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EU reaches deal on copyright exceptions on books for the blind or visually impaired

Marrakesh Treaty

A compromise deal was reached in trilogue discussions yesterday evening between the European Parliament, Council and Commission on the implementation of the Marrakesh treaty in the EU. The treaty makes exceptions to some copyright rules for books and other materials in accessible formats for people who are blind or visually impaired (such as audiobooks, large print, and braille).

Greens/EFA MEP **Max Andersson**, who negotiated the compromise on behalf of the European Parliament, says the deal can make a difference, but Member States must ratify sooner rather than later:

"Despite opposition from some Member States in the Council, I am pleased to have secured one of the main elements in the Treaty – the cross border exchange of books in accessible formats for people who are blind, visually impaired or otherwise print disabled. This means that a book which has been made available in an accessible format in one country can be accessed by people in other countries, both inside and outside of the EU.

"Now it's important that the Member States honour their commitment and meet the agreed timetable so that the ratification process can start and the exchange of books can finally begin. Blind and visually impaired people have waited long enough."

Notes:

The full title of the treaty is the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired or Otherwise Print Disabled. The treaty was adopted in 2013 by the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO). The compromise deal will now be formally approved by the Parliament in July.

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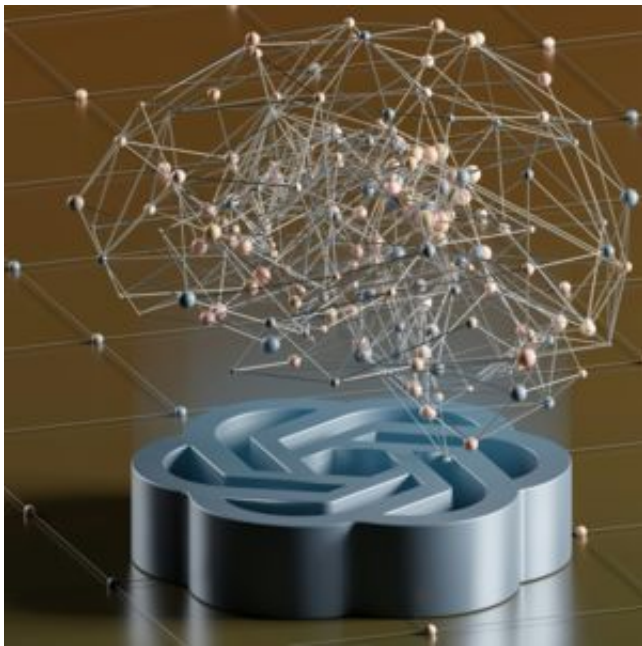


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