

To the members of the European Parliament:

Letter of Austrian Creators and Artists concerning Author's Rights

Dear honourable Member of Parliament,

With incredulous astonishment did we learn from press releases of several MEPs in July of this year that the adoption of the Copyright Directive in the European Parliament had been prevented in order to safeguard the freedom of the internet and for the benefit of the creators and artists. However, the opposite has been the case. The legal arbitrariness on the internet had been prolonged and the implementation of urgently needed provisions for creators and artists to protect their rights on the internet had been impeded. Speaking of censorship in connection with the protection of creators' and artists' rights is particularly infuriating. We emphatically voice our opposition against such misuse of the concept of censorship. And we are horrified that European MEPs tolerate such misuse of the concept of censorship.

No indication whatsoever of a limitation of freedom of expression and the media can be found in the text of the Copyright Directive. The text solely seeks to prevent the usage of works without consent of the rightholder – with the utmost restraint. Each creator and artist is obliged to warrant towards the licensee that he/she is the owner of the licensed rights. Thus, the requirements for licensees are the same as for the creators, artists and rightholders. No medium, no producer, no publisher is authorized to make available content without being entitled to do so by the rightholder.

On the internet, it is common practice to withdraw from such mundane legal requirements. However, what applies in the offline-world should and shall apply for the online world and for major online platforms as well.

The possibility that legal disputes may occur after the implementation of a new law shall not hinder the adoption of such regulations. It is very common for major platforms to oppose new or existing rules. Those platforms are not going to abstain from taking legal action in the present case. But eventually, as many recent examples show, such new or existing regulations have prevailed and have been widely accepted.

Dear honourable Member of Parliament! You have the choice to side either with the major platforms and online services or with the creators and artists. If you continue to block the adoption of the Copyright Directive, you are not helping the creators and artists - instead you render a service to the commercial online platforms.

The time is now. Take heart and adopt this Copyright Directive, in order to ensure a fair remuneration for creators and artists on the internet. Pass a resolution that secures a fair share to those who create and that does not play all into the hands of those who have no part in the creation of works, who do not invest, but solely wish to take profit.

You decide, if independent creations and art productions will be possible in the future. Or if monopolies will dominate the internet market, either offering cultural services for free to the user but without payment to the creator or selling high-priced own productions, but at the same time paying only small money to the artist.

Make your decision in favour of the creators and artists. Say "YES" to the Copyright Directive without limitations or dilutions. By this, you safeguard cultural diversity and art productions, which are not

dependent on anyone's mercy. You safeguard art, which thrives and develops by itself, and which creates and will eventually become something great.