Act recalls basic but fundamental principles that AI companies must respect. They must respect EU copyright law and actively ensure that they do, even if the AI was trained outside of Europe. They will finally have to be transparent on the data used to train their AI, which, to their own admission, relies on the use of copyright protected content.

This transparency is essential to allow publishers to ensure that their works have not been used illegally for the training of an AI. It will complement existing copyright obligations, that allow rightsholders to reserve their rights for Text-and-Data Mining uses of their works and support the development of a licensing eco-system.

The rapid development of AI relies on the illegal use of copyright-protected works, an absence of remuneration for rightsholders and no transparency. The deployment of generative AI has already destabilised the market, flooding it with AI content, often without informing consumers.

The European Commission must now ensure rightsholders have their legitimate place in the essential discussions that will take place to prepare the AI Act implementation. AI companies cannot be alone to write official recommendations that will impact our sectors, and the information they must provide on their training data must really help rightsholders and fit our needs.

Ricardo Franco Levi, President of FEP, declared “AI as a technology has great potential, including for our industry, but its original sin could not be overlooked, and the EU has now ensured that it can be corrected. The abuses of AI companies have been widely documented; it was high time to remind them that technology and innovation must always be made compatible with and fully respect the rights of others”.

For more information contact:

Quentin Deschandelliers, FEP Legal Advisor
qdeschandelliers@fep-fee.eu
+32 2 776 84 63

FEP is an independent, non-commercial umbrella association of book publishers' associations in Europe. FEP represents 29 national associations of publishers of books, learned journals and educational materials, in all formats, of the European Union, the European Economic Area and other European countries. Thus, FEP is the voice of the great majority of publishers in Europe.

Federation of European Publishers – Fédération des Éditeurs Européens

29 Chaussée d'Ixelles – 1050 Brussels

Tel 32-2-770-11-10 – Fax 32-2-771-20-71

Website www.fep-fee.eu