Basic information

2004/2238(INI) INI - Own-initiative procedure	Procedure completed
Implementing the information and communication strategy for the European Union **Subject** 3.30 Information and communications in general 8 State and evolution of the Union	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
CULT Culture and Education	HERRERO-TEJEDOR Luis (PPE-DE)	05/10/2004

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
LIBE Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
AFCO Constitutional Affairs	KAUFMANN Sylvia-Yvonne (GUE/NGL)	20/01/2005

Council of the European Union

Council configuration	Meetings	Date
General Affairs	2590	2004-06-14

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
20/04/2004	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2004)0196	Summary
14/06/2004	Resolution/conclusions adopted by Council		Summary
16/12/2004	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
21/04/2005	Vote in committee		Summary
26/04/2005	Committee report tabled for plenary	A6-0111/2005	
12/05/2005	Decision by Parliament	T6-0183/2005	Summary
12/05/2005	Results of vote in Parliament		

12/05/2005	Debate in Parliament		
12/05/2005	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2004/2238(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 55
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	CULT/6/24919

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee opinion	AFCO	PE355.560	20/04/2005	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A6-0111/2005	26/04/2005	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T6-0183/2005 OJ C 092 20.04.2006, p. 0302-0403 E	12/05/2005	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Non-legislative basic document	COM(2004)0196	20/04/2004	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	SP(2005)2765	22/07/2005	

Implementing the information and communication strategy for the European Union

2004/2238(INI) - 20/04/2004 - Non-legislative basic document

PURPOSE : to present a Commission communication on implementing the information and communication strategy for the European Union.

CONTENT : this Commission communication concerns the implementation and communication strategy for the European Union. If the EU's information and communication strategy adopted on 2 July 2002 is to succeed it must be adopted at the highest policy-making level and must itself be based on the institution's policy priorities. The forthcoming years must be used to consolidate the achievements of the EU's information and communication strategy since July 2002. The enlargement of the EU only enhances the importance of the concepts of partnership and decentralisation that underlie this strategy.

Its successful implementation will depend on the tasks the Commission sets itself and the Member States in this growing field of communication and on the resources that are available.

In the case of the Commission, the initiating, coordinating and planning role of the central administration must be enhanced, but at the same time the tasks of the representations must be defined in a way that is more in keeping with their resources.

The cohesiveness of the strategy will also require better coordination of the Commission's own resources as regards both its means of communication and its internal communication culture

From now on, these objectives should be implemented in a new context characterised by the necessary adjustment of the resources available with a view to the Union's enlargement.

In accordance with its institutional prerogatives, the Commission will have to face this new situation with staff numbers unchanged for its headquarters and particularly limited human resources for the establishment of 10 new representations. Thus, 2005 will be the first year in which the information and communication strategy will apply in full in EU-25.

The Commission believes that the principal objective is "to improve perception of the European Union and its Institutions and their legitimacy by deepening knowledge and understanding of its tasks, structure and achievements and by establishing a dialogue with its citizens". This includes in particular raising the quality of European public debate, associating the public in European decision-making, listening to the public and their concerns more attentively, and the methodical, consistent rebuilding of the EU's image.

As stated in its communication of 2 July 2002, the Commission has so far concentrated on four defined priority information topics: enlargement, the future of the Union, the area of freedom, security and justice, and the euro. It has also obtained Parliament's and the Council's agreement for a fifth PRINCE topic in 2004 – the role of Europe in the world – the more fully to meet the concerns of the Union's citizens.

The fact that various significant events will be taking place in 2004 makes it absolutely essential to update the strategies underlying the different priority information topics mentioned. In the first place this concerns enlargement. This communication strategy must be pursued beyond the decisive date of 1 May 2004; it should not be confined to simply explaining the arrival of ten new Member States but should also cover the ongoing negotiations with the other candidate countries and the further dimension of the new neighbourhood policy. This involves educating the public about a continuing process of drawing the frontiers of tomorrow's Union. The guidelines laid down by the Commission in its communication of 10 May 2000 are still the appropriate reference.

A review is even more warranted where the future of the Union is concerned. The negotiations at the Intergovernmental Conference are still going on, and the new strategy to be implemented with regard to the new constitutional treaty will therefore have to take account of the European elections and, in particular, of the new timetable for future negotiations.

Beyond 2004, which is a transitional year, it is also essential to think about the relevance of other topics, which may, with an eye to consistency, correspond more fully to the Commission's policy priorities.

Apart from updating current topics, the timetable for 2004 will also provide an opportunity

for preparing, for 2005, a better match between the strategic priorities of the new Commission, set out each year in the Annual Policy Strategy decision, and the various priority information topics. Full account will also have to be taken of the fresh priorities identified in the new financial perspective.

The Commission is of the opinion that the enlargement of the EU will have to be flanked by a greater degree of interinstitutional cooperation, based on better programming and a more structured redefinition of the various priority information topics for 2005 and subsequent years. The programming will also have to be multiannual. It could, for instance, cover a four- to five-year period (2005-2009), accompanied by annual monitoring and mid-term review, based on impact indicators yet to be defined, the more accurately to reflect Parliament's term and the Commission's mandate.

