

Press release of the European Bureau of Library, Information and Documentation Associations (EBLIDA) on the European Union Consultation on Copyright Rules

The Hague/Brussels, 5th of March 2014:

Today, EBLIDA submitted its response to the European Commission consultation on copyright rules.

Copyright has become and will remain a critical issue for libraries, information and documentation centres in the coming years.

EBLIDA believes that under copyright issues lie fundamental questions about democracy, access to information and completion of a true knowledge society.

With EBLIDA's submission, all librarians and information specialists throughout Europe are given a voice to address this issue from their own perspective, advocating for rights and not letting others decide on the future for libraries.

With our response we are calling for copyright legislation to keep up with changes brought about by the digital age and to open up new opportunities rather than limit innovation and access to information.

EBLIDA has built up its response by merging views from different European countries and from the perspective of national, university, public and school libraries and library associations.

In its response, EBLIDA calls in particular for:

- Reinstating a true balance of rights between the exclusive rights of the rights holders and other fundamental rights;
- Full exploitation of digital opportunities to be supported by a progressive and flexible approach to copyright rules at EU level;
- An updated copyright framework to secure libraries' public missions;
- A legislative solution to clarify that access to content made by libraries and cultural institutions for their public-interest mission are allowed, regardless of the medium of transmission;
- Greater harmonisation of the legal framework for sharing content across EU member states;
- All exceptions to be made mandatory for all EU countries, especially those for research and education, public-mission institutions, and disability, because they protect fundamental rights;
- Ensuring that contracts cannot override limitations and exceptions to copyright;
- The "right to e-lend" for libraries to give the library users a "right to e-read";
- Improving users' rights;
- An adaptation of the public lending right to apply to the extension of digital lending (e-lending) of copyright works ensuring that authors and creators are rewarded for the use of their works;

- The current 70 years after death terms of protection in Europe to be reduced to life plus 50 years for copyrighted works as is in the Berne Convention.

EBLIDA hopes that its response, together with the whole consultation process will act as a first step towards an ambitious copyright reform process that will allow European Citizens to enjoy the benefits of a flexible, open and fair digital environment in which libraries will play a crucial role.

To learn more, please download the [**EBLIDA Response to the Public Consultation on EU Copyright Rules**](#) (PDF).