The European Commission is adapting EU copyright rules to new consumer behaviours in a Europe which values its cultural diversity.

Digital technologies have radically changed the way creative content is produced, distributed and accessed. Copyright ensures that authors, composers, artists, film makers and other creators receive recognition, payment and protection for their works. It rewards creativity and stimulates investment in the creative sector. Thirty-three sectors of the EU economy are considered copyright-intensive, accounting directly for over 7 million jobs, or 3% of employment in the EU.

What are copyright and related rights?

These are rights granted to authors (copyright or authors' rights) and performers, producers and broadcasters (related rights). They include:

- Economic rights that enable rightholders to control the use of their works and other protected material and be remunerated for their use. They normally take the form of exclusive rights, notably to authorise or prohibit the making and distribution of copies as well as communication to the public. Economic rights and their terms of protection are harmonised at EU level.
- Moral rights include the right to claim authorship of the work and the right to object to any
Licensing is the main mechanism for the exercise of copyright and related rights. Depending on the relevant right, the type of use and the sector, licences are most often granted directly by the rightholder or collective management organisations. The EU has recently adopted legislation to improve the functioning of collective management organisations (http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32014L0026) including through facilitating the provision of multi-territorial licences.

**Exceptions to these rights**

Copyright systems balance the recognition of exclusive rights in order to facilitate the use of protected content in specific circumstances. The EU copyright rules set out an exhaustive list of exceptions to rights across various copyright directives (https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/copyright-legislation). Exceptions allow beneficiaries to use protected material without authorisation from the rightholders. Enforcement of procedures and remedies against infringements of copyright have been partly harmonised at EU level.

**The EU's role**

EU actions have led to more harmonised protection of rightholders, lower transaction costs and greater choice for users of content, notably through:

- the promotion of inclusive and dynamic stakeholders dialogues on copyright and related issues, to seek views, concrete experience and contributions from all interested parties;
- a leading role in international negotiations and discussions on copyright and related issues.


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The Commission adopted this week a Recommendation on how to combat commercial scale online piracy of sports and other live events, such as concerts and theatre performances.

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The Commission is defending European media and digital culture with policies that empower citizens and encourage media pluralism.

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The Commission organised a stakeholder dialogue to discuss best practices for cooperation between online content-sharing platforms and copyright rightholders.

The EU copyright law consists of 13 directives and 2 regulations, harmonising the essential rights of authors, performers, producers and broadcasters.

The Marrakesh Treaty allows people with print disabilities to access more books and other print material in formats that are accessible to them.

Databases in the European Union are protected under EU Law. The Directive on the legal protection of databases was adopted in 1996 and was evaluated in 2018.

See Also

Virtual worlds, also referred to as metaverses, will provide opportunities as well as challenges. The Commission will ensure they reflect EU values and fundamental rights and foster innovation for businesses.

These days we can watch our favourite programmes not just on TV, but also online. These shows are subject to the rules of the single market.

The Commission is promoting a coherent approach on media policies, covering legislation on media services and the preservation of European cultural heritage.
Cultural heritage is evolving rapidly thanks to digital technologies. The momentum is now to preserve our cultural heritage and bring it to this digital decade.

The European Union upholds media freedom and pluralism as pillars of modern democracy and enablers of free and open debate.

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