

Question for written answer E-003992/2018
to the Commission
Rule 130
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Subject: The impact of changes to the Copyright Directive on freedom of expression online

The European Parliament's Legal Affairs Committee has adopted a position on the copyright reform proposed by the Commission. The purpose of the new directive is to amend the rules on the publishing and monitoring of online content. The authors of the draft say that its purpose is to help combat piracy.

The Article 13 of the Directive requires service providers that store and provide public access to posts, photographs, quotes and creative works, etc., uploaded by their users to put into place 'effective content recognition technologies'.

Before making it possible for somebody to publish a post, those service providers have to check that they have not quoted somebody without the author's consent, that they have not posted their photo against the background of a picture or sculpture, or that any songs posted online (even if they were composed, performed and uploaded by the person posting them) do not have an element of plagiarism. Posted statistics and tables, etc., also have to be checked to make sure that they have not been taken from some scientific study.

Naturally, no automated technology could achieve such a complicated form of censorship, and so not only does Article 13 violate the freedom of expression, but it also creates a legally uncertain situation in which online platforms will have no choice but to monitor and extensively filter and block the EU citizens' communications.

- 1) Do the proposed changes not restrict the freedom of expression online?
- 2) Would the entry into force of the proposed changes not give big corporations total control over content appearing online?