Basic information

2000/2087(COS) COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)	Procedure completed
Audiovisual policy: media and digital technology **Subject** 3.30.01 Audiovisual industry and services 3.30.06 Information and communication technologies, digital technologies	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
CULT Culture, Youth, Education, Media and Sport	VELTRONI Walter (PSE)	22/02/2000

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
JURI Legal Affairs and Internal Market	TAJANI Antonio (PPE-DE)	18/04/2000
ITRE Industry, External Trade, Research, Energy	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
EMPL Employment and Social Affairs	ROCARD Michel (PSE)	17/12/1999
ENVI Environment, Public Health, Consumer Policy	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	

Council of the European Union

Council configuration	Meetings	Date
Culture	2261	2000-05-16

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
17/12/1999	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(1999)0657	Summary
17/03/2000	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
16/05/2000	Resolution/conclusions adopted by Council		Summary
13/07/2000	Vote in committee		Summary

13/07/2000	Committee report tabled for plenary	A5-0209/2000	
05/09/2000	Debate in Parliament		
06/09/2000	Decision by Parliament	T5-0365/2000	Summary
06/09/2000	End of procedure in Parliament		
07/05/2001	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2000/2087(COS)
Procedure type	COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)
Procedure subtype	Commission strategy paper
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 148 Rules of Procedure EP 050
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	CULT/5/12366

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A5-0209/2000 OJ C 135 07.05.2001, p. 0012	13/07/2000	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T5-0365/2000 OJ C 135 07.05.2001, p. 0083-0181	06/09/2000	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Non-legislative basic document	COM(1999)0657	17/12/1999	Summary

Other institutions and bodies

Institution/body	Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
CofR	Committee of the Regions: opinion	CDR0086/2000 OJ C 317 06.11.2000, p. 0025	14/06/2000	
EESC	Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report	CES1224/2000 OJ C 014 16.01.2001, p. 0114	19/10/2000	

Audiovisual policy: media and digital technology

2000/2087(COS) - 06/09/2000 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

In approving the report drafted by Mr Walter VELTRONI (PES, I), the European Parliament adopted the resolution on a Communication from the Commission on the 'Principles and guidelines for the Community's audiovisual policy in the digital age'. The European Parliament calls for an early revision of the 'television without frontiers' directive, by 2002 at the latest. The Commission, the Council and the Member States are called upon to ensure that the rules governing the new digital services offered via convergent networks reaffirm the specific nature of audiovisual services by comparison with all the services of the information society. Moreover, the importance of universal services must be recognised as a means of preventing social exclusion by ensuring that consumers have affordable access to communications services. In relation to the protection of minors, the Parliament calls on the Commission and the Member States, public broadcasting services, private broadcasters and all major operators in the audiovisual sector to step up experiments with systems for filtering programmes and other methods of parental control. It was highlighted by the Parliament that a Europe-wide coordination between the national regulatory authorities and the audiovisual sector regulators should be ensured. With regard to other initiatives concerning the audiovisual sector and related sectors, the Parliament calls on the Commission and the Member States to take steps to safeguard the balanced development of the digital audiovisual sector and the European music and digital broadcasting sectors. It is suggested that a study be carried out of the socio-economic impact of radio in Europe, focusing in particular on the role of local broadcasters, and to promote a move to the use of DAB standard. The Commission is also called on to propose further intiatives to develop cyber-cinema and to promote the simultaneous distribution of European cinematographic works in the Member States, on the basis of the experience acquired in connection with the Media Training and Media Plus programmes. In terms of financing, the Commission should take steps to encourage additional financing for European cinema, including the establishment of a guarantee fund. Lastly, on the international scene, the European Parliament calls on the Commission to ensure that, in international negotiations, the community insists on the distinction between regulating the medium and regulating content, so as to avoid the risk of audiovisual services being included among those which follow the rules of the networks and/or electronic commerce.

