Basic information

1995/0156(CNS) CNS - Consultation procedure Decision	Procedure completed
Information society: European multimedia content industry, INFO 2000 multi-annual programme **Subject** 3.30.25.02 Information programmes and action plans	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
ECON Economic and Monetary Affairs, Industrial Policy	BERÈS Pervenche (PSE)	06/04/1995

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
BUDG Budgets	TILLICH Stanislaw (PPE)	18/07/1995
ENER Research, Technological Development and Energy	PLOOIJ-VAN GORSEL Elly (ELDR)	19/07/1995
JURI Legal Affairs, Citizens' Rights	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
REGI Regional Policy	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
TRAN Transport and Tourism		
CONT Budgetary Control	DE LUCA Stefano (UPE)	06/09/1995
FEMM Women's Rights	BENNASAR TOUS Francisca (PPE)	24/11/1995

Council of the European Union

Council configuration	Meetings	Date
Industry	1926	1996-05-20
Telecommunications	1888	1995-11-27

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
30/06/1995	Legislative proposal published	COM(1995)0149	Summary
22/09/1995	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
21/02/1996	Vote in committee		Summary
21/02/1996	Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading	A4-0052/1996	
27/03/1996	Debate in Parliament		
14/05/1996	Modified legislative proposal published	COM(1996)0188	Summary
20/05/1996	Act adopted by Council after consultation of Parliament		Summary
20/05/1996	End of procedure in Parliament		
30/05/1996	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	1995/0156(CNS)
Procedure type	CNS - Consultation procedure
Procedure subtype	Legislation
Legislative instrument	Decision
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 170 EC Treaty (before Amsterdam) E 130-p3
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	ECON/4/07071

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading		A4-0052/1996 OJ C 096 01.04.1996, p. 0003	21/02/1996	
Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading		T4-0154/1996 OJ C 117 22.04.1996, p. 0031-0037	28/03/1996	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Legislative proposal	COM(1995)0149 OJ C 250 26.09.1995, p. 0004	30/06/1995	Summary
	COM(1996)0188		

Modified legislative proposal	OJ C 215 25.07.1996, p. 0010	14/05/1996	Summary
Follow-up document	COM(1999)0135	23/03/1999	
Follow-up document	COM(2001)0276	28/05/2001	Summary

Other institutions and bodies

Institution/body	Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
EESC	Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report	CES1455/1995 OJ C 082 19.03.1996, p. 0036	21/12/1995	Summary
CofR	Committee of the Regions: opinion	CDR0022/1996 OJ C 129 02.05.1996, p. 0039	17/01/1996	Summary

Additional information

Source	Document	Date
European Commission	EUR-Lex	

Final act

Decision 1996/0339
OJ L 129 30.05.1996, p. 0024 Summary

Information society: European multimedia content industry, INFO 2000 multi-annual programme

1995/0156(CNS) - 21/12/1995 - Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report

The Committee fears that the Commission is generally tending to underestimate the possible socio-economic consequences of excessive mass media concentration or of the inability to guarantee a plurality of sources of information. While the principles of liberalization, deregulation, competitiveness etc. are actively supported by the Commission, it is a source of great concern that the standards to be observed within the regulatory framework have not yet been stablished. Although the ESC fully supports the INFO 2000 Programme's stated objectives, it cannot but regret that the content of the draft Programme fails fully to meet the stated objectives: its overall direction is sometimes vague and its scope is not fully defined. Acknowledging the importance and relevance of a speedy Community initiative on the information-content industry, the ESC therefore urges the Commission to consider whether it should, as clearly as possible, make the following points in the programme: - Given the correlation with other Community programmes in the information sector, the ESC believes that INFO 2000 should be viewed as an instrument for closer overall coordination. - In view of the meagre overall funding, at least for the first four-year period, the percentage distribution between the various Action Lines should be altered so as to trigger the greatest possible European potential. - In the interests of preventing excessive dilution of the limited resources and of attaining maximum action efficiency, the number of possible projects should be reduced to a minimum applying their workability as the criterion and giving priority to those of a social nature.

