EU copyright rules will help European copyright industries and authors flourish, while making European works widely accessible to people in Europe.

**EU copyright rules fit for the digital age**

You can also download the brochure as a PDF

Page contents

- What is copyright?
- Modern EU copyright rules
- Portability
- Cross-border access
- Access to books and print material for blind and visually impaired people
What is copyright?

Copyright rewards creativity (of composers, writers, journalists, film directors, musicians, actors, software developers, etc.) and investment in creativity (by book and newspaper publishers, film and record producers, broadcasters) by creating exclusive rights over the use of creative content.

New ways of accessing and distributing creative content

Digital technologies have transformed the way we produce, distribute and access creative content.

- 72% of internet users read online news sites/newspapers/news magazines
- 56% of internet users listen to music online
- 66% of internet users watch videos from commercial or sharing services
- 42% of internet users watch internet-streamed TV (live or catch-up) from TV broadcasters

Copyright-related industries: a key asset for the European economy

- 5.4% of total employment in the EU
- 6.8% of EU GDP

Modern EU copyright rules

The EU has adopted a set of modernised copyright rules to facilitate the access and use of content in the online environment and to support European culture and creativity.

The new rules will help European copyright industries to flourish and European authors to reach new audiences, while making European works widely accessible to European citizens.

Modern EU copyright rules for the benefit of all Europeans

The Directive on copyright in the Digital Single Market introduces new opportunities to use content online and addresses the challenges faced by creators and creative industries in the online environment, while providing strong safeguards for users.

Fair remuneration for individual creators and journalists

With the new rules, it will be easier for authors, actors, musicians, journalists and writers to negotiate with their contractual partners (publishers, producers) in order to be better paid for the use of their works and performances.

A fairer online environment for creative industries and the press

Video or music-sharing websites are the most popular way for people to listen to music online.

The majority of people mainly access their news via social media, search engines, and news aggregation services.

Thanks to the new rules:
creators in the audiovisual and musical sectors will have more control over the use of their songs, films, and TV series uploaded by users on online platforms and will be better remunerated for it;
European press publishers will enjoy a new right to negotiate and be better paid for the use of newspapers and magazines by online service providers and journalists will receive an appropriate share of the revenues generated by this new right.

**Strong safeguards for internet users**

- Online platforms will take care of licensing for the content uploaded by users.
- Thanks to mandatory exceptions related to the freedom of expression, all users in the EU will be free to upload parodies, such as memes, or use clips for reviews, criticism or quotation.
- Users will also benefit from a robust redress and complaints mechanism to challenge the unjustified removal of their content.

**More opportunities for science, education and cultural heritage**

Thanks to EU-wide mandatory exceptions to copyright rules:

- Research and development of artificial intelligence will get a boost through the new exceptions for text and data mining that permit the analysis of big sets of data under copyright.
- Teachers and students will be able to use digital materials and technologies in their teaching and learning activities, including across borders.
- European museums, libraries, film archives and other cultural heritage institutions will be able to digitise more cultural works for future generations. They will be able to make available to the public books, films or music records that are no longer commercially available in Europe.

**Portability: travel with your online content across the EU**

Since 1 April 2018, Europeans have been able to travel across the EU with their online subscriptions to films, sports events, e-books, video games or music services, thanks to the Regulation on portability of online content services.

From 1 August 2019, the rules on portability have been applicable in the entire European Economic Area, which includes the EU as well as Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway.

**Which services are covered?**

Content services giving access to music, films, TV programmes, sports programmes, e-books, games, that are available online and portable in the home country and:

- that are provided against payment, via a subscription or through individual purchases, or
- that can be used free of charge, if the service provider chooses to be covered by the new rules.

**Benefits of the portability regulation**

- For consumers: access to online content services (access to the same content and same functionalities) when travelling in the EU, without extra cost.
- For providers of online content services: no need to acquire licences for other EU territories when providing portability.
- For right holders: strong safeguards to protect their rights against abuses.
Positive feedback from consumers

- 52% of Europeans know about the portability rules. Awareness is much higher (68%) among young people.
- 49% of Europeans who have a free or paid subscription for online content services and have travelled in the EU have tried to access it when visiting another EU country.
- 58% of those accessing their paid subscriptions from another EU country had a positive experience.

Cross-border access to television and radio programmes online

Europeans increasingly watch TV online...

41% of Europeans watch TV online (Eurobarometer, Autumn 2017).
65% of young people, between 15-24 years old watch TV online (Eurobarometer, Autumn 2017).

People who watch television via the internet

...and are interested in cross-border access

20 million people who live in the EU were born in a different EU Member State from the one they are resident in now. The Directive on online television and radio programmes will facilitate the licensing of rights for broadcasters and retransmission operators.

In practice:

- Broadcasters will be able to make their radio programmes and certain TV programmes (news and current affairs and own productions) available online on their live or replay services in all EU countries.
- It will be easier for retransmission operators, regardless of the technology they use, to obtain the necessary licences for the TV and radio channels they retransmit.
- When radio and TV programmes are transmitted to the public through a technical process called ‘direct injection’ (broadcasters send the programme-carrying signals to distributors through a private line, and distributors transmit them to the public), both broadcasters and distributors will need to obtain authorisation from right holders.
- Thanks to the new rules, Europeans will have access to a wider choice of radio and TV programmes from all EU countries.

Access to books and print material for blind and visually impaired people

It is estimated that only 1 to 7% of books are available in accessible format across the world. Directive (EU) 2017/1564 and Regulation (EU) 2017/1563 implement the WIPO Marrakesh Treaty in EU law, to allow people who are visually impaired or have other print disabilities to access more books and other print material, in formats that are accessible to them.
What is the Marrakesh Treaty?

- The Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons who are Blind, Visually Impaired, or Otherwise Print Disabled (‘the Marrakesh Treaty’) was negotiated and adopted in 2013 under the auspices of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).
- It aims at facilitating the availability and cross-border exchange of books and other print material in formats that are accessible to persons with print disabilities around the world.

What is the added value of the new EU rules implementing the Marrakesh treaty?

A mandatory exception: people who are blind, visually impaired or who have reading difficulties such as dyslexia as well as organisations acting on their behalf can copy books and other print works to make them accessible, for example in braille, daisy, adapted e-books or audiobooks.

Cross-border exchange of accessible format copies: the new rules allow the exchange of copies made under the exception between organisations as well as making them available to beneficiaries in other Member States and in third countries that are parties to the Marrakesh Treaty.

Related topics

Media Copyright