

Doc. 11272
24 April 2007

Copyright in Europe

Motion for a resolution
presented by Mr Bodewig and others

This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only the members who have signed it

1. The right of access to information and copyright practices are both playing an increasingly important role in today's information society and giving rise to more and more problems and questions, especially in the area of digital communication.
2. When the commercial search engine, Google, in 2004 announced its intention to develop a digital library by digitising library stocks, many publishers and press companies, as well as individual users of information available free of charge with unlimited access, feared that the digitisation of the relevant works would infringe copyright and establish barriers to information access. There were angry responses throughout Europe and those concerned put up resistance. Following various disputes, some libraries and companies decided to hold negotiations with Google about conditions for publication and ultimately reached agreements. These sometimes involved financial compensation or supervision by the libraries and companies themselves of the articles published online. It is likely that other search engines and information services will now also follow these examples, and that the trend will extend to the audiovisual information sectors.
3. This demonstrates the great significance of the commercialisation of access to, and the dissemination of, information.
4. Everyone must retain the right to free access to information. This also applies to access by individuals to digital libraries, including audiovisual sectors in which major commercial firms are currently not allowed to commercialise, or establish access barriers to, freely accessible content and information. At the same time, copyright must continue to be protected in future.
5. The Council of Europe is asked to ensure informational self-determination in this area, too, and to consider what trends are likely and whether there is a need for standard-setting work at the Council so that free and unrestricted access to digital and audiovisual information continues to be guaranteed in future.

Signed (see overleaf)

*Signed*¹:

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BARNETT Doris, Germany, SOC
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¹ SOC: Socialist Group
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
EDG: European Democratic Group
UEL: Group of the Unified European Left
NR: not registered in a group