

ReCreating Europe

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS) AND GUIDELINES FOR END-USERS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Information Sheet presents brief answers to 14 questions that are frequently asked by the end-users of cultural content protected by copyright or related rights. It aims to guide the end-users in their activities that involves accessing to, using or re-using copyrighted content available on digital platforms or found in-print or in other analogue forms.

The FAQs and Guidelines presented herein are extracted from the research conducted by Work Package 2 (WP2) of the reCreating Europe Consortium. More information on and research results of WP2 can be found on [the official website of reCreating Europe](#) and on the Project's open-access repository, [Zenodo](#).



LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CDSM	:	Copyright in the Digital Single Market
E&Ls	:	Exceptions and limitations
EULAs	:	End-user License Agreements
GLAM	:	Galleries, libraries, archives, museums
IP	:	Intellectual property
IPRs	:	Intellectual property rights
OCSSPs	:	Online Content-Sharing Service Platforms
TPMs	:	Technological Protection Measures
TRIPs	:	Agreement on the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights
UGC	:	User-generated content
WIPO	:	World Intellectual Property Organization
WP	:	Work Package



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS) AND GUIDELINES

1. What is copyright? What is unique about reCreating Europe's approach to copyright?

In broad terms, and in line with the EU copyright framework, 'copyright' can be described as a bundle of economic¹ and moral rights² entitled to the author or creator of an original literary, artistic, musical, cinematographic, or architectural work. The 'originality' herein applies to the expression of an idea (often) fixed on a medium, and it requires an expression as such to be the output of the intellectual and/or creative process of an individual, rather than requiring an utmost novelty in the idea itself. Intellectual creations meeting these criteria are automatically protected by copyright under the EU copyright law, without requiring any formalities such as registration and the like.

Whereas copyright serves as a legal tool to empower authors and creators by providing them with control and legal monopoly over their intellectual creations, it also encourages the dissemination of intellectual creations to the public at large. Thus, copyright is aimed at promoting the advancement of knowledge, culture, and science as well.

[reCreating Europe](#) is conscious of the value that authorial and creative works hold for the public's access to and engagement with cultural content. Due to this, reCreating Europe is dedicated to finding the ways in which the EU copyright law can be further democratized to enhance access to cultural content available online and offline by a wide spectrum of stakeholders. To achieve this end, reCreating Europe is organized in five substantive work packages (WPs), each of which concentrate on the unique needs and expectations of a specific group of [stakeholders](#).

Within this context, WP2 revolves around the necessities and perspectives of end-users, including persons with disabilities and persons belonging to minorities. It aims to understand the extent to which the current EU copyright framework impacts end-users' access to, use and re-use of digital (online) and analogue (offline) cultural content under copyright protection.

2. Is it possible for end-users to access, use or re-use cultural content protected by copyright, without infringing copyright?

The EU copyright framework provides for various legal tools that help end-users engage with cultural content under copyright protection. The reCreating Europe Consortium articulated and uses a generic term, namely 'copyright flexibilities', to cumulatively refer to these tools.

¹ The economic rights encompassed within copyright consist of the right of reproduction; right of adaptation, arrangement, and other alteration; right to communication to the public via wire or wireless means, right to making available to the public, and right to distribution.

² The moral rights enshrined in copyright are the right to claim authorship in the work, the right to object to certain modifications and other derogatory actions.

In the context of reCreating Europe’s research, ‘copyright flexibilities’ stand for a multitude of legal rules deriving from the EU copyright law and the EU Member States’ national copyright laws. These tools comprise exceptions and limitations (E&Ls) to copyright, legal rules on the termination of copyright protection, copyright exhaustion, the rules dealing with the public domain as well as the *public domaine payant*, the so-called ‘three-step-test’ envisioned for law- and decision-makers to interpret the fairness of the use of a copyright work, and, last but not least, compulsory licensing schemes that would authorize end-users to use a work in compliance with certain terms and conditions.³

For the purposes of this Information Sheet, three major components of copyright flexibilities are crucial for end-users’ legal access to, use and re-use of copyright protected works:

- (1) **E&Ls:** This term refers to a set of rules designating special cases, which permit the use of copyright protected content without seeking for the authorisation of the author (or copyright holder) and, in most cases, without any payment.

