



## **Adopted resolution**

# **Digital Rights are Civil Rights**

### **What we understand as Digital Rights:**

Digital Rights are nothing other than our usual and common civil rights, but expressed and translated into the domain of the digital sphere. Civil rights are universal and must therefore be valid in the internet as well.

The right to share, the right to protect one's privacy, freedom of expression, the right to learn, the right to access knowledge, the right to assembly, or consumer rights are amongst the common rights that apply in a digital world, hence they are Digital Rights.

Several of these rights gather new importance because of the digital environment where they are placed. The right to access knowledge is strengthened as the possibilities of accessing it are enhanced due to technological advances. This fact confers a new importance to these rights.

### **Present situation on Digital Rights**

Although these are rights that we may have taken for granted, the fact is that the digital world is a new environment, and these rights have to be fought for again.

In the last years we have experienced a series of attacks on Digital Rights:

- Privacy is put at risk and subdued under more permanent government and police surveillance. for example in the case of the swedish fra-law that authorizes the state to warrantlessly wiretap all phone and internet traffic that crosses sweden's borders
- The Digital Guillotine, aimed at banning from the Internet users infringing copyright
- legal systems and established rights management institutions – e.g. collecting societies – not being prepared for digital use of media, criminalize users for downloading songs for private use, even if this is not considered to be an illegal action
- Public Organisations systematically neglect the existence of GNU/Linux or other free software in their Calls for Tenders.
- Users are forced to buy certain products in order to have a normal experience on the Internet.
- The European patent office is continuously trying to grant software patents. The directive on software patents was rejected by the European Parliament. Now the lobbies try to get patents on software through the backdoor of a european patent litigation agreement (epla) and are now trying to negotiate an anti counterfeiting trade agreement through acta.
- Free speech is under attack from several governments, especially the right to access information.
- In the EU member states child pornography, identity theft and Nazi propaganda are dealt with by national law and do also cover such crimes on the internet.
- Companies should not make profit at the expense of civil and digital rights. Government control by authoritarian regimes is also a threat in many parts of the world, and we should fight this censorship in our own countries as well as abroad.

The role of the european companies in developing tools for internet control and for spying the cyber dissidents (for example in china) has to be considered as a breach of civil rights. as when buying products from these companies.

An attack has been started on our rights, and the confrontation is taking place in the World Wide Web.

### **Proposal for resolution on Digital Rights**

#### **\* Open Knowledge: The right to access knowledge**

- Our aim is to enhance the economic, social and cultural rights of all people. The internet makes it possible for knowledge to become accessible to a huge number of people in a relatively cheap way. We want to close the global digital gap and make knowledge accessible to everyone in the world .
- Knowledge must be free. Knowledge helps people's development and, as it has been developed based on previous knowledge, can be considered as a common good. Therefore it is absurd to allow knowledge monopolies. It is not ethical to make profit at the expense of other people's access to knowledge.
- We support free software, as it is free knowledge. It is also the proof that a new economic model can be set up based on free access to knowledge, rather than on restricting it.
- Free knowledge is also applied to medicines. We are in favour of extending the use of the compulsory licensing in specific countries, since the patented medicines imply restricting people's health in order to allow economic benefits.
- public funding has to mean public accessibility and usability, in all fields. starting at public financed scientific researches and ending at the fields of public funded radio or tv production. then our wish of open access can become reality.
- in today's web 2.0, users are also producers. we condemn the commercial exploitation of digital works without the users consent. we support creative commons, that allows authors to grant certain liberties on their creations.
- economic models that respect both users and creators digital rights are feasible, and we will help them take over the present one, based on restriction of rights.

#### **\* Technological neutrality is a consumer right**

- People must not be forced to use a certain technology. Just as it would be nonsense to force users to drive a certain brand of car to enter a national road, so is it nonsense to force internet users to "drive" on certain operating systems to access websites, especially if the websites have been built with public money.
  - To respect that technological neutrality, public organisations have to respect the principle of Open Standards and ensure interoperability.
  - Consumers shouldn't be forced to buy technology they don't want, in particular in the case of computers, where hardware and software are usually sold together. We support unbundling, so users can buy both the computer and the operating system of their choice.
  - DRMs (Digital Rights Management) prevent users from making free use of digital content. We oppose DRMs as they prevent open and free access to culture.
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### \* **The right to privacy and to protect personal data**

- we want to protect our right to identity. Identity theft is one of the most prevalent crimes today, and our legislation has to be updated.
- We support anonymity on the Internet. The ip address must be considered as private data, since it may identify users in the digital world.
- Cryptography is a technology used to secure communications and protect against unauthorized access to our communications. We support its use, and we are against any restriction on its use imposed by any Government.

### \* **Supporting P2P means protecting our right to share**

- Sharing and copying for private use is not stealing and not a crime.
- Copying is not stealing, and digital propriety is not comparable with physical propriety, especially when producing legislation.
- For governments it is not advisable to try to impose laws that would criminalize a wide range of citizens for privately using digital content
- In Europe, the European Commission is worried about "unauthorized" downloads. We say there is no authorization needed to make use of our right to share.
- Network Neutrality means that all information sent on the Internet should be treated the same way. In particular, Internet Providers must not reduce the speed of P2P communications.

### \* **Free Speech in a Free Internet**

- Free speech is under attack in several countries, and censorship is being enforced. This should not be tolerated, even if abiding by authoritarian rules helps companies make more profit. Companies operating in undemocratic states should share the responsibility of protecting civil right movements and fighters, not hand them over to totalitarian authorities.
- Internet has a special status, as no political and economical control must influence it, as should be the case for the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers, which manages important technical aspects of the operation of the Internet. We hope this means that certain values, such as free speech, will be more easily spread all over the world.

### **Conclusion**

- *We live at a time where Digital Rights are under attack*
  - *We consider Digital Rights to be basic **CIVIL** Rights*
  - *We are against profit being made at the expense of our rights*
  - *We commit ourselves to defending Digital Rights*
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