

Contact: Johannes Kleis: +32 (0)2 789 24 01
Date: 09/07/2015

European Parliament calls for reform of outdated EU copyright laws

Today's adoption of a European Parliament resolution on copyright issues highlights the need to adapt current laws to the digital reality in order to ensure that consumers can access online content without geographical and technical restrictions.

With this vote, MEPs have presented their wish list ahead of the forthcoming review of the 2001 copyright directive.

Monique Goyens, Director General of The European Consumer Organisation (BEUC), commented:

"Consumers are affected by copyright on a daily basis: when uploading holiday pictures to a social network, reading an eBook, or watching online television series and movies. But current copyright laws disregard the ways in which content is accessed and used in the digital world, meaning that many daily consumer acts are illegal. We are glad that MEPs have identified this problem and that they are calling for clear rights for consumers in the area of copyrighted material.

"What European consumers can or cannot do with copyrighted material depends on a patchwork of European and national rules. We recently carried out a survey among experts in ten countries asking if in their opinion four everyday scenarios were legal or not. Their disparate answers demonstrate that simple acts such as making backup copies of a DVD collection, trying to resell an eBook, or even sharing a family video online can be illegal. This situation is untenable. Consumers should be able to use copyrighted material according to their daily needs and expectations, especially in regard to user-generated content.

"Denying consumers access to audiovisual content on geographical grounds is an anachronism in a single market. We welcome the European Parliament's clear stance that geo-blocking urgently needs to be addressed.

"The European Commission should follow suit on the European Parliament's recommendations if it is sincere about fulfilling its promise for a modern and ambitious copyright reform as a key component of a digital single market that delivers to consumers. The creative economy depends upon consumers using its products, which provides a clear-cut case for strengthening consumer rights when it comes to using and accessing copyrighted material."

Read our [factsheet](#) and [infographic](#) for more information about copyright and our recent survey.

ENDS