

Procedure file

Basic information	
COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic) 2001/2087(COS)	Procedure completed
Audiovisual industry and information: protection of minors and human dignity. Evaluation report	
Subject 3.30.16 Ethical information policy 4.10.03 Child protection, children's rights	

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	CULT Culture, Youth, Education, Media and Sport		22/01/2002
		PPE-DE BEAZLEY Christopher	
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	LIBE Citizens' Freedoms and Rights, Justice and Home Affairs		25/04/2001
		PSE ROURE Martine	
	JURI Legal Affairs and Internal Market		24/04/2001
		PSE MCCARTHY Arlene	
Council of the European Union	Council configuration	Meeting	Date
	Culture	2361	21/06/2001
European Commission	Commission DG	Commissioner	
	Education, Youth, Sport and Culture		

Key events			
27/02/2001	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2001)0106	Summary
14/05/2001	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
21/06/2001	Resolution/conclusions adopted by Council		Summary
19/02/2002	Vote in committee		Summary
19/02/2002	Committee report tabled for plenary	A5-0037/2002	
11/04/2002	Debate in Parliament		
11/04/2002	Decision by Parliament	T5-0182/2002	Summary
11/04/2002	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2001/2087(COS)
Procedure type	COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)
Procedure subtype	Commission strategy paper
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 142
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	CULT/5/14687

Documentation gateway					
Non-legislative basic document		COM(2001)0106	27/02/2001	EC	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A5-0037/2002	19/02/2002	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T5-0182/2002 OJ C 127 29.05.2003, p. 0593-0667 E	11/04/2002	EP	Summary

Audiovisual industry and information: protection of minors and human dignity. Evaluation report

PURPOSE : to present the evaluation report from the Commission on the application of the Council Recommendation 98/560/EC of 24 September 1998 concerning the protection of minors and human dignity. **CONTENT** : the Recommendation invites the Member States, industries and parties concerned and the Commission to take step to enhance the protection of minors and human dignity in the broadcasting and Internet sectors. The need for the establishment of a safe environment has recently been stressed by the European Parliament when it adopted the above-mentioned resolution on Parental Control. Overall, after 2 years, the results of the application of the Recommendation are encouraging, although interested parties and in particular consumers should have been more involved in the establishment of codes of conduct. The Member States have applied the Recommendation in a heterogeneous way; nevertheless it should be stressed that most of the Member States have launched campaigns for a safer use of the internet and that some have introduced new legislation or supported measures such as hotlines to the police to deal with child pornography. The heterogeneity of the measures is not surprising, taking into account both cultural heterogeneity and the variation in development of Internet. Industry, in particular through ICRA, is working on the development of reliable filter and rating systems for Internet which can be individually adapted to the cultural values of citizens in the different Member States. As far as digital broadcasting is concerned, work by the industry is less developed. The DVB has expressed to the Commission its willingness to lead efforts in this area provided the European legislator gives a clear sign to the industry. Lastly, the results of the Report show that the challenges are to be met with respect to the protection of minors and human dignity across all the media, be it Internet, broadcasting, videogames or supports like videocassettes and DVDs. Renewed efforts need to be made to ensure a coherent approach, in particular as convergence will continue to increase, with Internet TV, interactive broadcasting or downloading of videogames from the Internet. The involvement of users including consumers should also be encouraged. Approaches like the establishment of the Dutch NICAM-Institute and the British Communications White Paper demonstrate that much can be achieved under coregulation or self-regulation and may constitute an orientation for further implementation of the Recommendation.

Audiovisual industry and information: protection of minors and human dignity. Evaluation report

The Council welcomed the Commission's Evaluation Report. It noted the conclusions of the report and recalled the European Parliament resolution of 5 October 2000 on the Commission Communication on the study of parental control of broadcasting, which stressed the need to introduce effective systems to protect minors from the increasing amount of harmful media content. The Council invited the Member States to:

- continue promoting the Recommendation and to pay particular attention to the need to encourage users and consumers participation;
- disseminate the results of the application of the Recommendation including users, consumers, industry and authorities in order to promote best practice and new skills. The Council invited the Commission to:
- continue promoting the application of the Recommendation by facilitating the exchange of experience and good practice at Community level;
- report to Council, with reference to the fact that two years may be a relatively short time for fully applying the Recommendation preferably before 31/12/02, on the outcome regarding the initiatives taken in Member States;
- continue the dialogue with the different parties involved and particularly with industry, on the possibilities for implementing technical systems for parental control in the digital environment.?

Audiovisual industry and information: protection of minors and human dignity. Evaluation report

The committee adopted the report by Christopher BEAZLEY (EPP-ED, UK) on the Commission's Evaluation Report. It noted that children's welfare was primarily the responsibility of their legal guardians, though this did not absolve suppliers and distributors of audiovisual content,

nor drafters of legislation, from their responsibilities. The committee favoured self-regulation by the industry and was concerned at recent moves to block access to certain websites, saying that such drastic measures did not solve the problem of sites outside the EU nor that of sites which were legal for adults but could be harmful to children or young people nor the question of fragmented access to the internet. By contrast, the emergence of service providers' self-regulation facilities in the Member States was welcomed and MEPs called on the Commission to promote and support networking and exchanges of experience between these bodies. With reference to the 1999 action plan to promote safer use of the internet, the committee called on the Member States to set up hotlines to handle complaints about illegal or harmful content. It also believed that consumer groups, voluntary associations and NGOs should be more closely involved in the implementation of the 1998 Council recommendation on the protection of minors and human dignity. MEPs further highlighted the need for greater cooperation at European and international levels to combat illegal content. In addition, the committee wanted the DVB (Digital Video Broadcasting) consortium to work on the development of reliable filter and rating systems for digital broadcasting, while the Commission was urged to promote the creation of user-friendly content filter systems at affordable prices so as to support parental control. However, the committee said that technical measures were no substitute for making service providers liable for the content they provide and that consequently such providers should be legally required to comply with rules designed to protect minors from harmful content. ?

Audiovisual industry and information: protection of minors and human dignity. Evaluation report

The European Parliament adopted the resolution drafted by Christopher BEAZLEY (EPP-ED, UK) on the Commission's evaluation report. (Please refer to the document dated 19/02/02). The Commission is asked to promote the creation of user-friendly content filter systems at affordable prices, so as to provide effective support for parental control both over the use of the Internet and over audiovisual media. Member States should incorporate the teaching of media literacy into the educational system in order to enable consumers to use the media in a manner geared to the values of society and to develop a sense of judgment in these matters. Media education should particularly be included in the school curriculum. Parliament went on to state that cooperation between the Internet industry, governments and national and regional authorities is the most effective way to tackle harmful content on the Internet. ?