Information society: European multimedia content industry, INFO 2000 multi-annual programme

1995/0156(CNS) - 20/05/1996

The Council adopted the programme, following the preliminary agreement reached at its sitting of 27 November 1995 and the opinion given by Parliament on 28 March 1996.

Information society: European multimedia content industry, INFO 2000 multi-annual programme

1995/0156(CNS) - 20/05/1996 - Final act

OBJECTIVE: to adopt a multiannual Community programme with a view to: creating favourable conditions for the development of a European multimedia content industry; stimulating demand for, and use of, multimedia content; contributing to the professional, social and cultural development of citizens; and developing the exchange of know-how between users and suppliers. COMMUNITY MEASURE: Council Decision 96/339/EC adopting a multiannual Community programme to stimulate the development of a European multimedia content industry and to encourage the use of multimedia content in the new information society (INFO 2000). CONTENT: in order to attain the objectives of the INFO 2000 programme, the following actions shall be undertaken under the guidance of the Commission: - stimulating demand and raising awareness: creating new markets by raising the awareness of specific user groups at European level; developing pan-European user groups; - exploiting Europe's public sector information: developing policies to access and exploit public sector information; linking the directories of European public sector information; making use of content resources in the public sector; - triggering European multimedia potential: catalysing a new, high-quality European multimedia content; negotiating multimedia intellectual property rights; developing and exchanging best practices; - support actions: observing and analysing the market; promoting the use of standards; promoting skills at European level. The programme shall cover a period of four years (1 January 1996 to 31 December 1999), the financial reference amount for its implementation totalling ECU 65 million. In its implementation, the Commission shall be assisted by an advisory committee made up of representatives of the Member States and chaired by the Commission representative. The programme shall be executed through indirect action on a shared-cost basis (the Community's contribution should not exceed 50% of the cost of the project, with progressively lower contributions as the project nears the marketplace). The choice of projects will be based on the call for tender procedure published in the OJ. Participation in the programme may be opened, without financial support, to entities in third countries, where such participation contributes to the implementation of the programme, taking into account the principle of mutual benefit. After three years and at the end of the programme the Commission shall submit to the Council, the EP, the ESC and the Committee of the Regions an evaluation report drawn up by independent experts. ENTRY INTO FORCE: 1 January 1996.

Information society: European multimedia content industry, INFO 2000 multi-annual programme

1995/0156(CNS) - 14/05/1996 - Modified legislative proposal

The amended proposal for a decision on the adoption of the INFO 2000 programme took over, in full or in part, 24 of the 52 amendments adopted by the European Parliament at first reading. In this context, the main amendments introduced by the Commission aimed to: - stress the importance of respect for linguistic pluralism; - point out that the measures under the programme should help reduce the risk of exclusion; - specify that cinema and television were included in the audiovisual sector; - emphasise the synergy between the INFO 2000 programme and other Community programmes or initiatives; - extend the Commission's responsibility to the granting of financial aid; - redefine the scope of the comitology procedure; - improve the title of Action line 2 (making good use by the multimedia industry of information held by the public sector); - specify the fields involved in certain pilot projects; - insist on particular encouragement for the development of multimedia services for SMEs amongst the measures aimed at developing and exchanging good practices; - point out that education must devote more attention to Europe's cultural and linguistic heritage and to multimedia; - reiterate the principles of equality, accessibility and low cost with regard to certain basic services which must be respected in the provision of multimedia services; - devote particular attention, at the level of implementation of the programme, to the risks of abuse of multimedia content in such areas as racism, illegal pornography and other criminal activities. The amendments not incorporated into the amended proposal included those which aimed to: - ensure that the actions supported the development of applications serving the purposes of health, education, training and regional planning; - give special treatment to associations and NGOs; - lay down a principle of reciprocity in implementing the programme in cooperation with third countries or international organisations; - establish a new Action line 3 relating to the development of new software packages; - propose a new breakdown of the budget. In this respect, the Commission proposed the following breakdown: . Action line 1 (stimulating demand and raising awareness): 20-30%; . Action line 2 (making good use by the multimedia industry of information held by the public sector): 18-23%; . Action line 3 (triggering European multimedia potential): 43-55%; . Action line 4 (support actions): 7-12%.

