



The Internet-Censorship Machine of the EU



A new EU-reform is to modernize the copyright law on the internet and is disguised: That which looks like more rights and remuneration on the internet for artists, media publishers and authors of all kinds, reveals itself as a next step into full control of the internet. What hides behind key-terms like “Upload-Filters” and “Ancillary Copyright”? What has already been decided by the EU-parliament and how is internet-censorship being implemented in today’s time? Kla.TV is summarizing the events.

Hot discussions, a storm of protest and a large-scale lobby battle. A new EU-reform is being made to modernize the copyright law on the internet and is debunked: That which looks like more rights and remuneration on the internet for artists, media publishers and authors of all kinds, reveals itself to be a next step into full control of the internet.

How is that? What hides behind the EU-Copyright Reform and behind key-terms like “Upload-Filters” and “Ancillary Copyright”? What has already been decided by the EU-parliament and how is internet-censorship being implemented today?

In the following, Kla.TV summarizes the you events for. Stay tuned:

1) What hides behind the EU-Copyright Reform and key-terms like “Upload-Filters” and “Ancillary Copyright”:

Circulation and advertising revenues of the largest media outlets like Springer, Bertelsmann, Rupert Murdoch and Guardian Media have been declining for years. At the same time the interest in free media is increasing daily. With just a few mouse clicks, alternative opinions, independent witness reports, free expert voices from all around the world etc. are disseminated on the internet and receive millions of visits. A true reason for media publishers and EU policy to worry about – at least this is what it feels like. For shortly after the EU’s General Data Protection Regulation was enforced which massively limited free media, the EU is just about to release the next reform of internet politics. The new EU-draft law is purportedly to modernize the copyright law within the European Union. The advertising revenues on the internet are not only supposed to fill the coffers of the big IT-groups, but pay artists, journalists and all creative people for their services. Article 11 and 13 of the reform show, amongst others, that this is only to serve as a pretext for higher goals.

Article 11 – “Ancillary Copyright”

Everyone sharing journalistic contents needs a license from the content’s publisher. Without it, the content cannot be shared legally.

This is also called “ancillary copyright” or “link-tax”.

In summary, the large publishing houses like Axel Springer and others want to be paid by all providers who link their publications. In search engines and online platforms like Google and Facebook for example, links with the title and a short excerpt from press reports are

displayed which would actually receive copyright protection. This journalistic service would have to be protected, otherwise internet platforms would be stealing contents of the media and make money with it. This is the argumentation of the publishing lobby and leading politicians. Internet activists are warning: With the enforcement of the so-called “ancillary copyright”, the linking and sharing of contents on the internet will be monopolized, made difficult and ultimately prevented. Furthermore, the introduction of a “link-tax” will threaten farewell to the freedom of information on the internet. The Ancillary Copyright is pure lobbyism and illustrates the close ties between the publishing houses and EU-politics.

Article 13 – “Upload-Filter”

Internet platforms must filter user uploads for violations against copyright law.

This is also called “Upload-Filters”.

According to Article 13, internet-platforms in the future would have to synchronize every upload they want to publish on the internet, i.e. to synchronize every text passage, picture, audio or film file with a fee-based database in order to determine if these are contents that might be protected by copyright. Under the guise of copyright law, an internet-censorship machine is created here which decides on what is allowed to be published on the internet and what isn't! The legal anchoring that each publication has to be approved of by a filter prior to its publishing – which is defined by government and companies – this will be the end to freedom of opinion on the internet. Online-platforms who cannot afford the access to the fee-based database or who do not want their contents to be screened by a third-party provider will be disqualified right from the start. Where such Upload-Filters lead even only in their beginnings is demonstrated by a comparable “Content ID”-system on YouTube these days. Mainstream-critical contributions on YouTube are censored in moderation due to alleged copyright violations and are already today removed from the so-called “free internet”. Furthermore, the technical error rate of such automatic algorithms is high and the system is easily misused. Users whose contents are maliciously declared to be protected by copyright by another user would have to take legal action and file a suit in order to be able to make use of their contents again.

1) This has already been decided by EU-parliament:

- On June 20th, 2018, the EU Legal Committee voted “YES” for the Copyright Reform and the therewith connected upload-filters and ancillary copyright for press publishers. The reform was released for voting in the EU-Parliament.
- The decision of the EU-Legal Committee was followed by a wave of protest by internet activists and diverse organizations. They called for writing to EU-delegates to move them to reject the reform. Even children of EU-delegates are said to have been phoned. An online-petition against this EU-censorship machine gathered over 700,000 signatures in a very short time.
- On July 5th, 2018, the reform was temporarily halted by the decision of the EU-parliament, yet not repealed. The majority of the delegates saw imperfections subsist with the EU-reform due to the massive opposition by the people. On September 12th, 2018, single changes of the draft will be voted upon. Despite this partial success through the broad information work of the citizens, it remains to be seen whether single imperfections subsist will be able to halt the planned EU-censorship machine and link-tax.
EU-politician Axel Voss who was significantly involved in the elaborations of the reform

proposals, accuses those who oppose the copyright reform with dissemination of “fake-news” and embellishes the situation.

“This sweet little fake-news campaign that is currently run by the big platforms with keywords such as “censorship engine” or “upload filter” or whatever... - What we are now trying to do here is somehow lay a foundation with software that recognizes works protected by copyright.”

To explain: The term “recognition software” is a downplaying of the term upload-filter, as if you would describe a nuclear bomb as “single-use reactor”.

3) This is how internet-censorship is carried out in today’s times:

A well-known parable says: If you put a frog in water that is too hot, he will jump out right away. If, you, however, put the frog in lukewarm water, he will stay in it, even though the water is very slowly heated up to its boiling point and therewith to his death.

Gradual internet-license fees, data protection regulations, upload-filters, ancillary copyright and so on are driving the heat in the EU-kettle for every independent informant slowly to the boiling point. An obvious blocking of mainstream-critical internet pages through government offices ultimately do not seem necessary anymore. For with increasing unbearable requirements, regulations and expenses in the internet, investigating voices will step-by-step fall silent and seemingly completely by their own.

Have the EU-cooks heated the EU-kettle too fast with a scheduled introduction of upload-filter and link-tax – and this during the FIFA World Cup? It remains to be seen which interim stages will be planned to finally reach the ultimate goal.

Remain active. The people are awakening and are no longer ready to carry out regulations of politicians in trustful faith, regulations that gradually give the deathblow to freedom of information and opinion.

Conclusion: The unmistakable close alliance of EU-politics and media companies against the freedom of information on the internet needs an unmistakable close alliance of the people and free media for the freedom of information. Therefore, do keep an eye on your politicians and media moguls – we do as well.

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