

Digital Agenda

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for Europe



Artists, authors, musicians

The internet is a unique platform for distribution of cultural content by creating opportunities for authors, composers and artists to reach larger audiences. Europe needs to push rapidly ahead with the creation, production and distribution of digital content. This requires a fully functional European Digital Single Market and better protection of authors' and other creators' remuneration.

For some areas of content, Europe's online Single Market is currently fragmented because rights management is organised on a national basis, so that a pan-European online music and video store would have to negotiate rights individually with different rights management bodies for each of the 27 Member States. The result is that although European consumers can for instance buy CDs in every shop, they are often unable to buy music from legal online platforms across the EU because rights are licensed on a national basis.

Currently, potential revenues for creators are lowered because European citizens that want to access creative and cultural content cannot do so because they have no legal means to access such work. It is a paradox that pirated content circulates much more freely in Europe than legal content.

There is a need for a balanced solution; creative industries should be stimulated to offer more content online in return for better legal protection. The Digital Agenda wants to tackle these problems by stimulating cross-border and pan-European licensing in the digital environment.

This will be done inter alia through a new framework Directive on collective rights management due for 2011, a proposal for a Directive on orphan works and continued discussions with stakeholders on out-of-print works, and by reviewing EU rules on the Re-Use of Public Sector Information. The need for other measures will be assessed in 2012 following a 2010 Green Paper on the opportunities and challenges of online distribution of audiovisual works and other creative content.

Want to know more? Check http://europa.eu/information_society/digital-agenda

Any comments or questions? Send an e-mail to INFSO-DIGITAL-AGENDA@ec.europa.eu