

Digital Assembly 2015

Riga – 17-18 June 2015

The 5th Digital Assembly, co-organised by the Latvian presidency of the EU and the European Commission took place in Riga from 17-18 June 2015. The event was attended by government officials from the EU Member States, representatives from the European Commission and Parliament, the ICT sector, NGOs and other relevant stakeholders.

EU Commissioner Oettinger, responsible for the Digital Economy and Society, delivered [opening remarks](#). He emphasized the indispensable requirement to adapt to digital innovations. In this regard, he specified that “European creativity, works and its rich cultural diversity should be as much promoted as European values and consumer protection”. Copyright, portability and content services are important elements for this purpose. In this context, the Commission will launch a [public consultation](#) for all stakeholders in order to consider input from every party involved. Oettinger concluded by reiterating the Commission’s aim to adopt a formal copyright proposal targeting a harmonized copyright by the end of 2015 .



*From the left: Alexander Scheuer (Deutsche Telekom),
Alfons Karabuda (ECSA)*

ECSA was represented at the 2015 Digital Assembly by President Alfons Karabuda, who was invited to speak on the business panel in the workshop ‘A Digital Single Market for Creative Content’. He discussed opportunities and challenges in a fast developing digital environment with panelists David Wheeldon (BSkyB), Janekke Slöetjes (Netflix), Alexander Scheuer (Deutsche Telekom), Pierre Raiman (Izneo), Leena Kuusniemi (Rovio) and Börje Hansson (Bright Moving Pictures).

Although all panelists agreed on fair remuneration for creators, it was obvious that the interpretation of how this can be achieved varied among the stakeholders. However, Alfons Karabuda’s call for more transparency and fair business models received positive echoes: his argument that consumers want to know that their money reaches individual creators was persuasive to all. Karabuda added: “Cheap might be important but not for every consumer. There are other values like quality, artistic freedom and freedom of speech”.

For further information on the event, click [here](#).

Reda report approved

Brussels – 16 June 2015

The legal affairs committee of the European Parliament adopted the non-legislative report of MEP Julia Reda with 23 to 2 votes on 16 June 2015. The report assesses the implementation of the 2001 ‘Infosoc directive’ and is the EP’s own initiative to respond to the plans of the European Commission to modernize copyright.

The first draft of the report was published in January 2015 and triggered a heated debate. It suggested an open norm for an exception to copyright and a mandatory application of all exceptions laid down in the 2001 ‘Infosoc directive’. Another critical suggestion of the report called for a unified EU copyright title, a parody exception for whatever use, freedom of panorama (even for commercial use) and a general ban of geo-blocking.

The report as voted was watered significantly and many of the controversial provisions had been replaced by so-called “compromise amendments”. The new text calls notably for an improvement of the contractual position of authors and requests new exceptions including data mining, digitisation of archives and e-lending. However, the introduction of wider exceptions offering the possibility to copy segments of audio-visual content was rejected.

As for geo-blocking, the report stresses the importance of territorial licences, particular for financing film productions.

The report approved by the legal affairs committee still needs to be endorsed by all members of the European Parliament. The plenary vote will take place on 9 July 2015.

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