Audiovisual industry: MEDIA II 1996-2000, development and distribution of European works

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Mrs ANDRE-LEONARD noted that MEDIA II, whose main objectives were training, development and distribution, had been allocated funding of ECU 400 million, in other words twice as much as its predecessor. As regards the main amendments, she mentioned the amendment to the legal basis as the EP' s Committee on Culture had called for codecision on the basis of Article 128 of the Treaty for the section on 'development and distribution'. As far as the substance was concerned, the EP proposed, *inter alia*, the creation of a support system to enable distributors to reinvest in the distribution of new European films. The rapporteur concluded by quoting Martin Scorsese, who believed that the successes of Woody Allen and Quentin Tarantino could be explained by the influence of the films of Fellini and Bergmann respectively, as well as those of Melville. Commissioner Oreja stated that the Commission could take over, in full or in substance, Amendments Nos 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23 and 24 on training; it could also take over in full Amendments Nos 3, 16, 20, 28, 29, 35, 37, 43 and 49 on development and distribution, and in substance Amendments Nos 2, 27, 31, 44 (support for distributors), 6, 18, 26, 34, 46, 47 (SMEs and countries with limited production capacity), 14, 23, 24, 25, 43 (promotion of archives and existing European audiovisual works), 12, 33 and 51 (establishment of catalogues of European audiovisual works). However, two issues had not been resolved: - support for the distribution of European films in cinemas, which strictly speaking was outside the scope of the programme's objectives, given its limited budget in relation to the number of cinemas (more than 20 000) and the important role of the principle of subsidiarity in this area. In spite of this, the Commissioner was prepared to take over Amendments Nos 5, 8 and 44 on the issue. - the Commission's choice of legal basis was Article 130 (consultation of the EP) rather than Article 128(4) (codecision), in accordance with the case-law of the Court of Justice, since the objectives of MEDIA II were essentially industrial.