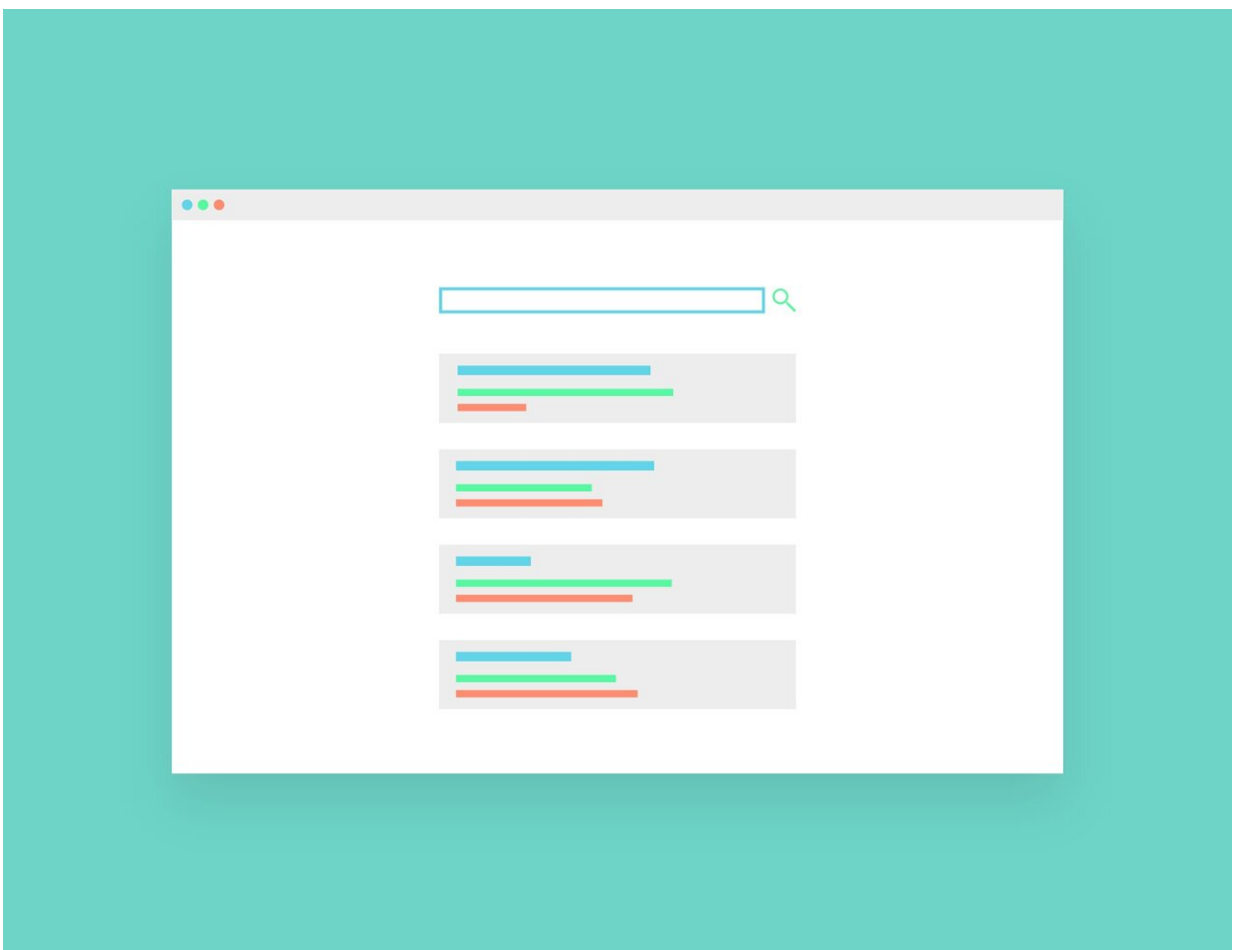


Swiss gov't favors compensation for journalistic 'snippets' posted by online services

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Switzerland's executive branch says it favors changes to copyright law to require large online service providers—including social media platforms and search engines—to pay media companies for use of their journalistic content, even small excerpts known as "snippets."

The Federal Council, Switzerland's executive body, announced Wednesday that it's opened a four-month examination of a proposed legal change to improve compensation for journalists and their media companies.

The government noted the importance of public debate in a democracy, which has now largely moved onto the Internet.

"The content offered by search engines, [social media](#) and multimedia platforms is largely based on journalistic works by traditional publishing media," a government statement said. Short previews of journalistic content—or "snippets"—are not currently protected under Swiss copyright law.

It said media companies and journalists don't receive any remuneration from online service companies that use their work. Setting the rates of any such compensation would have to be worked out between industry players.

"The Federal Council proposes that large online service providers should be required to remunerate media companies for the use of snippets," the government said. "For example, if a large search engine shows snippets of newspaper articles in its [search results](#), the online service provider will have to pay remuneration for this in future.

Only the biggest online services—which draw a number of users annually amounting to least 10 percent of Switzerland's population—would be required to pay such compensation. Switzerland's

population was about 8.8 million as of the end of last year.

The Swiss government pointed to changes abroad, including a directive by the European Union—which does not count Switzerland among its 27 member states—that helped [media companies](#) defend their interests with regard to online services.

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