

The Irish Writers' Union is the representative organisation for one of the major stakeholders in any discussion about copyright: Irish authors.

While we understand that copyright legislation might be a barrier to innovation in certain industries, the IWU believes that any change to copyright law must be managed in such a way as to ensure that no damage is done to Ireland's literary activity.

Literature is one of Ireland's great success stories in these recession hit times. Quite apart from the unquantifiable value of the pleasure a country's strong literary traditions provides for its population, literature earns hard cash for Ireland. Both in the form of its contribution to the €2bn annual gain from cultural tourism ( <http://www.failteireland.ie/culturaltourism> ) and in the considerable revenues deriving from the success of sales of Irish works, Irish publishing and writing is an activity that should not be jeopardised by any legal change that weakens the value of copyright ownership to the creators of original literary works.

In regard to the particular dangers inherent in potential copyright changes, the IWU is in full agreement with the concerns raised by the Irish Copyright Licensing Agency. We note that if anything, copyright law in regard to literature should be strengthened to protect rights holders. For example, the current Public Lending Right scheme is admirable but should be extended to include estates of those writers who were alive in 1994 when Ireland, according to the EU, should have introduced the scheme.

Thank you for noting our views on this matter.