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Press Release

European Commission Recognises Importance of Copyright for Content Creators in Key New Proposals

Two key documents affecting online copyright- the IPR Strategy and the Draft directive on Orphan Works - are published by the European Commission this week, both incorporating ideas and proposals made by the European Publishers Council that will help sure up innovation and investment in the online content sectors. The EPC represents 29 chairmen and CEOs of leading European media corporations actively involved in multimedia markets spanning newspaper, magazine, book, journal, internet and online database publishers, and radio and TV broadcasting.

The IPR strategy, that also covers patents, trademarks, as well as copyright and an action plan against counterfeiting and piracy, includes reference to initiatives based on the EPC's "Big Idea" on automated and integrated standards based rights management.

EPC Executive Director Angela Mills Wade said: "We welcome the Commission's strategy that acknowledges that copyright is a major enabler in the internet economy, encouraging the creation of diverse, authoritative, quality content and giving creators the incentive to make their content available on the net. The Commission also recognizes the importance of safeguarding rights that journalists and publishers have over the use of their works on the internet, in particular in relation to aggregation services."

The EPC notes that the strategy also mentions that the Commission may be considering a "European Copyright Code" that could lead to new legislation. The EPC reiterates its long-held position that copyright law itself is fit for the 21st century - and that what is needed is new technology to make it work in the online environment. The EPC has been working on developing new technology with other content industries, with projects such as the "Big Idea" being launched on 17 June at the Commission's Digital Assembly in Brussels, and the ACAP[2] project that is working to create new tools for the communication of permissions online.

In the Orphan Works draft directive, governing the use of published works where the author is unknown, the EPC is delighted to see that the Commission has included "end of orphan status" - that is that rights holders can come forward and end the orphan works status at any time. The Commission also includes "Mutual recognition" meaning that a work that is considered orphan in one member States, is orphan in all Member States - thus ensuring legal certainty for those seeking to use the works.

The European Parliament will now provide an opinion on the proposal.

Angela Mills Wade concluded: "Both documents recognize that the creative economy is only as good as the available content, regardless of the methods of distribution. The Internet is an incredible vehicle for knowledge distribution. With good, 21st century tools to ensure that copyright law is workable whether on- or offline, content creators will have the confidence to make their intellectual property available for the benefit of business, consumers and the wider society."

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- [Commission sets out "blueprint" for Intellectual Property Rights to boost creativity and innovation](#)
- [Intellectual Property Strategy - Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Orphan works - Frequently asked questions](#)