



knowledge without boundaries

# EIFL-IP

**Promoting a fair and  
balanced copyright system**

## **Organizing a campaign to review the copyright law of the Republic of Armenia**

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March 2013

Results of an EIFL-IP funded project

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### The Context

Armenia joined the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) in 1993, the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2003, and is a member of the major international treaties including the Berne Convention, Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), and the WIPO internet treaties.

Currently, negotiations are underway with the European Union (EU) for an agreement on the creation of a [Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area \(DCFTA\)](#), which has a chapter on intellectual property rights. Meanwhile, the Armenian Intellectual Property Agency (AIPA) is a partner in the [EU Twinning Project on Strengthening the Enforcement of Intellectual Property Rights in Armenia](#). As a result, the Law on Copyright and Related Rights, adopted in 2006, is undergoing a full review for alignment with EU laws.

Libraries in Armenia play an important role in developing today's democratic society and supporting education, and enrich their collections with digital materials to provide new services. However, basic activities such as digitization and electronic document delivery are hampered by the law that doesn't cater for the digital environment. Librarians must get involved in the review process to ensure that the new law meets the real needs of libraries and library users.

### Project Objectives

The project partners were the Electronic Library Consortium of Armenia (ELCA) and the American University of Armenia. The main objectives of the project were to:

- organize an advocacy campaign to raise awareness in the library community of current copyright issues, and to brainstorm on possible solutions;
- with legal support, draft proposals for library-friendly amendments to the law on copyright;
- bring library copyright issues to the attention of local authorities and policy-makers to improve their understanding of library needs; present the library proposals to the copyright office and the European expert charged with making a pre-draft of the new copyright law.

## Strategies and Tactics

- Consult widely with librarians and the user community to understand current needs.
- Provide resources on copyright in Armenian.
- Seek professional library guidance to oversee the project strategy and activities.
- Obtain legal expertise to support the library position.

## Key Achievements

- ✓ A major accomplishment was the fostering of a professional relationship with the Armenian copyright office. For the first time, copyright officials were brought to meet librarians around the country to hear their views. As a result, libraries have a new standing as a credible stakeholder with policy-makers.
- ✓ The library community has been strengthened with new knowledge, and through collaboration with cultural heritage institutions. For the first time, libraries, archives and museums came together to discuss common legal issues and solutions - a rewarding experience that reinforced the role of library leadership for the benefit of all.
- ✓ Gained confidence to present the library perspective at national events on an equal basis with other stakeholders.
- ✓ The first resource on library copyright issues adapted for Armenian law was published.

## Activities

- **Established a Library Copyright Committee** with experienced professionals to advise on project activities and proposals that met every month. The Committee members were:
  - Fatma Khachatryan, Head Librarian, National Assembly of Republic of Armenia
  - Robert Khachatryan, Chair of Education Management and Planning, Yerevan State Linguistic University
  - Levon Gharibyan, Director of Scientific Technical Library, National Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (NCIE)
  - Nerses Hayrapetyan, Director, US Embassy Information Resource Centre (IRC), Armenian Library Association Board Member
- **Hired a Legal Advisor.** Dr. Maja Bogataj Jančič, Institute of Intellectual Property, Slovenia was engaged to provide a legal analysis of the library provisions in the copyright law with recommendations for amendments.
- **Published a new resource in Armenian.**

An [Armenian adaptation of the EIFL Handbook on Copyright](#) was launched in October at the AUA Akian Art Gallery attended by c. 40 people including copyright officials, the EU expert, academics, librarians, archivists and museum staff. The first of its kind, a copy was later presented to Dr. Levon Avdoyan, Armenian Specialist at the Library of Congress in Washington D.C. as part of a book exchange program, and it is included in "Armenian Books in Print". Now more librarians can learn about the issues and contribute their views.



*Launch of the Handbook in Armenian, October 2012*

- Met the library and user community.** In conjunction with AIPA, seminars were held in Lori Regional Library, Vanadzor and Shirak Regional Library, Gyumri with more than 100 participants from libraries, archives and museums, active library users, faculty and student council members. Presentations on copyright issues were followed by a discussion on [library proposals for amendments to meet today's library needs](#). Participants were grateful for the opportunity to personally meet Armenian copyright officials for the first time to ask questions and to clarify many issues.



