The information society, culture and education

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The European Parliament adopted the own-initiative report by Mrs Eluned MORGAN (PSE, UK) on the information society, culture and education. In its resolution, Parliament calls for a series of actions to be taken at both Community and Member State level. More specifically, Parliament: - calls on the Commission: . to present a communication detailing Community efforts in the area of new technologies, education, training and culture, including the development of multimedia products within the framework of various Community programmes, and proposals for measures to be implemented; . to set up a permanent working group to coordinate and shape actions regarding culture; . to promote Community competition with a view to stimulating projects of networked "twinning" between schools and cultural institutions; . to establish a pilot programme in rural areas to assess the viability of satellite technology as a possible solution to the provision of universal access to the information society; . to fund projects by the year 2000 which will use national networks to link up teaching and training establishments in the different Member States; . to launch a study into the effectiveness of introducing new technologies into education; . to launch a study on ways in which entertainment-based interactive multimedia software can be adapted for educational purposes; . to encourage the dissemination and exploitation at European level of best teaching practices based on the use of multimedia software; . to present a Green Paper on the role of libraries in the European information society in order to initiate a debate on issues such as copyright, the promotion of books and reading, public access to electronic information, public lending rights and the training needs of librarians; . to speed up production of a report on the harmonisation of copyright and related rights; . to create and provide free multimedia language courses in each of the Member States' languages (including the lesser-used languages) and to make these available to users as an on-line service; . to explore ways in which museums, galleries, heritage sites and the performing arts can better use information technology for publicity, reviews and on-line performances; - called on the Member States: . to publish a programme for the continuing application of information technology in schools, colleges, libraries and community centres; . to ensure that teachers and cultural professionals receive relevant training in the use of new technologies before the year 2000; . to establish networks which would allow schools and colleges to contract with service suppliers who would provide connectivity and educational materials and software; . to ensure that adequate facilities are provided so that women are able to take advantage of new technologies; . to ensure that the needs of each region and area are catered for with sufficient technical support by the provision of one-stop-shopping; . to encourage schools to form into groups and organizations to enjoy the benefits of scale through the ability to purchase hardware and software in larger quantities; . to give tax incentives to equipment and multimedia service providers who arrange special rates for educational institutions; . to encourage collaboration between schools and community organisations and businesses to allow the latter use of school facilities outside normal hours, which will both increase schools' resources and improve IT skills in the community; . to encourage a clear information technology requirement in the training courses of all newly-qualified teachers and provide ongoing training for all teachers; . to establish a European browser system on the World Wide Web in order to locate suitable sites of use for schools in the educational and cultural field and to examine the effectiveness of using on-line services for educational purposes, and relevant ways of using the Internet as a tool for learning; . to encourage private enterprise to join with the public sector to sponsor educational software; . to ensure that teachers are involved in the design and development of educational software; . to encourage public libraries to provide CD-ROMS for hire; . to put national cultural collections into digital form in order to contribute to the creation of a European millennium archive with free public access for educational institutions and libraries; . to develop cooperative marketing strategies in order to promote European educational and cultural software. Lastly, Parliament reaffirms the principle whereby the official languages of all the Member States should be used on an equal basis by all the Community institutions and urged the Commission and the various bodies responsible to take the necessary steps to ensure that this principle is not undermined as a result of EU enlargement.