

# Copyright reform: promote cultural diversity and ensure access to it, say MEPs

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**Forthcoming proposals to reform EU copyright law for the digital era must ensure a fair balance between the rights and interests of both creators and consumers, said MEPs on Thursday. They called for ways to improve access to online content across borders, while recognizing the importance of territorial licences, particularly for TV and film productions.**

“Parliament has listened to Europeans' concerns and conclusively rejected the suggestion to limit the right to freely photograph public space. This decision exemplifies a core message of the report: the upcoming reform proposal by Commissioner Oettinger must reflect the essential, multi-faceted role exceptions play – giving authors the room to create, users legal certainty for their everyday actions and everyone access to culture and knowledge,” said the lead MEP, Julia Reda (Greens/EFA, DE), after the vote.

The non-binding resolution, which assesses the implementation of the key aspects of EU copyright law ahead of upcoming Commission proposal to modernise it, was passed by 445 votes to 65, with 32 abstentions.

## **Improve cross-border accessibility to culture and knowledge**

User access to certain content services is too often denied on geographical grounds, says Parliament, emphasising that geo-blocking practices should not prevent cultural minorities living in EU member states from accessing existing content or services in their language. It urges the Commission to propose ways to improve the cross-border accessibility of services and copyrighted content.

However, Parliament also points to the importance of territorial licenses, particularly for financing audiovisual and film productions, which reflect Europe's rich cultural diversity. Although copyright inherently implies territoriality, there is no contradiction between territoriality and content portability, the resolution stresses, and it supports enhancing portability of online services within the EU.

## **Make copyright rules fit for the digital age**

Parliament says the Commission should review existing exceptions to copyright laws to better adapt them to the digital environment and examine the application of minimum standards. It should also look at the possibility of providing an exception for libraries to lend works in digital format and for scientists to mine text and data.

Parliament asks for measures to ensure fair and appropriate remuneration for all categories of right-holders, including with regard to digital distribution of their works, and improve the contractual position of authors and performers in relation to other right-holders and intermediaries.

Parliament also wants the Commission to study the potential impact of a single European copyright title that would cover the whole of the territory of the EU.

# Press release

## Images of public buildings and art works

Concerning the right to create and publish images and photographs of public buildings and art works, MEPs prefer to retain the current situation by rejecting the proposal in the draft resolution that commercial use of such images should require authorisation from the right-holders. Under current EU copyright law, it is possible for member states to insert or not to insert a so-called freedom of panorama clause in their copyright legislation.

### Next steps

The Commission is to table a proposal by the end of 2015 to modernize EU copyright law to make it fit for the digital age.

**Procedure:** Non-legislative resolution

### Further information

- Adopted text will be available here (click on 09.07.2015)  
: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/texts-adopted.html>
- Video recording of debate (click on 09.07.2015): <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/ep-live/en/plenary/search-by-date>
- Julia Reda (Greens/EFA, DE): <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meps/en/124816.html>
- Video of the press conference (08.07.2015 at 16:00): <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/ep-live/en/other-events/schedule>
- Audiovisual material for media: <http://audiovisual.europarl.europa.eu/default.aspx>
- EP Research: Background note:  
[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/ATAG/2015/564364/EPRS\\_ATA\(2015\)564364\\_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/ATAG/2015/564364/EPRS_ATA(2015)564364_EN.pdf)
- EPRS Briefing: The challenges of copyright in the EU:  
[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2015/564380/EPRS\\_BRI\(2015\)564380\\_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2015/564380/EPRS_BRI(2015)564380_EN.pdf)

### Political groups

- EPP group press releases: <http://www.eppgroup.eu/press-releases>
- S&D group press releases: <http://www.socialistsanddemocrats.eu/newsroom>
- ECR group press releases: <http://ecrgroup.eu/video/>
- ALDE group press releases: <http://www.alde.eu/press/press-and-release-news/>
- GUE/NGL group press releases: <http://www.guengl.eu/news/archives/category/gue-ngl-news>
- Greens/EFA group press releases: <http://www.greens-efa.eu/press/70-press-releases.html>
- EFDD group press releases: <http://www.efddgroup.eu/newsroom/press-releases>

### Contact

**Niina SALORANTA**

BXL: (+32) 2 28 31834

STR: (+33) 3 881 73472

PORT: (+32) 473 84 03 65

EMAIL: [lega-press@europarl.europa.eu](mailto:lega-press@europarl.europa.eu)

TWITTER: EP\_Legal