European Parliament: Resolution of the European Parliament on the Commission Green Paper Concerning the Protection of Minors and Human Dignity in Audio-visual and Information Services

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Frédéric Pinard
European Audiovisual Observatory

Taking the Commission Green Paper as a basis, the European Parliament, in its October session, adopted a resolution on the protection of minors and human dignity. Following the example of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, it also stressed its attachment to the right to freely receive or transmit information on any kind of media but considers that its application should not as a result adversely affect dignity or private life or the development of minors. The Parliament notes that national solutions do not provide satisfactory answers to the legal problems posed by the globalisation and crossborder nature of the various means of communication and it appeals for a harmonisation of measures concerning the protection of minors and human dignity, both on a national and international level. The Parliament considers minimum legal obligations for content providers and a self-regulatory system are means to this end. For the content providers, gradual responsibility could be envisaged, according to the technical degree of control and awareness that the provider has over the material that he supplies (for example, unlimited responsibility for contents made up by the provider himself). Codes of practice should also be drawn up, adopting a broad definition of what can be defined as harmful and it is also urged that filtering mechanisms be given large-scale testing. Associations, grass-roots and consumer organisations are also being called upon to help draw up measures and to define the level of responsibility of each of the groups involved (consumers, providers, etc.). These measures should take into account the specific nature of the service provided and should take the level of protection obtained in the radio broadcasting sector as a reference standard.

Resolution on the Commission Green Paper on the protection of minors and human dignity in audiovisual and information services, Minutes of the sitting of 24 October 1997 - provisional edition

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