European digital content: quality, access, use and exploitation, eContentplus. 2005-2008 programme

2004/0025(COD) - 13/02/2004 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE : to establish a Community programme to make digital content in the Community more accessible, usable and exploitable, facilitating the creation and diffusion of information and knowledge - in areas of public interest - at Community level. PROPOSED ACT : Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council. CONTENT : Media convergence and the global reach of the Internet have turned digital content into a potentially lucrative asset. However, in relation to the uptake of digital content, Europe has barriers. In particular, barriers relating to the multiplicity of languages, cultures and practices of public administration and enterprises affect the establishment of cross border services in Europe based on digital content. In order to address the challenges posed, it is proposed to adopt a financial support programme to make digital content in Europe more accessible. The programme will contribute to the Lisbon strategy and strengthen European competitiveness in the knowledge economy. The programme focuses on the end-user - be it the citizen in society, the student, the researcher, business user wishing to augment their knowledge, or the 'reuser' wishing to enhance and exploit digital content resources for economic return. It should broaden user choice and help stakeholders to reap the benefits that knowledge-enhanced digital content can offer. The programme envisages three operational goals: - Facilitating access to European Digital Content - Improving quality by facilitating best practice related to digital content; - Reinforcing co-operation and awareness between digital content stakeholders. The programme will finance projects designed to improve tools, processes and services related to the production, access, use and distribution of digital content. The programme will facilitate the transfer of knowledge, experiences and good practices; coordination activities; cross-fertilisation between content sectors, content providers and users. To this end, the programme encompasses the use of best practice actions normally conducted in thematic clusters as well as thematic networks bringing together a variety of stakeholders around a given technological and organisational objective. The overriding principle of the programme is to maximise the impact on a group of actors beyond the participants of the programme. A tighter focus in terms of participants as well as objectives should help achieve this. The financial envelope for the implementation of the programme is proposed to be EUR 163 million covering a period of 4 years (2005-2008). Specifically, the activities of the programme will support the emergence of pan-European frameworks (services, information infrastructures, etc.) facilitating discovery of and access to digital content in Europe, the creation of new content-based services and their organizational underpinnings. A series of experiments will showcase how semantically well-defined metadata can improve usability and reusability, searchability and interoperability of digital content in multilingual and multicultural environments. Where digital content involves personal data, the technologies used should be privacy-compliant and, where possible, privacy-enhancing. Target areas will bepublic sector information, spatial data, learning and cultural content. Fostering the organisational frameworks to ease access to digital resources and showcasing the best use of technologies for their exploitation will lower the perceived risk for organisations and thus create a better environment for investment and innovation in digital content. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS : Budget lines and headings : 09 03 02 and 09 01 04 02 Overall figures: Total allocation for action: EUR 163 million Period of application: From January 1st, 2005 to December 31st, 2008 Schedule of commitment appropriations/payment appropriations (financial intervention): total EUR 160 million Technical and administrative assistance and support expenditure: EUR 3 million Overall financial impact of human resources and other administrative expenditure: EUR 7.928 million. The needs for human and administrative resources shall be covered within the allocation granted to the managing DG in the framework of the annual allocation procedure. Total: EUR 170.928 million Staff to be assigned to management of the action using existing and/or additional resources: 17