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Press release | 01.09.2016

Copyright reform

Oettinger's copyright proposals unfit for digital age

A leaked draft* of the new EU Copyright Reform Directive reveals major flaws in the European Commission's proposals.

Commenting on the leak, Greens/EFA digital agenda spokesperson **Julia Reda** said:

"This confirms our worst fears. Commissioner Oettinger has let copyright reform be hijacked by the biggest players from the news publishing, film and music industries. Rather than a modernisation of the 15-year-old copyright framework we so desperately need, Oettinger is about to present plans to shield analogue industries from the digital opportunities they ought to be embracing. Not only will that backfire on these industries in the long-term, but the proposals would spell disaster for freedom of expression on the internet, European start-ups' ability to innovate, and the cause of a Europe without digital borders.

"The planned EU-wide ancillary copyright for press publishers would make most ways of sharing even 20-year-old news articles illegal and thereby limit Europeans' freedom of expression and access to information. His plan to oblige internet platforms to scan all user uploads for copyright infringements will be the death knell for any European competition to YouTube or Facebook who will be unable to comply with this costly burden.

"Commissioner Oettinger appears to have turned a blind eye to just about everyone but the lobbyists. Despite strong public demand, there are no proposals on freedom of panorama - the right to use images of public buildings or monuments still protected by copyright - and no changes to the discriminatory practice of geo-blocking, despite calls from Commission Vice-President Andrus Ansip for it to be abolished.

"This is not a copyright fit for the digital age. It is a copyright that will hold European internet users back and hinder European start-ups. If this is the best our Digital Commissioner can come up with after years of preparatory work and debate, he is clearly unfit for office."

Further analysis of the leaked proposals can be found on Julia Reda's blog.

(*) Leaked draft proposals for Copyright Reform Directive

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