Television broadcasting activities. 'Television without frontiers'

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The Committee on Culture adopted the report by Messrs GALEOTE QUECEDO (PPE, E) and HOPPENSTEDT (PPE, D) on the "television without frontiers" directive. As the Council had failed to incorporate a number of amendments at first reading, the committee was looking to amend the Council's common position. It sought a clearer definition of television broadcasting to include televisions programmes on demand. However, this definition should not include the interactive exchange of information between individuals (such as the Internet). With regard to advertising, the report also sought to clarify the concepts of television advertising and teleshopping. Televisions advertising refers to any commercial advertising broadcast on behalf of a person other than the broadcaster during advertising breaks. In addition, teleshopping should be understood to mean a direct offer broadcast to the public for the purpose of supplying goods or services or distributing them free of charge as part of a promotion. Teleshopping programmes and spots should be easily identifiable. Advertising broadcast during a feature film should not exceed 15% of the length of the film. The number of teleshopping windows per day should be limited to four and their overall length should not exceed two hours a day. With regard to major sporting events (Olympic Games, World Cup etc.), the Member States should ensure that broadcasters with exclusive broadcasting rights to these events do not exercise their rights to the detriment of the right of the majority of television viewers to watch these events live. In addition, Member States should introduce appropriate legal measures to ensure that most broadcasting time is reserved for European productions. At the same time, they should encourage broadcasters to broadcast non-national European productions. With regard to minors, the rapporteurs want stricter standards to protect them. In order not to prejudice their development, Member States should ensure that broadcasters do not broadcast programmes, trailers or advertising which defeats the objective sought. The committee hoped that stricter national rules would be the best way of attaining language objectives. It insisted on the need to highlight the role of television as a source of information and culture in order to safeguard pluralism and competition in the media. National regulations should be compatible with Community law.