The Commission deals with the issue of the means available to the Commission which are both centralised and dispersed. Meeting the challenge of developing information and communication strategy in the context of EU-25 requires not only the adaptation and extension of all means to this new horizon (partnerships proposed with the Member States as well as with their local and regional bodies, relays and networks, various audiovisual tools, multimedia and surveys), as well as the provision of sufficient resources both at headquarters and in the 25 representations.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT :

- Total allocation for action (financial intervention and technical assistance): EUR 193.239 million in CA (EUR 65.169 million in CA in 2004; EUR 63.835 in 2005; EUR 64.235 million in 2006.

- Period of application : 2004-2006.

- Overall multiannual estimate of expenditure 2004-2006 (commitment appropriations and by budget line) :

- Financial intervention : EUR 179.205 million broken down as follows:

16 02 02 – Citizens' information via the media : EUR 28.165 million;

16 02 03 – Direct communication – Media : EUR 8.300 million ;

16 03 01 - Public opinion analysis and proximity actions : EUR 22.800 million;

16 03 02 - Actions in the field of communication : EUR 27.190 million;

16 04 02 - Tools for information to the citizens : EUR 24.250 million;

16 04 03 - Communication tools : EUR 15.900 million;

16 05 01 - Information outlets : EUR 52.600 million.

Technical assistance : EUR 14.034 million broken down as follows :

16.01 04 01 - General information work concerning the EU : EUR 0.540 million;

16010402 – Information outlets : EUR 0.942 million;

16010403 - PRINCE Programme : EUR 8.352 million;

16010404 - Communication work : EUR 4.200 million.

- Overall financial impact of human resources and other administrative expenditure : EUR 3.900 (1.300 million EUR/year.

- Total cost 2004-2006: EUR 197.139 million.

Implementing the information and communication strategy for the European Union

2004/2238(INI) - 12/05/2005 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

Parliament adopted a non-binding report on the EU's information and communication strategy with 398 votes in favour, 54 against and 55 abstentions. (Please refer to the summary dated 21/04/2005).

In addition to the summary concerning the committee’s decision on this report, Parliament believes that there is also a need to find a formula that will make it possible to involve regional and local media more closely in information and communication policy. The Commission is called upon to hold an "ideas competition" which would enable original proposals to be brought together on the best ways of putting the European message across.

Parliament is of the opinion that greater financial resources should be allocated to Eurobarometer, to enable it to compile much fuller and more rigorous reports.

Lastly, Parliament notes that the Prince Programme has traditionally been based on partnership between the Commission and the Member States. It stresses the need for parliamentary involvement in the determination of Prince priorities and believes that MEPs should be fully involved in events organised under the aegis of the Prince Programme. It welcomes the Commission's suggestion that the programming and monitoring of Prince be adapted to more accurately reflect Parliament's term.

Implementing the information and communication strategy for the European Union

2004/2238(INI) - 14/06/2004

The Council has adopted conclusions on the information and communication strategy for the European Union. It agrees on the necessity to regularly update the selected information topics and the underpinning communication strategies in line with the information needs of citizens as identified, inter alia, in opinion polls and surveys. It underlines, in the context of the "Future of Europe" priority topic, the need for Member States and Institutions to deploy major efforts to ensure that European citizens are well-informed about the future Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe. Council invites Member States and the Commission to implement special communication actions aimed at addressing the information needs of all schools students. The Council considers that the objectives and content of campaigns on "Enlargement" should be redefined and adapted in the light of the accession of the ten new Member States. It stresses the need to put greater emphasis on the "Area of Freedom, Security and Justice" by increasing budgetary allocations and by undertaking joint information initiatives on aspects of particular relevance to citizens like the fight against crime and terrorism.

Great importance is attached to the "Role of Europe in the World", including the need to inform citizens on ESDP, especially in connection with the missions being carried out under that policy; calls for interested Member States and Institutions to consider co-ordinated activities in this regard in the forthcoming years. It urges strongly that budgetary allocations and personnel resources for priority topics under the PRINCE programme should be consistent with the communication challenges ahead, at both institutional and local level. The need need to facilitate effective co-operation between Member States and the Commission's Representations in the Member States is underlined.

Moreover, it recommends the future regrouping of the PRINCE budget in a single budget line in

order to make the best use of available funds. It shares the Commission's view that PRINCE should continue to be based on partnership between Commission and Member States. "Strategic partnerships" are considered to be the most practicable option for implementation and invites interested Member States to define and carry out joint communication plans whose measures are financed separately but complementarily by Member States and the Commission.

Concerning the information relays and networks, the Council notes their extremely pro-active role as multipliers of information and considers them to be crucial suppliers of information to the general public and wishes to preserve their valuable experience and know-how. The need to create a stable legal framework which guarantees funding of networks from 2005 onwards and their operability, thus preventing any interruption in the flow of information provided to the public was agreed.

The Council reiterates the key-role of the Interinstitutional Group on Information (IGI) in laying

down guidelines for EU communication and information activities, selecting the priorities for future initiatives and making suggestions for the conduct and financing of the major information campaigns. Lastly, it stresses the need to implement the EU communication and information strategy in

conformity with the IGI orientations.