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"Link tax" and upload filters will cause huge damage to free internet

Copyright reform

The European Parliament's Legal Affairs committee voted to largely approve the Commission's proposed directive on Copyright in the Digital Single Market. The Greens/EFA group voted against, citing concerns that the proposals will restrict how internet users can participate online.

The proposals approved today would see the introduction of

- a "link tax", which will require internet platforms to pay a license fee when users share links to news articles that include even short snippets of the article's content
- automatic upload filters, which will block any photos, videos and texts users upload to websites that raise any suspicion of being copyright infringement

Greens/EFA shadow rapporteur **Julia Reda** comments:

"These measures would seriously undermine basic internet freedoms. People will run into trouble doing everyday things like discussing the news and expressing themselves online. Putting the special interests of large media companies ahead of our ability to participate freely online is unacceptable."

"While there are legitimate issues at stake here, these blunt and misguided policy measures would do more harm than good. Requiring licenses to spread the news won't help fund journalism; it will simply shut down the sharing of professional news content and threaten smaller publishers, who most rely on their articles being shared."

"The plans for automatic filters are equally short-sighted. While their advocates claim they will help make sure creatives get paid, in reality they will mainly end up blocking legitimate and harmless creations like memes and parodies, and kill off European platforms and startups who can't afford to comply."

"I will challenge this outcome and request a vote in the European Parliament next month. We can still overturn this result and preserve the free internet."

The Greens/EFA group helped to defeat plans that would have seen some remuneration diverted from

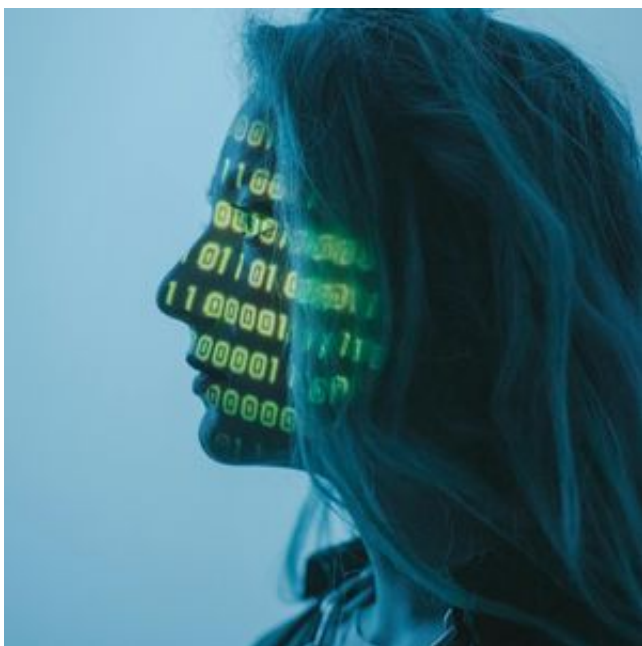
authors to publishers. **Heidi Hautala**, Greens/EFA coordinator in the JURI committee, comments:

"We have already successfully defeated one of the harmful elements of these proposals. At the final hour, we managed to convince the majority on the Legal Affairs committee to put the needs of authors ahead of those of publishers. We found a compromise that will avoid transferring authors' rights and income to publishers. Publishers are an important part of the cultural production, but they are already the stronger party and there is no reason to further strengthen their legal rights over authors."

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