Information society: European multimedia content industry, INFO 2000 multi-annual programme

1995/0156(CNS) - 17/01/1996 - Committee of the Regions: opinion

The Committee of the Regions very much welcomed the proposed INFO 2000 programme, which was part of an integral strategy designed to create a European information society. However, it did express fears that budget limitations would prevent the programme from achieving all its targets. Given these concerns it was essential that the INFO 2000 programme be treated as complementary to other programmes in connection with the information society. The CoR also considered that it was important for the Commission to involve itself in the INFO 2000 programme when it was clear that any action undertaken at European level brought added value. It was important to see that this work was included as a supplement to that being carried out

at local, regional and national level and also to ensure that the principle of subsidiarity was being applied. Close cooperation was also needed with the European Union's CONEX programme. Close ties with local and regional authorities were essential for the programme, especially as far as public sector information was concerned. The CoR wished to underline the fact that commercial ventures could be undertaken both by the private sector and by the public sector. Local and regional authorities also had a vital contribution to make when it came to raising awareness and stimulating demand at the level of the multimedia content industry and the strategic areas that sought to develop the multimedia potential (cultural heritage, services for SMEs and geographical information) representing all the political domains in which local and regional authorities had a key role to play. The CoR stressed the importance of the information society in economic, social and cultural terms and pointed out that the aspect of cultural and linguistic diversity had to be taken into consideration when developing a European multimedia content industry. The CoR greatly welcomed the efforts being made within the context of the INFO 2000 programme to prevent the emergence of information-rich and information-poor regions by focusing special attention on the less-favoured and outlying parts of the Community when it came to certain action lines.

Information society: European multimedia content industry, INFO 2000 multi-annual programme

1995/0156(CNS) - 28/03/1996 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

In adopting the report by Mrs Pervenche BERES (PSE, F), Parliament approved the Info 2000 programme for the European multimedia industry, subject to around fifty amendments aimed at emphasizing the concept of minimum levels of service to be provided by the multimedia (access, equal treatment, etc.), encouraging linguistic pluralism and ensuring that support is provided exclusively for EU undertakings. Parliament wishes actions under the programme to: - support the development of applications serving the public interest (health, education, training and regional planning for less-favoured regions); - give access to associations and NGOs; - give priority to the interests of citizens; - help reduce the risk of exclusion and inequality between regions; - be conducted in synergy with programmes covered by the fourth framework programme on research and development (1994-1998). Moreover, Parliament considers that it is necessary to coordinate efforts at international level to combat the abuse of multimedia content (e.g. in connection with racism, illegal pornography and criminal offences). Finally, activities conducted in cooperation with non-Community countries should be established on the basis of strict reciprocity.

Information society: European multimedia content industry, INFO 2000 multi-annual programme