The vast majority of the E&Ls to copyright were introduced into the EU copyright law by **Article 5 of the [Directive 2001/29/EC \(InfoSoc Directive\)](#)**. In a similar manner, **Articles 5 and 6 of the [Directive 2009/29/EC \(Software Directive\)](#)**; **Articles 6, 8, and 9 of the [Directive 96/9/EC \(Database Directive\)](#)** consists of E&Ls, respectively, to computer programs and compilations of works as well as of data. Most recently, **Articles 4 and 14 of the [Directive \(EU\) 2019/790 \(CDSM Directive\)](#)** introduced other flexibilities, directly or indirectly, facilitating end-users use of copyright protected content to access information and to participate in cultural life.

These provisions, in general, permit the reproduction of works, computer programs, and databases for private or non-commercial purposes, by end-users, as well as the use of this content in accordance with the intended lawful use.

- (2) **Term of protection and the public domain:** Copyright does not provide indefinite legal protection to the copyright holder. In principle, copyright protection lasts during the lifetime of the author and a minimum of 50 years after the death of the author. Whereas this general rule has been set by the WIPO-administered **Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works of 1886**, the **[Directive 2006/166/EC \(Term Directive\)](#)** is aimed at harmonising the term of copyright protection across the EU.

³ For the explanations of these legal concepts in light of the EU copyright law, please visit the ***Glossary*** on our public database, ***Copyrightflexibilities.eu***.



This piece of legislation contributes to contouring the public domain, as it envisions temporal restrictions to the legal monopoly of copyright owners and determines when content shall fall into the public domain to be accessed and used by anyone.⁴

(3) Technological Protection Measures (TPMs): As a response to the advancement of the technology and its impact on the generation and dissemination, as well as accessibility, of copyright protected content, **Article 6(1) of the [Directive 2001/29/EC \(InfoSoc Directive\)](#)** encourages the EU Member States ‘to provide adequate legal protection against the circumvention of any effective technological measures’. To complement this regulation, **Article 6(4) of the Directive** guarantees that end-users who are the beneficiaries of an E&L shall not face any obstacles in legally accessing works protected by TPMs.

In addition to the above, it shall be clarified that, for reCreating Europe, not only the public regulatory tools introduced by the EU and the State authorities offer effective flexibilities to copyright, but so do private regulatory sources, such as end-user license agreements (EULAs) as well as the terms and conditions of online content-sharing service providers (OCSSPs).⁵

3. What are the E&Ls available in the EU copyright legal framework that would enable end-users to engage with copyright protected content, without infringing copyright? What shall end-users be cautious about while re/using content as such under E&Ls?

As mentioned above, E&Ls are a set of rules designating special cases, which permit the use of copyright protected content without seeking for the authorisation of the author (or copyright holder) and, in most cases, without any payment.⁶

Whereas it is neither possible nor desired to provide for a full mapping of these E&Ls herein, a few examples demonstrating the tools end-users have to access to and re/use copyright content can be mentioned.

Access to cultural content: Articles 6(1) and 8 of the [Directive 96/9/EC \(Database Directive\)](#) allow the lawful users, respectively, of databases compiling copyrighted works and data, to perform the actions necessary to access to the contents of the database. Additionally, **Article**

⁴ For a comprehensive mapping and explanation of the copyright inherent in the EU copyright law and the national copyright laws of the EU Member States, please see our final report, **D2.3 – Final report on legal mapping of copyright flexibilities and data set**, available on [Zenodo](#).

⁵ Please see our final report, **D2.3 – Final report on legal mapping of copyright flexibilities and data set**, available on [Zenodo](#), to have an insight to the private regulatory tools as such.

⁶ For a comprehensive legal mapping of the E&Ls stemming from the EU and national laws, please visit: [Copyrightflexibilities.eu](#).



