

Community participation in the European Audiovisual Observatory

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The Committee on Culture and Education adopted the own-initiative report by Ivo **BELET** (EPP-ED, BE) on Community participation in the European Audiovisual Observatory. It recognises that the Observatory plays a vital role by providing detailed information on the sector to both public and private bodies in the field.

The report stresses that multimedia and new technologies will play an ever greater role in the audiovisual sector and that the Observatory must, in due course, strengthen its capacity to follow these new developments in order to continue to play an important role in the sector. MEPs call on the Observatory, in this respect, to extend its activities to cover more specifically the latest challenges that are created by media convergence and new developments (giving particular attention to the analysis of the impact of digitalisation on the film and audiovisual industry in general and the analysis of online audiovisual services, mobile TV and video games).

MEPs emphasise that the Observatory must be provided with the **resources necessary** to continue realising its objectives, thereby effectively keeping step with new developments in multimedia and new technologies.

Towards new tasks: MEPs welcome the Observatory's publication on copyright and other related rights. They suggest that the Observatory cover these issues systematically and extend its coverage to include the issue of tax and labour law in the audiovisual sector in Europe. They invite the Observatory to provide suggestions and policy options which could serve as a basis for European policy.

In addition, MEPs recommend that the Observatory should carry out an analysis on developing models of cooperation with partners from third countries.

Although MEPs recognise that whilst some specific areas, such as media literacy, are not currently within the field of activity of the Observatory, exploration of such issues should be envisaged.

MEPs recognise the cultural differences between Member States which may result in different ways of dealing with harmful or offensive audiovisual material, especially vis-à-vis minors, therefore they recall the need for minimum harmonisation in the field of protection of minors as laid down in the Audiovisual Media Services Directive and the actions taken under the Safer Internet plus programme.

In this respect, MEPs call on the Observatory to monitor the different (legal) instruments and to develop policy options.

Raising awareness and information: MEPs encourage the wider dissemination of the Observatory's publications through an intensified communications policy in order to promote awareness of its activities. They encourage the Observatory to provide, in cooperation with its members, more data on the availability of specific audiovisual services such as subtitling, audio description and sign language, designed to assist disabled people.