1995/0156(CNS) - 30/06/1995 - Legislative proposal

OBJECTIVE: . To promote the development of a European multimedia content industry; . To optimise the contribution of the new information services to growth, competitiveness and employment in Europe and to the professional, social and cultural development of the citizens of Europe. COMMUNITY MEASURE: Proposal for a Council decision adopting a multiannual Community programme to stimulate the development of a European multimedia content industry and to encourage the use of multimedia content in the emerging information society (INFO 2000). SUBSTANCE: . The programme covers a period of four years (1 January 1996 to 31 December 1999); . To fulfill the objectives of the programme, the following measures shall be undertaken under the guidance of the Commission: - stimulating demand and raising awareness: creating new markets by raising awareness at European level with specific user groups; encouraging clusters of pan-European users; - exploiting European public sector information: developing policies to access and exploit European public sector information; linking directories of European public sector information; making use of content resources in the public sector; - triggering European multimedia potential: catalysing new high-quality European multimedia content; trading multimedia intellectual property rights; developing and exchanging best practice; - actions to support the programme: observing and analysing the market; spreading the use of standards; encouraging skills development at European level; . The programme will be executed through indirect action and on a shared-cost basis (the financial contribution shall not normally exceed 50 % of the cost of the project, with progressively lower participation the nearer the project is to the market place). The selection of projects will be based on the procedure of calls for proposals published in the Official Journal of the European Communities; . Participation in the programme may be open to legal entities established in third countries, without financial support by the Community, where such participation contributes to the implementation of the programme and taking into account the principle of mutual benefit; . The Commission shall be assisted by an advisory committee composed of representatives of the Member States and chaired by the representative of the Commission; . Half way through and at the end of the programme, the Commission shall submit to the Council, the EP, the ESC and the Committee of the Regions an evaluation report drawn up by independent experts.

Information society: European multimedia content industry, INFO 2000 multi-annual programme

1995/0156(CNS) - 27/11/1995

The Council reached preliminary agreement on the proposal for a decision adopting a multiannual Community programme to stimulate the development of a European multimedia content industry and to encourage the use of multimedia content in the emerging information society (INFO 2000). It instructed the Permanent Representatives Committee to finalise the Decision once the European Parliament had delivered its opinion so that the programme could be adopted at a forthcoming meeting. INFO 2000 will cover a four--year period beginning on 1 January 1996. The programme will be allocated ECU 65 million, broken down as follows, for the following four action lines: (i) stimulating demand and raising awareness (22--32%); (ii) exploiting Europe 's public sector information (18--23%); (iii) triggering European multimedia potential (45--57%); (iv) support actions (3--8%). INFO 2000 is intended to stimulate the creation, development and distribution of European multimedia products and services. The purpose of the programme is to encourage this industry (which is largely composed of small, and often new, undertakings) to identify and exploit the new commercial

opportunities expected on this market, with the emphasis being laid on the move from print publishing to electronic publishing and the arrival of interactive multimedia information services.

Information society: European multimedia content industry, INFO 2000 multi-annual programme

1995/0156(CNS) - 28/05/2001

The Communication is based on an evaluation report presented to the European Commission in July 2000 assessing projects funded under the INFO 2000 programme. A successor to INFO 2000, known as eContent, is proposed. The objectives of eContent are based on the findings of the evaluation report. INFO 2000 was set up in 1996 based on Council Decision 96/339/EC. It was to run for four years (1996-2000) with a remit to raise awareness of, and to encourage the use of, multi-media contents in the emerging information society. Its target audiences are European industry, SME's and citizens. The objectives of the Council decision are to: - create favourable conditions for the development of the European multimedia content industry; - stimulate demand for, and use of, multimedia content; - contribute to the professional, social and cultural development of citizens; and lastly - to promote the exchange of knowledge between users and suppliers. Within the context of these objectives a budget of EUR 65 million was allocated to INFO 2000 and the following four action lines set up: - stimulating demand and raising awareness; - exploiting public sector information; - triggering Europe's multimedia potential; - support actions. These action lines formed the basis for project funding. An evaluation of INFO 2000 projects was undertaken by an independant company over a six month period (Jan 2000-July 2000). Overall the conclusion of the report were positive. For example, projects funded by INFO 2000 helped raise awareness of multimedia content amongst SME's at a time when the European Union was lagging seriously behind the United States. Further, projects encouraging liaisons between private and public sector organisations proved both stimulating and informative to participants. The evaluators did note however that cutting the original budget from EUR 100 million to EUR 65 million minimised the impact of various projects. It was further noted that the lack of harmonisation and standardisation in multimedia content across the EU effectively hinders the exploitation of its use. Whilst the Commission Communication accepts the latter conclusion it also notes that it is not within the remit of eContent to set standardisation issues but that it will in future try to facilitate standardisation projects.