5(2)(a) of the [Directive 2001/29/EC \(InfoSoc Directive\)](#) enables the facsimile reproduction of cultural content, except for sheet music, by anyone and by employing reprographic methods.

Re/use of cultural content: The ‘incidental inclusion’ exception enshrined in **Article 5(3)(i) of the [Directive 2001/29/EC \(InfoSoc Directive\)](#)** enables the reproduction of, communication and making available to the public of a work or other subject matter, by incidentally including content as such in other material.

As a last remark, it is worth noting that it is often required by law - and highly recommended by the reCreating Europe Consortium - that the quotations and parodic uses of works or other subject matter shall be accompanied by a clear indication of the author or right holder as well as of the source of the works and subject matter in use.⁷

4. What are the cultural elements that are not or no longer protected by copyright? Is it possible to freely use that cultural content?

Despite the absence of a clear-cut and binding definition of the term, the ‘public domain’ constitutes a key concept in the copyright discourse to cumulatively refer to the intellectual creations and cultural elements that have never been granted legal protection or are specifically excluded from legal protection, as well as those of whose legal protection has been expired.

Whereas the latter category contains works and other subject matter that were once protected by copyright or related rights, the former category comprises a great variety of materials of a disparate nature. Even though the EU have not had any major interventions to harmonise the pan-European public domain, the **Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works of 1886 (Berne Convention)** and the **Agreement on the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs Agreement)** provide guidance on the elements contained in this category.

Indeed, **Article 9(2) of the TRIPs Agreement** consolidates a well-established copyright rule into a legal provision and holds that: ‘Copyright protection shall extend to expression and not to ideas, procedures, methods of operation or mathematical concepts as such.’ Likewise, **Article 2(2) of the Berne Convention** leaves room for the Member States to decide whether to grant copyright protection to works which have not been fixed in material form, while **Article 2(4) of the Convention** gives the States discretion on whether to allocate ‘official texts of a legislative, administrative and legal nature, and to official translations of such texts’ to

⁷ While the information provided herein focuses on the legal rules that primarily and directly benefit end-users of copyright content, please see the **FAQs and Guidelines**, available on **Zenodo**, drafted by other reCreating Europe Consortium members, to have a broad view of the copyright flexibilities available to **authors and performers, creative industries; Galleries, Libraries, Archives, Museums (GLAM)**; and the **intermediaries**.



the public domain. Last but not least, **Article 9(9) of the Berne Convention** excludes ‘the news of the day or (...) miscellaneous facts having the character of mere items of press information’ from the scope of the copyright protection regulated therein.

In light of these international regulations, it shall be noted that all the EU Member States, except for France, have legal provisions regulating the public domain, albeit to varying degrees. In some cases (i.e., Bulgaria, Czechia, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Lithuania, Slovakia, Slovenia), the aforementioned list is accompanied by expressions of folklore. In some other cases (i.e., Estonia, Lithuania, Poland) other elements such as official symbols, coat of arms, flags and the like are also allocated to the public domain.

Regardless of such discrepancies in the scope of the subject-matter, the works and other subject matter that are allocated to or that have fallen into the public domain, in principle, can be freely used by anyone. Whereas this statement can be interpreted as the redundancy of an authorisation or license mechanism for the use of the works and other subject matters, it does not always mean the use of such content without the payment of a fee. Indeed, there are a few EU Member States whose copyright laws envision a *domaine public payant* (payment of a fee to use the works and other subject matter in the public domain).⁸

5. What are the key E&Ls and other rules that safeguard end-users’ online activities on social media platforms (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, TikTok)?

The EU copyright framework offers many flexibilities that may enhance end-users’ experience of online culture. Amongst these flexibilities, the so-called ‘freedom of panorama’ (FoP), the reproduction of works of visual art in the public domain, as well as the exceptions for quotation and parody stand out.

FoP was introduced by the [Directive 2001/29/EC \(InfoSoc Directive\)](#), in its **Article 5(3)(h)**. This rule allows anyone to use works that are permanently located in public spaces and still protected by copyright.

