European Commission: Communication on the Promotion of the European Multimedia Industry

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On 30 June 1995, the European Commission presented a Communication to the Council and the European Parliament in which it sets out a programme to stimulate the development of a European multimedia content industry and to encourage the use of multimedia content in the emerging information society. The programme would run from 1996 through 1999 at the cost of approximately ECU 100 million.

The activities of the content industry are considered to be creation, development and packaging and distribution of content-based products and services. The content industry, according to the Commission, is composed of the print publishing, electronic publishing and audio-visual industries. The objective of the programme is to establish an integrated policy approach at the European level by creating the pre-conditions for a thriving content industry, identified in the Communication as the liberalisation of telecommunicaions networks and services, the adoption of a clear and stable regulatory framework, particularly in relation to intellectual property rights and privacy protection, and the pomotion of research and technological development on applications of public interest. In total, the Communication identifies 11 actions to trigger the European multimedia potential, amongst which projects to catalyse high quality European multimedia content, to observe and analyse the multimedia content market, to spread the use of multimedia content standards, to encourage skills development at European level and a project to trade multimedia intellectual property rights.

In regard to the latter, the Commission announces that it intends to launch a call for proposals for pilot projects that lay down the foundations for cross-border trading of multimedia rights electronically. Studies will be launched to determine how different intellectual property rights trading systems for multimedia in Europe can work together. In the longer term, the Commission reckons that harmonisation and rationalisation of legal requirements may be necessary. It is now up to the European Council to adopt a formal decision to implement the proposed programme.

Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament of 30 June 1995 concerning a multi-annual Community programme "INFO 2000", COM(95) 149 final.

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