Seminar at Shirak Regional Library, Gyumri November 2012

*'I would like to express my gratitude to the Project Team who gave me the chance to meet local and regional library representatives, students and other library users to raise awareness of copyright, and to listen to their major concerns. Developing a "legal culture" among users is important, as the effective operation of the law depends on both authors and users.*

*At the same time, new types of resources, and new ways of using them requires development of the legal framework to support progress in science and technology. The renewal of the law on copyright is aimed at allowing greater freedoms to people to access cultural resources, especially through libraries. The role of the project's Library Copyright Committee in drafting specific provisions for libraries was extremely helpful to identify solutions to the problems that arise in libraries, cultural and educational institutions.'*

Sonya Vardanyan, Head of Copyright and Related Rights Department, Armenian Intellectual Property Agency (AIPA)

- Conducted roundtable discussions with policy makers. In July, a first meeting took place with the Director and senior officials of the Armenian Intellectual Property Agency (AIPA) and an international library delegation that included Professor Michael Carroll, American University Washington, Barbara Szczepanska, EIFL-IP Poland and the Project Manager to exchange views on current copyright issues, especially international trends and developments.
- In August, a first meeting took place between the Library Copyright Committee and Dr. Miha Trampuz, the expert appointed to make a pre-draft of the new copyright law. In September a roundtable discussion with c. 15 invited library Directors and ELCA members was co-organized with AIPA. Participants recognized the need to address gaps in the law so that libraries can provide modern, digital services to meet the needs of the academic and user community.

*"While developing the pre-draft Law, it is good practice to consult with stakeholders who will be using the new legislation and living with it in the coming years. In Armenia, the stakeholder group that showed the most vivid interest was the library community. Our discussions, attended by a wide range of librarians, were very constructive and I learned at first-hand about the specific problems for libraries in Armenia - for a legislator a very precious experience on one hand, and a great challenge on the other.*

*Having heard the voice of the Armenian library community, I changed several provisions in the pre-draft text to meet their concerns as far as possible, especially the chapter on exceptions and limitations, while safeguarding the framework of international and European legislation to which the Republic of Armenia is committed."*

Dr. Miha Trampuz, appointed expert to develop a modern and EU-compliant draft Law on Copyright and Related Rights of the Republic of Armenia.

- **Library interests presented at multi-stakeholder events.** For the first time, libraries were invited to participate in multi-stakeholder events including the VI International Forum of Translators and Publishers, part of Yerevan World Book Capital 2012, and a seminar organized by the EU Twinning Project on enforcement, where participants were reminded by libraries that stronger enforcement goes hand-in-hand with fair and reasonable user freedoms.

*'I was delighted that libraries took part in [the third Book Platform capacity building event in Yerevan](#). Librarians are a strong force acting in the public interest to provide access to books and other reading materials. Their views on copyright are important and need to be heard'.*

Yana Genova, Manager, Book Platform Project & Director, Next Page Foundation.

## Lessons Learnt

- A key lesson learnt is the need to establish regular contact with the copyright office through dialogue e.g. hold joint meetings, invite copyright officials to speak at library events. If there are questions or uncertainties about the law, ask the copyright office for advice.
- Identify key players and work with them, and know the timeline for developments.
- Librarians need more materials about copyright in the Armenian language, more training on the needs of today's users, and the benefits of international library cooperation.
- Have a strong committed team to work on the front line to share their knowledge and to build a network, not only locally but internationally as well.
- Take opportunities to involve international experts visiting the country e.g. the meeting in July 2012 with AIPA was planned to coincide with the EIFL General Assembly in Yerevan.

## The Future

The publication of the Draft Law is expected in April 2013, to be followed by public hearings for stakeholders. The Armenian library community will follow developments and will continue to be involved to get the best results for libraries e.g. the Library Copyright Committee will consider holding roundtable discussions when the draft law was published. Watch this space!

## Acknowledgements

Thanks to the grant, I realized my goal to bring the interests of libraries to the attention of copyright policy-makers, and to share the knowledge that I have gained with local colleagues in the Armenian language, especially for those who do not have a chance to participate in conferences or to get professional advice from copyright officials.

Special thanks to Teresa Hackett, EIFL-IP Programme Manager for guidance and assistance throughout the project, and to EIFL-IP coordinators Mariana Harjevschi (Moldova) and Barbara Szczepanska (Poland) for their practical advice. Finally, thanks to the American University of Armenia (AUA) for their personal and technical contribution in the implementation of this project.

Hasmik Galstyan, Project Manager

*EIFL-IP supported this project with a grant of €4,000. The project began in June 2012 for a duration of seven months. For more information, please contact the Project Manager, Hasmik Galstyan at <hgalst@aua.am>*

*For information on other EIFL projects in support of national copyright law reform, visit [www.eifl.net/advocacy-campaigns-national-copyright-law-reform](http://www.eifl.net/advocacy-campaigns-national-copyright-law-reform)*