As of today, all the EU Member States, with the sole exception of Italy, have a legal provision in their copyright laws to enable FoP. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that FoP is not one of the well-harmonised E&Ls across the EU. Indeed, each Member State has interpreted this EU flexibility in light of their own cultural needs and priorities, hence they adopted FoP rules that slightly depart from the original EU rule. Due to this, it shall be kept in mind that the subject-

⁸ For a comprehensive legal mapping of the national rules tackling the public domain, please visit: Copyrightflexibilities.eu.



matter that can be used and the conditions of use under the FoP exception varies from one country to another.

Whereas the FoP is aimed at facilitating the use of copyright protected cultural content, **Article 14 of the [Directive \(EU\) 2019/790 \(CDSM Directive\)](#)** introduces rules for **works of visual art that are no longer protected by copyright or related rights**, due to the termination of the legal protection. According to this regulation, the reproductions of works of visual art that are in the public domain would also remain in the public domain, rather than being subject to copyright or related rights – only if the reproduction as such does not constitute an original work. Whereas the interpretation and the application of this rule is yet to be seen in the near future, this provision facilitates the circulation of non-original reproductions of works of visual art, such as photos of ancient artifacts exhibited in museums and galleries, by end-users – also on social media platforms. Yet, it is worth noting that Article 14 of the CDSM Directive has been transposed to the national laws of only nine (i.e., Cyprus, Estonia, Germany, Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Malta, Romania, Spain) EU Member States so far.

Last, the EU copyright framework includes several regulations that are crucial for end-users' online activities that involve making and circulation of intellectual creations, such as fan-fiction, mash-ups, memes, and other **user-generated content**. These activities often rely on a previously created and disclosed work or other subject matter protected by copyright or related rights. Whereas the use of such works and other subject matter, in principle, requires the authorisation of the copyright or related rights owner; **Article 5(3)(d) of the [Directive 2001/29/EC \(InfoSoc Directive\)](#)** allows **quotations**, for purposes such as criticism or review, to be made from works and other subject matter that have already and legally been made available to the public. In a similar vein, **Article 5(3)(k) of the InfoSoc Directive** enables the use of works and other subject matter for the purpose of **caricature, parody, and pastiche**.

As to the interplay of these E&Ls with the digital platforms, **Article 17(7) of the [Directive \(EU\) 2019/790 \(CDSM Directive\)](#)** envisions that the EU Member States shall ensure that the end-users are able to rely on these E&Ls when **uploading and making available user-generated content on online content-sharing service platforms**. At the time being, this regulation has been transposed to the national laws of the vast majority of the EU Member States. The Member States expected to introduce this regulation are as follows: Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, Finland, Hungary, Latvia, Poland, and Portugal.

Once again, it is essential to note that It is often required by law - and highly recommended by the reCreating Europe Consortium - that the quotations and parodic uses of works or other subject matter to be accompanied by a clear indication of the author or right holder as well as of the source of the works and subject matter in use.



6. What is the ‘disability copyright exception’ in EU Copyright Law?

Persons with disabilities (in particular although not exclusively, persons who are blind or visually impaired) experience barriers in accessing copyrighted cultural content, in particular printed material. Copyright may act as a barrier preventing people with disabilities from getting access to copyrighted cultural content, for example preventing them from getting a copy of a printed book in accessible formats – such as braille, audio, accessible e-text or large print – or an accessible e-book which is readable by screen-reader.

Among the E&Ls to copyright which are set out in EU copyright law, one in particular aims to support access to culture for persons with disabilities. In EU copyright law, **Article 5(3)(b) of Directive 2001/29/EC (InfoSoc Directive)**, in its original formulation, allowed but did not oblige Member States to provide for a copyright exception in their national law to allow the use of copyrighted material by people with disabilities without the permission of the right holder. This provision was transposed by Member States in very patchy and different ways.

With the approval of a new international treaty by the World Intellectual Property Organization (the *Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired or Otherwise Print Disabled*), the ‘copyright disability exception’ has been reinforced.

