The role of libraries in modern society

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The objective of the own initiative report by Mrs Mirja RYYNÄNEN (ELDR, Fin), adopted unanimously by the committee, is to define the role of libraries in the information society. It highlights various topics and political priorities such as the importance of access to information and knowledge, various categories of media and books, copyright issues, licensing systems for electronic documents, networked information, conserving library collections, networking libraries, financial problems inherent in operating libraries etc. The report therefore recommends certain measures to preserve the use of libraries, such as increased cooperation at European level, the possibility of national funding for digitisation of documents in order to preserve their cultural heritage and transmit them in a form which is accessible to the largest possible number of people on the basis of common standards etc. The report also calls on Member States to provide libraries with modern equipment, especially Internet access. At the same time, the Member States and the European Commission should carry out studies, especially into the costs of and impact on libraries of licensing systems for the use of electronic documents.