Resolution on access by blind people to books and other printed products

2011/2894(RSP) - 16/02/2012 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution tabled by the Committee on Petition on Petition 0924/2011 by Dan Pescod (British), on behalf of the European Blind Union (EBU)/Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB), on access by blind people to books and other printed products.

Noting that the Copyright Committee of the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) is considering an international treaty to improve access to books for blind and other visually impaired people, Parliament calls on the Council and Commission to support a binding WIPO treaty with regard to copyright on books and printed products for blind and visually impaired people. Parliament also notes that in its resolution of 12 May 2011 on 'Unlocking the potential of cultural and creative industries', it had called on the EU to back a binding WIPO treaty.

Blind and visually impaired people in the European Union have severely restricted access to books and other printed products because 95% of all published works are never converted to 'accessible formats' such as Braille, large print or audio. Members recall that globally there is at present no international legal standard for a targeted exception to copyright rules for cross-border distribution of formats adapted for print-disabled persons, and EU representatives have consistently opposed a legally binding text, favouring non-binding recommendations.