Directive 2017/1564/EU (Marrakesh Directive) introduces a new mandatory exception to the copyright and allows persons who are blind, visually impaired or otherwise print disabled as well as certain entities such as libraries or educational centres to make a copy in an accessible format of copyrighted printed material. The Marrakesh copyright exception reinforces the original optional disability exception in **Article 5(3)(b) of the InfoSoc Directive**.

7. What is the so called “Marrakesh exception”?

The Marrakesh exception derives from the transposition of the **Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired or Otherwise Print Disabled**, approved in 2013 by member states of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), into EU law by means of **Directive 2017/1564/EU (Marrakesh Directive)** and **Regulation 2017/1563/EU (Marrakesh Regulation)**.

This exception allows:

- people who are blind
- people who have a visual impairment
- people who are print disabled (for example people that have a reading disability, such as dyslexia, and those who cannot hold a book)



without prior authorization of the copyright holder

- to convert existing printed material (books, newspapers, magazines, sheets of music, any kind of written works, regardless of the media on which they are made available, digital or analogue) in accessible formats (for example. to create an audiobook from a printed volume)
- to reproduce accessible format copies (for example, to make additional copies of a book in Braille)
- to transfer of accessible copies (for example to donate accessible copies)
- to make accessible copies available to persons with a disability which is listed in the Marrakesh Treaty for example by publishing an audiobook on a dedicated website that available exclusively to persons with disabilities

This exceptions also allow certain non-profit entities, such as libraries and educational centres or service providers for persons with disabilities to make copies for persons with disabilities covered by the Marrakesh Treaty.

8. Is the “disability copyright exception” the only way to support access to cultural material for persons with disabilities?

No the ‘Disability copyright exception’ is not the only rule to support access to cultural materials. In EU legislation, there are various rules on accessibility that complement the copyright exception.

9. Are there E&Ls specifically aimed at supporting access to cultural material by people belonging to minority groups?

No there are not specific copyright exceptions in that regard in EU copyright law. However, access to copyrighted material by people belonging to minority groups should be facilitated by general measures supporting translation of copyrighted material in minority or lesser used languages .

General policy measures should support access to cultural material for people belonging to minorities.

10. Who are prosumers and what copyright rules apply to their acts online?

In today's world, end-users of online platforms rely on these services for a broad range of purposes, including communication, learning, education, research and alike. Most typically, they do not merely *access (or consume)* contents, but they do increasingly *produce* contents accessed by fellow end-users as well. The expression ‘prosumer’ comes directly from the merger of these two expressions: producers and consumers; and effectively represents the



development of roles of end-users of the online platforms with all the legal consequences of it. As such, prosumers are on the one hand consumers, who conclude contracts (most often end-user license agreements or EULAs) to use various services. These contracts oblige them to comply with the 'as is' terms of use of the given platforms. On the other hand, end-users are also producers of contents that these platforms are designed to disseminate. While the creation and sharing of these contents is equally regulated by the EULAs, they might also be copyright subject matters (typically photographs, literary texts, audio-visual contents, artworks). With respect to these contents, prosumers have certain rights and interests, which shall be effectively protected by the platforms themselves and respected by fellow end-users. The copyright norms that apply in the offline world are the same for prosumers, although certain acts might be required to be carried out per the EULAs that are not prohibited by the laws.

11. What is the role of EULAs in the online environment and what do they generally say on user flexibilities?

EULAs play an important role in contractually regulating the access to and the availability of content (including protected works). They fall under the scope of private ordering mechanisms where the platform provider (a private party) regulates the dataflow and content-accessibility taking place on their systems. EULAs include the specific acts that users might carry out, as well as those uses that are restricted to them. Depending on the nature and structure of the provisions, permitted acts are usually related to the perception of the content (viewing, listening) and, if needed, a limited number of copies are also allowed to be made on the user's device(s). The restricted acts are broadly construed, and in case of platforms based on user-generated contents (or UGC), it is also usual that the EULAs have a well-defined UGC policy in favour of the platform operators (allowing the providers of the service greater flexibility to reuse the UGC). Regarding user flexibilities, platforms are varied on a wide scale. If they provide storage functionality and collect and promote UGC, they provide a more flexible environment and user experience. If, on the other hand, they provide access to an already licensed audio-visual or audio repertoire, the possibilities for end-users to engage with the content are more limited. Furthermore, service providers might further limit the user experience by deploying technological restriction measures to hinder the access to the contents.

