European Commission: Viviane Reding Urges a Revision of the “Television without Frontiers” Directive

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Irene Gentile
European Audiovisual Observatory

On 22 June 2001, on the occasion of the Luxembourg RTL Group conference held in Venice, Viviane Reding, the member of the European Commission responsible for Education and Culture, spoke about the amendments to be made to the "Television without Frontiers" Directive (hereinafter "the Directive") in the light of technological changes.

In particular, Ms Reding considered that there are some areas where technological and market changes are posing serious challenges to the regulatory framework. The provisions of the Directive concerning advertising, for example, should be rethought, given the new range of advertising and marketing techniques that become possible with digital technology. Moreover, concerning the protection of minors, the increasing use of a wide range of electronic media by children (television, Internet, computer games, video cassettes and DVD's) would call for a coherent classification system of content, according to its suitability for children, in order to create filtering devices. Finally, in a new landscape where the number of channels is no longer limited, the question arises of knowing whether quotas are still an effective means of ensuring cultural diversity and pluralism or whether a flexible regulatory framework encouraging innovation and transition would be a more appropriate tool.

The Commissioner also envisaged the publication of three studies in early 2002. They will concern the impact of measures to promote the distribution and the production of European TV programmes, technological developments in the audiovisual sector and new advertising techniques. A proposal for amending the Directive will be published by the end of 2002.

Ms Viviane Reding, Member of the European Commission responsible for Education and Culture: "Television without Frontiers : amending the directive". RTL Group Management Conference, Venice, 22 June 2001. Speech/01/304

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