

Culture, Welsh Language and Sport Committee

CWLS(2)-07-04(p.2)

Date: 9 June 2004

Time: 9.00am – 12.00pm

Venue: Committee Room 2, National Assembly for Wales

European Union Documents: January 2004 – May 2004

Purpose

1. To consider recent European Union (EU) documents related to the Culture, Welsh Language and Sport portfolio.

Background

2. Scrutinising EU documents deposited in the UK Parliament is a new regular item for the Committee, following agreement by the Panel of Chairs of a system for more proactive scrutiny of European proposals and legislation by subject committees.

3. This paper has been compiled by the Members' Research Service.

Deposited Documents

4. Details of thirteen all EU documents deposited in the UK Parliament between 1 January 2004 and 21 May 2004, considered to be of interest, are attached.

5. Members may wish to seek information from the Minister on the likely impact of these proposals in Wales and whether the Assembly Government has scope to influence the proposals. The Committee may wish to identify for future scrutiny those items where there is scope for influence, with a view to making representations to the Assembly Government, UK Government and/or European Commission.

Recommendation

6. The Committee is invited to consider the attached documents and seek further information from the

Minister about the implications of the proposals for Wales. Where there is scope to influence, the Committee may wish to identify items for future scrutiny.

Frequency of Review

7. The Committee is also invited to decide how often it would like to consider EU documents relevant to its portfolio e.g. every meeting/every other meeting.

Members' Research and Committee Services

June 2004

Committee Ref: CWLS (2) 07-04

Culture, Welsh Language and Sport Committee:

Summary of European proposals relevant to Culture, Welsh Language and Sport Committee.

Abstract

This paper describes and summarises the main points of each of the following European proposals deposited in the UK Parliament between 01 January 2004 and 21 May 2004.

Title	Commentary
<p>Proposal for a Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Council Decision No 1999/784/EC concerning Community participation in the European Audiovisual Observatory</p> <p>EU Ref: 16203/03</p> <p>http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/com/pdf/2003/com2003_0763en02.pdf</p>	<p>The Observatory was established in Strasbourg in 1992. Its Statute stipulates that "the aim of the Observatory shall be to improve the transfer of information within the audio-visual industry, to promote a clearer view of the market and a greater transparency. In doing so, the Observatory shall pay particular attention to ensuring reliability, compatibility and comparability of information".</p> <p>The Observatory's contribution to the achievement of the policy objectives of knowledge dissemination and market transparency will be improved by the implementation of a new strategy at present under development with the participation of the Commission.</p>

The Commission considers it would be appropriate to extend the Community participation in the Observatory for a period of two years. This short extension will allow to cover a critical period for the definition of the future patterns of the Observatory activity and can be lodged in the present Community's financial perspectives without any prejudice for future decisions, which will be taken in 2006 with the full knowledge of the features of the Observatory's new remit and financial framework.

Through the proposal the European Commission therefore proposes:

- To prolong the Community participation in the Observatory for two years up to 31/12/2006;
- To maintain the yearly budget at the level of 2004, i.e. €235,000.

Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions:

"The future of European regulatory audiovisual policy"

EU Ref: 16206/03

http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/com/cnc/2003/com2003_0784en01.pdf

On 15 December 2003 the European Commission adopted a Communication which sets out a roadmap for future EU regulatory action in the audiovisual sector. The Communication presents the results of the public consultation relating to the review of the "Television without Frontiers" Directive, launched at the beginning of 2003, and on the basis of these results proposes a number of short and medium term initiatives.

The Commission has concluded that the current situation of the market does not require at present a revision of the Directive. However, it believes that in the medium term technological developments and changes in the structure of the audiovisual market might make changes to regulation for the different distribution channels for audiovisual content necessary. It thus envisages a possible thorough revision of the Directive at a later stage.

COM(2004) 154 final - Communication from the Commission: Making citizenship Work: fostering European culture and diversity through programmes for Youth, Culture, Audiovisual and Civic Participation

EU Ref: 7352/04

http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/com/cnc/2004/com2004_0154en01.pdf

Following a public consultation and an official evaluation, in March 2004, the Commission adopted a communication on the future YOUTH programme, due to replace the current programme when it expires in 2006. The communication recommends that the YOUTH programme should continue to be a distinct programme, and its key aims should be promoting active citizenship and solidarity of young people. The proposal suggests extending the age limits for the programme to cover a 13-30 age group. The communication does not enter into details about what the budget will be. This information will only be known later in the year (probably July), when the Commission is due to adopt a packet of legislative proposals on all education and culture programmes.

COM(2004) 175 final - Amended proposal for a Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council modifying Council Decision 2008/821/EC of 20 December 2000 on the implementation of a programme to encourage the development, distribution and promotion of European audiovisual works (MEDIA Plus – Development, Distribution and Promotion)

EU Ref: 7426/04

http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/com/pdf/2004/com2004_0175en01.pdf

In April 2003 the Commission put forward a proposal to extend the MEDIA Plus and Training programmes (2001-05) by one year. At its first reading of the Commission's proposal in February 2004, the European Parliament put forward two amendments.

