It's time to fix copyright in Europe: Support a public domain 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 public domain exception?

The preservation of public domain works should not be limited to libraries, archives, museums and film or audio heritage institutions.Everyone should be allowed to contribute to the preservation of history and culture, not just so-called cultural heritage institutions. We support a harmonized legal framework that protects our shared public domain by making sure that no new exclusive rights are awarded for digital preservation of works that are beyond the term of their copyright.

Who benefits from the public domain?

Artists. Whether you prefer listening to "Blowin' in the wind" or watching "Romeo + Juliet", both Bob Dylan and Baz Luhrmann borrowed from the public domain to create new works. As most authors will tell you, creativity always involves building on the past.

People like you and me. Re-using and adapting existing works 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. To enjoy freedom of expression, we must also enjoy the freedom to re-use our cultural heritage online.

Entrepreneurs. A surprising amount of transformative re-use of public domain works is made by commercial users. 33% of all Kickstarter projects relied on public domain works in 2015, generating economic value that would have been impossible without the re-use of cultural heritage works.

Educators. A substantial part of today's educational materials are public domain. We can freely rearrange and digitise rich heritage of libraries to ensure this sum of knowledge is passed on to the next generations.

Visit https://fixcopyright.wikimedia.org to tell your representative to support a public domain exception.