

Attention: news desks/science and education correspondents

For immediate release

Brussels, 12 February 2016

EUA responds to the EC's move towards a modern, more European copyright framework

The European University Association (EUA) has offered feedback on the European Commission's Communication outlining its intentions to move towards a modern, more European copyright framework. The Communication, dated 9 December 2015, addresses the need to urgently reform current legislation as students, researchers, educators and innovators are hampered by outdated copyright rules that have not evolved with new working methods, the advent of digitalisation and increasing international collaboration in higher education.

The EUA welcomes the Communication and in order to develop its intentions into concrete legislative proposals, it encourages the EC to keep in mind that:

- restricting a text and data mining (TDM) exception to public interest research organisations and for scientific research purposes is inhibiting collaboration among various stakeholders. The EC should thus make sure that a mandatory exception enables those who have legal access to content to mine it with their tools of choice.
- publicly-funded research must be made available to the public through Open Access (see [EUA roadmap](#)). Therefore, the EC should provide an exception that allows research organisations to distribute scientific publications of affiliated researchers through their own channels.
- clarifications to the exception for “illustration for teaching” should facilitate off-site education. Broadening this exception is essential as currently E-learning needs are not covered by copyright legislation. The EC's intention to enable remote consultation is a move in the right direction.
- exceptions for research and teaching should not be overridden by contracts or licences with third parties or by technical protection measures such as Digital Rights Management (DRM). This would remove rights granted by the legislation and would render any reform meaningless.
- measures ensuring that heritage material can be preserved digitally and accessed online are most welcome. The increasing prevalence of born-digital material in these collections should be considered, along with the public availability of these assets which is limited by current legislation.
- the disability exception also matters for universities, as the EUA encourages its members to be inclusive in welcoming people with disabilities. This exception should ensure equal access to all information for disabled students, researchers and educators.

“Providing innovators, educators, students and researchers with more legal certainty on the rights and duties linked to the use of materials is a seminal step forwards,” explains Professor David Drewry, EUA Vice-President and Chair of the [Research Policy Working Group \(RPWG\)](#). “Furthermore, this can amplify the competitiveness of European research and innovation. The EC's framework is hence important both for increased collaboration and exchange of knowledge.”

These recommendations were developed by [EUA's Expert Group on "Science 2.0/Open Science"](#), chaired by EUA Council member Professor Jean-Pierre Finance. The recommendations were endorsed by the EUA Council on 29 January 2016.

Notes:

"Response of EUA to the European Commission's Communication on copyright", 12 February [2016](#)

Commission Communication: "[Towards a modern, more European copyright framework](#)", 9 December 2015

To view the "EUA Roadmap on Open Access to Research Publications", please click [here](#).

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The European University Association (EUA) is the representative organisation of more than 800 universities in 47 European countries and 36 national rectors' conferences (NRCs). The Council of EUA is comprised of the President, the members of the Board, and of the presidents of all of Europe's NRCs. EUA works closely with its members to ensure that the voice of European universities is heard.