The first requires that an assessment of the Media Plus programme be carried out by 31 December 2005 in order to allow the Parliament and the Council to consider the proposal for the new successor programme to Media Plus which will run from 2007 to 2013. The Commission has accepted this amendment. The Commission has now put forward outline proposals for a new programme with a view to producing detailed legislative proposals in July 2004.

The second amendment increases the budget for 2004 and 2005 by a total of €18m to take account of enlargement in those two years. The Commission has accepted this increase.

The overarching aim of the Media Plus (Development, Distribution and Promotion) programme is to strengthen the competitiveness of the European audiovisual industry through a series of support measures. Media Plus provides support both before and after production of audiovisual works, but does not support actual production, which is left to national mechanisms. The programme finances the development of production

projects as well as the distribution and promotion of European audiovisual works and the development of digital pilot projects.

COM(2004) 176 final - Amended proposal for a Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council modifying Decision No 163/2001/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 January 2001 on the implementation of a training programme for professionals in the European audiovisual programme industry (MEDIA-Training) (2001-2005)

EU Ref: 7427/04

http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/com/pdf/2004/com2004_0176en01.pdf

The 'MEDIA Training' Programme, adopted by the Council on 19 January 2001 for a five-year period with a budget of €50m, will end on 31 December 2005. The purpose of this proposal for a Decision is to extend the programme unchanged for one additional year (2006). A budget of €7.4m is proposed for this one-year extension, taking account of a Europe of 25 Member States. This amount will be additional to the current €50m (thus a budget of €57.4m).

The amended proposal adapts the original proposal by taking account of the impact of enlargement for the years 2004 and 2005, whereas the Commission proposal only took account of enlargement for the extension for the year 2006. This will clarify the budgetary framework for the remainder of the Programme.

Two amendments were adopted in plenary session.

Amendment 1 introduces a requirement for the Commission to provide a full and detailed assessment report on the 'MEDIA Training' Programme not later than 31 December 2005 in order to allow the European Parliament and the Council to consider the proposal for a new programme for Community action in the audiovisual sector, announced for 2004 and planned to start in 2007.

Amendment 2 modifies the budget proposed by the Commission. The amount of €57.4m is replaced by an amount of €59.4m. The additional amount of €2m is intended to take account of the impact of enlargement for 2004 and 2005 (as laid down in the Communication of the Commission COM (2003) 777).

The Commission has accepted both amendments proposed by the Parliament. The Commission intends to present an assessment report on the MEDIA programmes by 31 December 2005 as specified.

COM(2004) 171 final - Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the follow-up to the Commission communication on certain legal aspects relating to cinematographic and other audiovisual works (Cinema communication) of 26.09.2001 (published in OJ C 43 on 16.2.2002)

Proposal for a Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on film heritage and the competitiveness of related industrial activities

EU Ref: 7583/04

http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/com/pdf/2004/com2004_0171en01.pdf

The Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on certain legal aspects relating to cinematographic and other audiovisual works tackled, among others, two issues that are of vital importance for the cinematographic industry: State aid to cinema and protection of heritage. The present Communication is the follow-up to that Communication.

In the field of State aid, the Commission intends to provide legal security to the sector, by clearly stating the rules to be applied until 30 June 2007. In relation to film heritage, the Commission proposes adopting a Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on film heritage and the competitiveness of related industrial activities.

COM(2004) 341 final - Proposal for a Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council

on the protection of minors and human dignity and the right of reply in relation to the competitiveness of the European audiovisual and information services industry

EU Ref: 9195/04

http://europa.eu.int/smartapi/cgi/sga_doc?smartapi!celexplus!prod!CELEXnumdoc&lg=en&numdoc=52004PC0341

On 24 September 1998, the Council adopted a Recommendation on the development of the competitiveness of the European audiovisual and information services industry by promoting national frameworks aimed at achieving a comparable and effective level of protection of minors and human dignity. The Recommendation is the first legal instrument at EU-level concerning the content of audiovisual and information services covering all forms of delivery, from broadcasting to the Internet.

The implementation of the Recommendation was evaluated for the first time in 2000, and the first report was published in 2001. The report indicated that the implementation of the Recommendation was already quite satisfactory. On 12 December 2003, the European Commission has adopted a new evaluation report on the September 1998 Council Recommendation. The report analyses the measures adopted in the Member States and at EU level since the year 2000.

In order to be able to keep up with the challenges which technological developments bring, the Commission now follows up on the Second evaluation report by proposing this additional Recommendation.

The Recommendation calls on the Member States, industry and interested parties, as well as the Commission, to take steps to enhance the protection of minors and human dignity in the broadcasting and internet sectors. Illegal, harmful and undesirable content and conduct on the Internet continues to be a concern for law-makers, industry and parents.

SEC(2004) 464 final - Recommendation for a Council Decision on the European Capital of Culture event for the year 2008

EU Ref: 9035/04

http://europa.eu.int/smartapi/cgi/sga_doc?smartapi!celexplus!prod!CELEXnumdoc&lg=en&numdoc=399D1419

This designates Liverpool and Stavanger (Norway) as European capitals of Culture 2008.

