Consultation on the review of EU Legislation on copyright and related rights: response of Share The Vision

Share The Vision [STV] is a United Kingdom wide partnership of voluntary agencies for visually impaired people and organisations for publicly funded libraries which is attempting to improve the delivery of library and information services for visually impaired people. Until recently the timely production of materials in alternative formats [Braille, Moon, large print, giant print, audiobooks etc...] accessible to visually impaired people was badly hampered by copyright restrictions. STV is grateful to the Commission for recognising and removing this impediment to the inclusion of visually impaired people in being able to access the contents of books published throughout the European Union. The exception provided by Article 5.3b of the Information Society Directive 2001 led to the enactment of the Copyright [Visually Impaired Persons] Act 2002 in the United Kingdom.

We also welcome the Commission’s recognition of the need to extend this exception for the benefit of disabled people to the Database Directive as set out in this paper. We are pleased that the Commission wishes to remove any uncertainty about the interpretation of Article 6 of the Database Directive by setting out the exception explicitly in the Database Directive in 2005. This will be of great help to disabled people.

We have also noted the assessments on decompilation and protection of technological measures set out in Sections 2.2.1.3 and 2.2.1.4 of the paper. We support the Commission’s desire to ensure that interoperability is not deterred by the application of these technological protection measures. We would also point out that these technological measures could prevent access to computer programs by disabled people who have to use assistive technology. We are sure that the Commission would not want this to happen and would request you to take this into account in your ongoing assessment of the application of Article 6 of the Information Society Directive.

David Owen
Executive Director
Share The Vision