

European Commission: Public Consultation on Challenges and Opportunities for Audiovisual Media in the Online Age

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In accordance with the Europe 2020 Strategy, the EU is aiming at becoming a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy. Since the cultural industries in Europe, including the audiovisual sector, contribute significantly to the EU economy and innovation, the European Commission has focused on this sector in the Europe 2020 and IPR Strategy. The goal is to create a digital single market wherein the internet is borderless. For the time being, the online markets in the EU are still fragmented by multiple barriers.

Because of the shift from broadcasting over air, satellite or cable towards on-demand services, new digital platforms, social media and “cloud-based services”, new legal issues and business models have arisen. The European Commission has acknowledged the current developments by the publication of a consultation on the online distribution of audiovisual works in the European Union. Stakeholders are asked to comment and advise on how to best to seize the opportunities for TV and film in the online age.

The Green Paper assesses the impact of the advent of the internet on the audiovisual sector. It refers to new business models, more online services and better remuneration for rightsholders in the context of online distribution and exploitation as points of attention for creators, industry and consumers. The Green Paper also discusses the issue of rights clearance for films and television. Finally, special uses of audiovisual works are addressed, such as the preservation of film heritage and their online availability and the accessibility problems to cultural material that disabled persons experience.

Internal Market Commissioner Michel Barnier, who initiated the Green Paper, stated: "I want to ensure that Europeans can seize the opportunities offered by the internet. It is important for me to hear the views of all stakeholders concerned - creators, performers, producers, distributors and consumers. The results of this consultation will provide a significant contribution to the initiatives I am preparing, including a legislative proposal on collective copyright licensing, an examination of the framework set by the 2001 Information Society Directive, and a review of the Intellectual Property Enforcement Directive."

Replies can be submitted up until 18 November 2011.

Green Paper on the online distribution of audiovisual works in the European Union: opportunities and challenges towards a digital single market, Brussels, 13 July 2011, COM(2011) 427 final

http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/consultations/2011/audiovisual_en.htm

