



Standing Committee on Copyright and Related Rights SCCR 37 – 1-5 April 2019, Geneva

Response to Interim Report on Practices and Challenges in Relation to Online Distance Education and Research Activities

FUIS thanks Ms Torres and Professor Xalabarder for their report.

As a representative of Italian authors, and, through its membership of the International Authors Forum, part of a worldwide body of more than 700,000 authors, it is most important for FUIS to state that, whether they are applied in an analogue or digital environment, it is vital for copyright systems to ensure authors are paid for all uses of their works.

Considering the ease with which authors' works can be accessed, copied and transferred online, this becomes even more crucial in a digital context.

Exceptions and limitations have a place - they can be appropriate when they are applied in specific, carefully circumscribed situations - if they are necessary to enable educational and research institutions to function and give access to their users.

However, FUIS prefers licensing systems to be developed in relation to online distance education and research activities so that a possibility is created for authors to be remunerated, as well as others' whose work contributes towards these activities. These licensing schemes can be adapted to differing market conditions.

As the example of Canada's Copyright Modernisation Act shows us, taking away licensing schemes has disastrous economic effects on authors and publishers. The effect was to severely reduce their existence in Canada. This was because of the resulting loss of income to authors and publishers when educational institutions did not pay for the content they were using through the hitherto well-established licensing system.

Even if resources can still be accessed across borders (i.e. we have access to 'global' content), the failure to pay attention to the economic working conditions of local authors and publishers means they are not valued, and the local knowledge and production so vital to economies and communities the world over is lost. This globalising effect reduces the quality and diversity of the knowledge we have access to and the effect on local authors and publishers is detrimental.

It is as important that copyright systems work to account for and protect authors' livelihoods and the cultural heritage they represent in Italy as it is in Senegal, Argentina or Australia. Regardless of whether the systems they are applied to are digital or analogue, this principle of paying authors and valuing diversity must be upheld.