Audiovisual policy: media and digital technology

2000/2087(COS) - 17/12/1999 - Non-legislative basic document

PURPOSE : to present the principles and the guidelines for the Community's audiovisual policy in the digital age. CONTENT : digital technologies are bring about major changes in the audiovisual sector. These will very likely require the adoption of both the regulatory framework and the various support meachanisms for this sector. It is therefore of vital importance for the operators in this sector to benefit from a clear and predictable policy environment in which to plan investment and develop strategies for their businesses. This is essential if they are to make the most of the opportunities offered by the digital broadcasting and production techniques and by the new means of distribution and new types of activities, for example, via the Internet. This Communication is intended to contribute towards that predictability by setting out the European Commission's priorities for the next five years as well as the aims and the principles of the Community's audiovisual policy for the mid-term future. The Commission considers that the digital revolution does not call into question the need for audiovisual policy to identify relevant general interests and, where necessary, to protect them through the regulatory process. Technological developments, however, call for ongoing evaluation of the means and methods used, in order to ensure that they continue to be proportionate to the objectives to be achieved. In addition, audiovisual policy is concerned with services providing audiovisual content intended for the public: such services constitute "communication to the public" and may affect certain general interests associated with the media sector as a whole (for example, with regard to copyright and neighbouring rights, protecting the integrity of artistic works, the protection of minors, of consumers, cultural diversity and so on). With regard to regulation, the Commission proposes separate approaches to the regulation of transmission infrastructure and content: services providing audiovisual content should be regulated according to their nature and not according to their means of delivery. Adaptation should be evolutionary rather than revolutionary. A balanced approach to public service broadcasting is needed and self-regulatory mechanisms may well play a bigger role in achieving public interest objectives. In light of technological developments, the Commission considers that certian regulatory questions are likely to pose problems in the near future and therefore warrant further analysis now. These include cultural and linguisic diversity, questions of access to audiovisual content, the protection of minors and advertising. With regard to support mechanisms, the principles of complementarity beween national and European levels, Community added value and adaptability should apply. These are incrporated in the Commission's proposal for a new MEDIA programme. The proposed "MEDIA Plus" programme also takes account of the challenges and opportunities created by the digital age. Coordination between this end and other Community actions, such as the Fifth Framework Programme for Research and Development and the "eEurope" initiative will beensured. In external relations, and with regard to future trade negotiations in the framework of the WTO, it is vital for the Community and its Member States to maintain their freedom of action in the audiovisual sector if Europe is to retain its cultural and linguistic diversity. Similarly, it is important that the accession countries implement rapidly and in full the Community acquis in the audioviusual sector. In conclusion, the Commission reaffirms the fundamental principles which are the heart of the Community's audiovisual policy. The Community should develop this policy on the basis of the existing regulatory instruments and support mechanisms. Technological and market developments must be closely monitored to ensure that the relevant instruments are adapted as necessary. In this respect, and over the next five years, particular areas for attention will be the Television without Frontiers Directive, ensuring access to audiovisual content which reflects Europe's cultural and linguistic diversity, the protection of minors and consumer protection in advertising. Community support mechanisms for the audiovisual sector must be reinforced and adapted to ongoing developments and needs.

Audiovisual policy: media and digital technology

2000/2087(COS) - 16/05/2000

The Council held a first policy debate on the proposals presented by the Commission on 14 December 1999 on the new programme in support of the audiovisual industry. MEDIA Plus follows MEDIA I and MEDIA II and covers the period 2001 to 2005. The programme comprises: -a proposal for a decision on the implementation of a training programme for professionals in the European audiovisual industry ("MEDIA - Training"); -a proposal for a Decision on the implementation of a programme to encourage the development, distribution and promotion of European audiovisual works ("MEDIA Plus - Development, Distribution, Promotion"). The debate revolved around a number of questions which the Presidency had drawn up for the attention of the Council and which included: 1. "horizontal" questions relating to both proposals for decisions touching on the programme objectives and proposed approach as well as the balance between the industrial objectives and respect for linguistic and cultural diversity; 2. questions relating to MEDIA Plus (Development, Distribution and Promotion) as regards the relevance of the areas of intervention adopted and the importance to be

attached to new technologies; 3. questions relating to MEDIA Training concerning the relevance of the training areas and the best way of ensuring coherence and complementarity between MEDIA Training and MEDIA Plus. Following the discussion of these issues, the Presidency drew the following conclusions: -there was wide-ranging consensus among the delegations on the Commission's proposals as they stood; -the proposals were generally considered adequate insofar as they offer the necessary proportion of subsidiarity between national and Community aid; -the proposed programme is appropriately geared towards the different contexts and national features, largely due to the measures suggested for positive discrimination; -several delegations identified the sectors of promotion and distribution as the weak links in the European audiovisual industry and thus requested that most funding go to these areas; -special attention should be paid to the use of new technologies in the framework of MEDIA Plus, while at the same time ensuring enough flexibility for the programmes implementation; moreover, complementarity with other Community policies and initiatives in this field should be sought; -as regards training, emphasis should be placed on further training for professionals; -pending the European Parliament's opinion, the Council has not yet taken a position on the overall budget. The Chairman said that these activities would be pursued vigorously until the end of the Portuguese Presidency and that the incoming French Presidency had let it be known that it would do its utmost so that the programme could enter into force in early 2001 as planned.