12. What are the key rules of Article 17(7) CDSM Directive with respect to EULAs?

Article 17 of the [CDSM Directive](#) established an active responsibility for Online Content-Sharing Service Providers (OCSSPs) regarding content moderation, monitoring and removal. This active role also constitutes a direct liability for the making available to the public of unauthorized contents. OCSSPs also have the burden of entering into license agreements with



rights holders whose content can easily be uploaded onto OCSSPs platforms incorporated into a UGC. Pre-filtering obligation of uploaded content raises several concerns regarding the user privileges, and it could also lead to restriction of otherwise lawful UGCs. To avoid such undesired results, **Article 17 of CDSM Directive** introduced several safeguards in favour of the users. **Article 17(7)** obliges Member States to mandatorily implement certain exceptions and limitations into the authors' rights regimes, including quotation, criticism, review, or use for the purpose of caricature, parody or pastiche so that certain freedom of speech backed activities might be carried out freely via OCSSP's services. The EULAs of the OCSSPs should also contain expressed reference to these mandatory exceptions and limitations further increasing the end-user flexibility of their platforms.

13. Are there any procedural safeguards for the benefit of end-users regarding excessive content monitoring/filtering?

The EU law has detailed - copyright-related - provisions on how e-commerce service providers, and, under the CDSM Directive, OCSSPs, shall guarantee that their clients do not suffer any harm due to the online enforcement of third parties' copyrights. First, and foremost, platforms themselves are not obliged per the law to monitor their systems on a general basis - as such, not all contents and not on an automated, regular basis shall be monitored by the platforms. In reality, however, to meet the legislative obligations, platforms might deploy broad monitoring practices. Hence, certain procedural guarantees shall also be put in place to safeguard end-users. Under the 'older' e-commerce regime, e-commerce service providers (mainly hosting service providers) could apply a 'notice-and-take-down' regime, under which they should have blocked access to illicit contents; but uploaders of such contents should have given the right to submit a complaint against such removals/blockades. Most recently, **Article 17(9) of [the CDSM Directive](#)** also obliged OCSSPs to introduce a 'complaint-and-redress' mechanism, according to which end-users who believe that their user rights are hurt by certain acts of the OCSSPs shall be allowed to submit a complaint to the service provider to fix the problem regarding the probably excessive content-filtering. In line with the CDSM Directive, OCSSPs shall expressly regulate such 'complaint-and-redress' mechanisms in their EULAs.

14. How flexible are EULAs with regard to user-generated contents?

End-users have high expectations. They want instant access to the content. This is demonstrated by the constantly growing number of subscribers and registered users of platforms, and by the ever increasing number of orders processed by online marketplaces. The thriving platform economy is trying to meet these increased demands. Platforms show significant differences in terms of their business model and the software they operate. Their contractual practices provide access to the content within a rather strict framework. The



flexibility of EULAs is largely determined by whether a platform provides on-demand streaming or whether it allows more space for end-user interaction. It also increases flexibility where the service allows multiple devices to stream content, even permanently, so that consumption could be done offline. As we move from simple streaming to hosting and social media, UGC becomes an increasingly dominant element regarding flexibility, which is also determined by the platform's economic-business system and contractual practices.



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Copyrightflexibilities.eu <<http://www.copyrightflexibilities.eu/>>





The ReCreating Europe project aims at bringing a ground-breaking contribution to the understanding and management of copyright in the DSM, and at advancing the discussion on how IPRs can be best regulated to facilitate access to, consumption of and generation of cultural and creative products. The focus of such an exercise is on, inter alia, users' access to culture, barriers to accessibility, lending practices, content filtering performed by intermediaries, old and new business models in creative industries of different sizes, sectors and locations, experiences, perceptions and income developments of creators and performers, who are the beating heart of the EU cultural and copyright industries, and the emerging role of artificial intelligence (AI) in the creative process.

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