A selection panel met on 25th February 2004 and submitted a report to the Commission on 4th March. The panel unanimously agreed to recommend that Liverpool and Stavanger host the European Capital of Culture in 2008.

The panel also issued some general considerations concerning a possible reform of Decision 1419/1999/EC which lays down the procedure of designation of the European Capital of Culture from 2005 onwards. The Commission took note of these considerations as they made a useful contribution to an ongoing debate on the issue.

SEC(2004) 521 final - Recommendation for a Council Decision on the European Capital of Culture event for the year 2007

EU Ref: 9131/04

http://europa.eu.int/smartapi/cgi/sga_doc?smartapi!celexplus!prod!CELEXnumdoc&lg=en&numdoc=52004SC0521

This designates Luxembourg and Sibiu (Romania) as European capitals of Culture 2007.

The selection panel met for the first time on 5th April 2004 to examine both nominations and agreed unanimously in a report to the Commission to recommend that Luxembourg host the European Capital of Culture 2007.

The panel highlighted many problems with Sibiu's proposal but agreed to support Sibiu as European Capital of Culture in 2007, provided that considerable improvements are achieved by 2005. The panel will meet with representatives from Sibiu in February next year to see how things are progressing.

Commission Report to the European Parliament, the council and the Committee of the Regions on the implementation of the Community programmes Kaleidoscope, Ariane and Raphael

EU Ref: 5663/04

http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/com/rpt/2004/com2004_0033en01.pdf

This report is based on the results of the evaluation of the Community programmes Kaleidoscope, Ariane and Raphael. The evaluation was undertaken by the company GMV Conseil during 2003. These programmes were replaced by the Culture 2000 programme with effect from 1 January 2000.

The aim of the Kaleidoscope programme was to encourage artistic and cultural creation in Europe by means of co-operation and to promote dissemination of culture in Europe.

The aim of the Ariane programme was to encourage co-operation between Member States in the field of books and reading and to increase the knowledge and dissemination of literary works and the history of the European peoples.

The aim of the Raphael programme was to encourage cooperation to contribute to the protection, conservation and development of the European cultural heritage and to improve public awareness of the cultural heritage and public access to this heritage.

Some of the findings of the evaluation were:

- that the programmes were relevant to the European Commission's general objectives,
- that the results obtained from the programmes were proportional to the resources committed,
- that the programmes could have been more effective if administrative matters had not required so much time and effort and if more resources had been available to help with disseminating the project results,
- that the chief impact of the programmes, five years on, is the fact that they enabled networks to be created or strengthened, and that cultural operators now regard European networks or partnerships as a positive thing.

Report from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the implementation and results of the MEDIA II Programme (1996-2000)

EU Ref: 5033/04

http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/com/cnc/2003/com2003_0802en01.pdf

The MEDIA II programme succeeded MEDIA I (1991-1995) and was followed by MEDIA Plus (2001-2005). These three generations of the MEDIA programme have a common objective: to improve the competitiveness of the European audiovisual programme industry.

The purpose of this report is specifically to evaluate the results of the MEDIA II programme which was assigned by the Commission to an independent consultant following an open invitation to tender.

Key findings in the report included:

- that a Community programme to assist the European audiovisual industry was fully justified by the economic situation in the audiovisual sector,

- that there was complementarity between national measures and the MEDIA programme,

- that MEDIA II assistance has proved to be well suited to the specific needs of the European audiovisual sector,

- that there was smooth administrative functioning of the programme, sound management by the Commission having reduced the operating costs by half compared with MEDIA I,

- that MEDIA II was particularly helpful to small independent cinemas,

- that funding had only a limited impact on support for video and multimedia publishing and distribution.

Several adjustments were made to MEDIA II following the mid term evaluation. Also experience acquired from MEDIA II influenced the design for MEDIA Plus.

COM(2003) 187 final - Proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council amending decision No. 508/2000/EC of 14 February 2000 establishing the 'Culture 2000' programme

EU Ref: 8495/03

http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/com/pdf/2003/com2003_0187en01.pdf

Amended proposal for a Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Decision No 508/2000/EC of 14 February 2000 establishing the "Culture 2000" programme.

EU Ref: 6222/04

http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/com/pdf/2004/com2004_0079en01.pdf

The Culture 2000 Programme was adopted by the European Parliament and the Council in February 2000 for a five-year period and will end on 31 December 2004.

Dated 22 April 2003, the purpose of this proposal for a Decision of the European parliament and Council was to extend the programme unchanged for a further two years (2005-2006).

A budget of EUR 69.5 million is proposed for this two-year extension, taking account of a Europe of 25 Member States. This amount will be additional to the present EUR 167 million.

Two amendments were adopted in plenary to the proposal.

"In a spirit of compromise" the Commission has accepted amendment 1, establishing the principle of respect for the financial perspective in view of enlargement.

The second amendment proposed "the essential need for the Commission to provide a full and detailed assessment report on the Culture 2000 Programme not later than 31 December 2005 in order to allow the European Parliament and the Council to consider the proposal for a new framework programme for Community action on culture, announced for 2004 and planned to start in 2007". The Commission has accepted amendment 2 in spirit but did not agree that the presentation of the report should constitute a condition.

