

European Parliament: Resolution on "Europe and the global information society"

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At its sitting on 19 September 1996, the European Parliament adopted a comprehensive resolution on matters concerning the information society. The resolution recalls the targets set out in its previous resolution of 30.11.1994, repeating its call for the creation of a European regulatory authority on communications and the promotion of new standards at European and global level.

The resolution covers the following areas in particular:

- effects on society and on citizen's rights (as a result of the development of the information society); the Commission is called upon to have gender-specific research carried out on this.
- legal aspects and intellectual property: the European Parliament proposes that the EU should adopt a common position with WIPO and WTO/TRIP on further protection of intellectual property. State intervention in respect of copyright law, citizens' rights and law enforcement should be determined internationally (the European Parliament suggests that the national parliaments of the G7 states should organise joint initiatives in this area). The European Parliament stresses the urgent need to set up framework legislation in these areas as quickly as possible. It also felt there was a risk in the Commission's habit of referring to Art.90 of the EC Treaty in order to adapt a number of liberalisation directives (eg cable television) of the differences between States becoming even more pronounced.
- broadcasting: the European Parliament was in favour of maintaining the concept of broadcasting with the consequences for example of special authorisation procedures.
- employment: the EU is called upon to make funds available for innovative projects such as telecentres, electronic offices and teleworkshops for businesses in the future.
- industrial policy and telecommunications: the European Parliament calls on the Commission and the Member States to lay down the legislative framework, particularly as regards taxation, within which small and medium-sized businesses

could invest.

- aspects concerning research and development: the Commission is urged to embark without delay on the pilot projects agreed on in the Bangemann Report and at the G7 summit and to develop as quickly as possible the necessary complementary measures in policy regulations and legal provisions.

Further points in the Resolution concern the areas of initial and further training, organisation and quality of work, social cohesion and linguistic, educational, cultural and social aspects.

The European Parliament believes that policy on the information society has too long been aimed solely at the economic aspect, neglecting the question of whether and how future developments could be of use to citizens. The time had come to catch up and start discussions with them. In view of the speed of developments, it was no longer possible to await a Green Paper from the Commission; instead, the Commission should put forward an action plan, if possible before the end of 1996.

Resolution on “Europe and the global information society - Recommendations to the European Council” and on a communication from the Commission of the European Communities: “Europe’s way to the information society: an action plan” (COM(94)0347 - C4-0093/94); A4-0244/96, Brussels, 19 September 1996

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