

Press Statement

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Date: 27/04/2018

EU Member States agree on copyright reform, consumers lose out

EU Member States today reached an agreement to update EU copyright law. The EU's final position will be negotiated with the European Parliament who still has to decide on its position.

If adopted, it would oblige Google, Facebook and other platforms to conclude licencing arrangements with right-holders and creators for any copyright-protected videos, articles or pictures uploaded on their websites. Platforms would have to deploy measures – such as filters – to ensure that non-licensed material are not uploaded.

The European Consumer Organisation (BEUC) criticises the Council's position which lets consumers down.

- It does not help to simplify confusing and outdated copyright rules. A BEUC survey confirmed that current national copyright regimes are unclear and leave consumers in the dark as to whether sharing e-books or uploading holiday videos with a popular music in the background is legal or not. [1]
- Member States also failed to grant consumers a right to use copyright-protected material to create own content for private use. Without such rights, consumers will depend on platforms deciding if their private content can be uploaded or not.

Monique Goyens, Director General of BEUC, commented:

"The agreement of Member States totally overlooks today's reality in which consumers every day share, upload and post content online. Creators deserve fair remuneration but consumers who produce a music video for fun should not suddenly see their content disappear from the internet.

"If the likes of YouTube or Twitter have to filter out posts, consumers will be frustrated and helpless. Companies' internal complaint mechanisms are often tedious and going to court is not an option in absence of a user right."

END

[1] www.beuc.eu/publications/beuc-x-2015_063_consumer_use_of_copyrighted_material.pdf