

It's time to **fix copyright in Europe:
Support a user-generated content
exception.**

On September 12, the European Parliament will vote on amendments to their proposed EU Copyright Directive. This is a rare opportunity for the European people to define and shape a legal framework that will affect the way they use the internet every day.

Why support a user-generated content exception?

User-generated content is content which uses parts of existing works in new creations like memes, critiques, parodies, or re-arrangements. European member states have differing laws about this type of use, with some allowing it and others not. Wikimedia believes in updating copyright to match the way that people actually create, share, and consume knowledge and culture online, and this includes a user-generated content exception.

Who benefits from a user-generated content exception?

Critics. If you had to choose between a video critique of a movie, would you want to watch one which features a talking head describing scenes from that film, or critique which uses *actual clips from that film* to demonstrate its main points? Critics can more effectively make their points and contribute to the discourse around a work if they are able to show the work they are discussing.

Fans. As important as using clips, stills, and quotes from artistic works is for critiquing that work, those same actions have been just as important for celebrating those works. Fans show their love for their favorite music, movies, and shows by sharing clips or gifs of popular characters or scenes and forming communities around specific works. Online videos dissect stills of works to reveal hidden details. Campaigns making use of user-generated fan content can sometimes even ignite a new fan-base for a show, and some shows have been saved from cancellation due to this phenomena.

Anyone who creates or communicates online. Whether your canvas is memes, song mashups, or parodies, online creation is often predicated on adding to or adapting existing works. Building on content is how more and more people express themselves nowadays. Internet memes have become a form of expression and communication in themselves and almost always require well-known creations as base material to even work. After all, would a Twitter conversation with your favorite celebrity be the same without that perfect reaction meme? To enjoy freedom of expression, we must also enjoy the freedom to re-use existing works.

Visit <https://fixcopyright.wikimedia.org> to tell your representative to support an exception for user-generated content.