



Copyright sector accounts for nearly 100.000 jobs

Arthena pleads to actualize legislation because of economic significance

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A study ordered by Arthena, who unites the associations of authors, artists, publishers and producers, demonstrates that the sector of copyright and related rights generates a turnover of more than 32 billion euro - that is 2,9 % of the GDP- and employs more than 90.000 people. Almost 100.000 persons make a living on copyright, amongst others by creating, publishing and distributing books, films, games, newspapers and magazines, music, television programs and videos. Nevertheless, the sector is under great pressure, particularly by illegal (digital) copies, for which the makers do not receive a reimbursement.

According to Arthena, sensitization for the economic significance of copyright, an adapted legislation for the digital world and a reimbursement for the entitled persons or parties (authors, artists, publishers and producers) are imperative for this sector and also a responsibility of the government.

More important than catering industry or automotive sector in Belgium

Arthena made an appeal to Partners In Marketing in order to analyze the economic significance of the sector which is engaged in the creation, publishing, production, performance, broadcasting, exhibition, distribution and sales of protected works. The study was executed on the basis of internationally accepted guidelines - in particular those of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) - and took into account the methodology of similar studies in our neighboring countries.

The results of this research show that the sector generated a turnover of more than 32 billion euro in 2008 or 2,92 % of the total turnover in Belgium, invested more than 1.2 billion euro or 2,9 % of the total investments in Belgium, employs more than 92.000 fulltime-equivalents with more than 9000 employers, respectively 3,25 % and 4,07 % of the Belgian total. In 2007 the Gross Value Added realized by this sector was over 10 billion euro or 3,38 % of the total Gross Value Added in Belgium and 3,01 % of the Belgian GDP.

Nearly 100.000 people make a living on copyright, amongst others by creating, publishing and distributing books, films, games, newspapers and magazines, music, television programs and videos. The most important main industries in copyright and related rights are: the wholesale business of CDs and DVDs, the producers of software and databases, the world of advertising, the publishing companies and the printing businesses.

These figures show that the economic contribution of the sector of copyright and related rights is more important than that of the automotive or the catering industry.

Copyright, foundation for creativity and economy

“Policy makers in this country fail to fully grasp the economic impact of the creative sector. This stands in contrast to their colleagues in our neighboring countries such as France and the United Kingdom, where culture and economy, research and development are always bracketed together,” says author, composer and musician Koen Gisen (An Pierlé/White Velvet).

“It is high time to stop saying everything has got to be for free,” declares author, composer and artist Alec Mansion (amongst others from the music group Léopold Nord et Vous).

“Copyright will also become more important for the development of the digital world. Technological innovations, new media applications and an improved Internet and broadband penetration allows us to spread the music of our artists even better. On the other side, nowadays everything is thrown on the Internet without permission, and thus without reimbursing the makers. If this situation does not change, the willingness to invest in new or unknown artists will decrease,” puts Erwin Goegebeur, director of EMI Music, the label of amongst others Bart Peeters, Clouseau and Novastar.

Arthena formulates 3 priorities

“From this study emerges that copyright is not only important from a cultural viewpoint, but also as a motor for the economy. Consequently, the protection of copyright is a crucial task for the government,” clarifies Serge Vloeberghs, chairman of Arthena. In order to support the copyright sector, Arthena calls the government for attention in formulating three priorities.

Arthena asks the government for extra strength for the sector by:

1. Acknowledging that the sector of copyright is an important economical player and sensitizing the public for the foundations of the sector, namely copyright.
2. Working on a adapted legislation for the digital world in order to effectively fight the illegal distribution of books, music, films and other works through the Internet so that the legal supply gets a fair chance.
3. Making sure that authors, artists, publishers and producers obtain a reasonable reimbursement for the use of their works, also in the digital world, among other things by a faster approval of the new regulation for copying for own use on ‘new’ devices (MP3-players, DVD-players with hard disc, ...) and ‘new’ carriers (USB-keys, separate hard discs,...).

Arthena represents 31 associations and collective rights management companies van authors, artists, publishers and producers of books, films, newspapers and magazines, music, television programs and videos.

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