

# Debunking the Myths: **Neighbouring Rights**

## Myth

“...a growing online readership cannot make up for income lost through declining print sales...”

- ⇒ According to [Deloitte](#), in 2014 the total value of referral traffic from online services such as social media, news aggregators etc. to news publishers in France, Germany, Spain and the UK was **€746 million**.
- ⇒ Axel Springer [reported](#) an 8.5% increase in profits in 2015, with **62% of its revenues** generated from **digital activities**.
- ⇒ **Digital subscriptions sales of [The Economist](#) rose 47%** in 2016, and circulation profits grew 30%.
- ⇒ **Nearly three-quarters** of the [Financial Time's](#) total paying readership is online.

## Myth

“...social media and the use of snippets discourage users from reading our articles...”

- ⇒ **The majority of consumers access news sites/apps directly.** 64% of Bild.de and 68% of Spiegel.de users access the content directly ([Similarweb data](#)).
- ⇒ Social media and news aggregators allow publishers to reach large audiences **for free**.
- ⇒ The [introduction of neighbouring rights](#) in Spain caused the entire digital news market to shrink. Publishers **lost** as much as **14% of their web traffic**, losing direct traffic from social media and from news aggregators. This is estimated to **cost** the Spanish news publishing industry **€10 million a year**.

## Myth

“...a new publishing right will increase the quality of Europe's journalism...”

- ⇒ Publisher rights **create new barriers to entry** for all news publishers, regardless of the quality and veracity of the information they provide. **This threatens media pluralism and harms small local publishers** which provide quality information often not covered by large news outlets. Further information can be found [here](#).
- ⇒ According to [Reuters](#), European **online news users access significantly more news brands** than offline users and read more diverse sources.
- ⇒ Online services such as news aggregators allow less well-known, alternative sources to be discovered and **gain traffic**.

## Myth

“...the online industry is the only voice against this right...”

- ⇒ Small publishers [think](#) that a **neighbouring right could actually be harmful**.
- ⇒ **Close to 60 European academics** have already **condemned** the idea of an EU publisher right on the record, with the [most recent](#) letter sent by a coalition of EU IP researchers in February 2017.
- ⇒ A **coalition of over 60 European Startups** highlighted their concerns in response to the European Commission's consultation.
- ⇒ **Journalists unions** in France, Germany and Austria are **increasingly opposed** to the creation of a new right for publishers, as are civil society organisations like [Communia](#) and [C4C](#).