Transition from analoque to digital broadcasting: an opportunity for the European politics in the audiovisual and cultural divertity areas

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The committee adopted the own-initiative report by Henri WEBER (PES, FR) on the transition from analogue to digital broadcasting. MEPs said that the new audiovisual technologies should, above all, make it possible to deliver media pluralism and broadcast high-quality programmes. They stressed that the development of the information society as a whole, including audiovisual services, should be "socially, regionally, culturally and linguistically balanced". In order to avoid new forms of exclusion, and in particular the 'digital divide', all citizens must be given the possibility of benefiting from the information society. To prevent adverse repercussions, the measures accompanying the transition process should be focused primarily on the interoperability of platforms and standards, and thus on the interests of citizens and consumers. The report also insisted on the need to safeguard the European audiovisual model which is "based on a healthy balance between a strong and independent public service and a dynamic commercial sector".

The Member States were urged inter alia to ensure that the transition process was geared to seeking a balanced range of services offering added value to the public and did not involve increased costs for the consumer, and that efforts were made to educate the public about digital technologies ('digital literacy').

Among other recommendations, the report called on the Commission to produce a communication on education in the media and a Green Paper on the subject of pluralism and the concentration of media ownership. Lastly, it said that funding was needed to ensure that public broadcasters were able to compete with large groups entering the market.