Information society: European multimedia content industry, INFO 2000 multi-annual programme

1995/0156(CNS) - 17/01/1996 - Committee of the Regions: opinion

The Committee of the Regions very much welcomed the proposed INFO 2000 programme, which was part of an integral strategy designed to create a European information society. However, it did express fears that budget limitations would prevent the programme from achieving all its targets. Given these concerns it was essential that the INFO 2000 programme be treated as complementary to other programmes in connection with the information society. The CoR also considered that it was important for the Commission to involve itself in the INFO 2000 programme when it was clear that any action undertaken at European level brought added value. It was important to see that this work was included as a supplement to that being carried out at local, regional and national level and also to ensure that the principle of subsidiarity was being applied. Close cooperation was also needed with the European Union's CONEX programme. Close ties with local and regional authorities were essential for the programme, especially as far as public sector information was concerned. The CoR wished to underline the fact that commercial ventures could be undertaken both by the private sector and by the public sector. Local and regional authorities also had a vital contribution to make when it came to raising awareness and stimulating demand at the level of the multimedia content industry and the strategic areas that sought to develop the multimedia potential (cultural heritage, services for SMEs and geographical information) representing all the political domains in which local and regional authorities had a key role to play. The CoR stressed the importance of the information society in economic, social and cultural terms and pointed out that the aspect of cultural and linguistic diversity had to be taken into consideration when developing a European multimedia content industry. The CoR greatly welcomed the efforts being made within the context of the INFO 2000 programme to prevent the emergence of information-rich and information-poor regions by focusing special attention on the less-favoured and outlying parts of the Community when it came to certain action lines.