Resolution on the protection of audio-visual performers

2003/2541(RSP) - 15/05/2003 - Text adopted by Parliament, topical subjects

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on the protection of audiovisual performers, based on the report by Michel Rocard (PES, France.) Parliament pointed out that audio-visual performers (actors, dancers and other performers) have been waiting for many years to be granted protection of their intellectual property rights at international level. Authors enjoy the protection granted to them by the Bern Convention and the WIPO Copyright Treaties, and the Rome Convention and the WPPT provide protection for music producers performers. Broadcasters, who are users and not creators, have been granted many rights by the Rome Convention, which are to be updated by the forthcoming WIPO Treaty on broadcasting organisations' rights. Audio-visual performers, however, are excluded from the WPPT and denied international protection available to all other creators. The lack of international harmonisation of rights means performances are not protected when exploited outside the European Union, thus impeding the free circulation of artists. In a world where new technologies have eliminated boundaries and barriers it is essential to protect the work of artists internationally. The European Union has always acknowledged that artistic works act as important economic drivers for all countries. WIPO is organising an informal meeting in June 2003 to reach an agreement on the inclusion of audio-visual artists in its Treaty. Parliament asked the Commission to inform it on the current state of the WIPO negotiations on audio-visual performances. It also asked the Commission to take action to reach the adoption of an effective WIPO Treaty in favour of audio-visual performers' rights. There must be strong support for the protection of performers' rights, particularly in the audio-visual field where the lack of protection in many countries has a highly detrimental effect on the dissemination of European works at international level.