Television broadcasting activities. 'Television without frontiers'

1995/0074(COD) - 14/08/2006 - Follow-up document

The report comprises of the Commission’s seventh communication on the application of Articles 4 and 5 of Directive 89/552/EEC "Television without Frontiers", as amended by Directive 97/36/EC, for the period 2003-2004.

The purpose of this bi-annual reporting exercise is, firstly, to bring Member States’ statistical statements to the attention of the other Member States, the European Parliament and the Council and, secondly, to check that the measures to promote European and independent production are being properly applied in the Member States. For the first time, the ten Member States which joined the European Union on 1 May 2004 are included in this report.

Reported data indicate that, for the first time, there has been a slight decrease in the scheduling of European works (Article 4) at Community level during the current reference period. However, the medium-term (1999-2004) trend is positive. Two factors have to be taken into account when evaluating progress under Article 4. First, the figures for 2004 include the ten Member States which joined the EU in 2004. Second, the method of calculation has been altered inasmuch as secondary channels with audience shares below 3% are now also included in the average proportions of European works.

These results show that, notwithstanding the slightly downward short-term trend, scheduling of European works has stabilised in the EU at a level well above 60% of total qualifying transmission time. Particularly for the ten Member States which participated in this monitoring exercise for the first time this is an encouraging development. Thus, overall the application of Article 4 of the Directive at European level has been satisfactory.

As regards the application of Article 5, the slight increase during the present reference period (+ 0.11% percentage points) can be seen as a positive development, bearing in mind that the data for 2004 include the ten Member States joining the EU in 2004. However, from a midterm perspective, this short-term upward trend is offset by a serious drop of more than 6 percentage points (or a decrease of more than 16%) compared with the averages for 1999 or 2001.

However, this downward mid-term trend is offset to some extent by three factors:

1) the EU-average compliance rate has risen within the present reporting period, meaning that in 2004 substantially more channels in the EU complied with the minimum proportion set in Article 5 than in 2003;

2) levels of transmission of recent European works by independent producers were relatively high.In relation to independent productions, recent works have risen by 30% in six years;

3) proportions have remained at levels well above the 10% minimum set by the Directive.

Overall, the application of Article 5 has been generally satisfactory.