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Mapping of EU databases and metadata standards providing information on copyright-protected works

28/05/2026



In Europe, information on copyright-protected works is crucial for licensing, remuneration, transparency and the implementation of copyright rules in digital environments, including in the context of artificial intelligence (AI). However, information on works, rightsholders and usage conditions is often dispersed across multiple public and private databases that rely on different identifiers, metadata practices and technical standards.

The objective of the study is to provide an overview of existing copyright databases and metadata standards across the European Union. It analyses the current landscape, including challenges such as fragmentation and interoperability issues, and explores opportunities related to the development of “CopyrightView”, an EUIPO initiative that aims to improve transparency and streamline reliable copyright information from existing data sources.

The study represents a first step for the CopyrightView initiative which will be gradually developed. The EUIPO is soon to establish an expert group to discuss the feasibility and technical specification activities to be carried out and, more broadly, it will have further consultations with copyright stakeholders to discuss its specificities. The findings of the study will also support the EUIPO Copyright Knowledge Centre’s efforts to raise awareness and understanding of copyright infrastructures in the EU.

Main findings

- Information on copyright-protected works is highly fragmented across public and private databases. This has resulted in various issues, including duplication of records, inconsistencies in metadata and increased transaction costs for stakeholders. The study also highlights challenges linked to data quality, legacy systems and legal constraints, including data protection considerations.
- International identifiers and metadata standards (e.g. ISBN, ISWC, ISRC, ISNI, ONIX and DDEX) already provide important foundations for interoperability, but their adoption remains uneven across sectors and jurisdictions.
- Stakeholders generally support an EU-level initiative based on interoperability, provided that existing infrastructures are respected and responsibility remains with original data providers.
- The study identifies potential use cases for CopyrightView, including information discovery, metadata matching, support for rights clearance and licensing workflows, deduplication, and improved handling of TDM opt-outs in the context of AI. It also underlines the significance of educational and awareness-raising activities.
- The findings support further work on the feasibility, governance and technical design of a federated CopyrightView service facilitating structured access to existing copyright information sources, with a view to improving their searchability and discoverability.

How was the study conducted?

This study was prepared by a research team for the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO) in the context of the EUIPO Copyright Knowledge Centre (ECKC). The study approach combines desk research with interviews involving stakeholders from across the copyright system, including public authorities, collective management organisations, cultural heritage institutions, publishers, registries, technology providers and standardisation bodies.

Full report



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Executive summary



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Supporting materials



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[Registers of works or legal deposits managed by public authorities](#)



[Matrix of metadata schemas and their categorisation](#)



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