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

2004/0025(COD) - 06/04/2004

The committee adopted the report by W.G. van VELZEN (EPP-ED, NL) amending the proposal under the 1st reading of the codecision procedure. While agreeing with the proposed objectives, MEPs felt that in some cases the wording was too general. They specified, for example, that access to digital content should be facilitated at Community level "in areas of public interest". The committee also amended Article 5 on monitoring and evaluation to take account of the fact that the eContent programme extends beyond the current financial perspective. It wanted the Commission to report on the extent to which the funding for 2007-2008 was consistent with the new financial perspective which would come into in force in 2007 and to adjust the budget if necessary. One amendment added a new provision stipulating that the Commission should forward the results of its evaluations to Parliament and Council, together with any proposals to amend the Decision, before the presentation of the EU's draft budget for 2007 and 2009 respectively. With this in mind, the committee also amended the provisions on the overall programme budget, which the Commission had set at EUR 163 million for the four-year period running from 2005 to 2008. MEPs proposed that funding should be set at EUR 55.6 million for the 2005-2006 period, and that the remaining amount for the period 2007-2008 should be confirmed depending on its consistency with the new financial perspective.