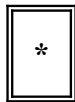


24 February 1999

A4-0081/99



REPORT

on the draft Council Decision establishing a Community statistical information infrastructure relating to the industry and markets of the audiovisual and related sectors
(SEC(98)1325 - C4-0548/98 - 98/0269(CNS))

Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and Industrial Policy

Rapporteur: Mr Frieder Otto Wolf

PE 229.125/fin.

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By letter of 30 September 1998 the Council consulted Parliament, pursuant to Article 213 of the EC Treaty, on the draft Council Decision establishing a Community statistical information infrastructure relating to the industry and markets of the audiovisual and related sectors.

At the sitting of 5 October 1998 the President of Parliament announced that he had referred this proposal to the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and Industrial Policy as the committee responsible and the Committee on Culture, Youth, Education and the Media for its opinion.

At its meeting of 23 September 1998 the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and Industrial Policy appointed Mr Frieder Otto Wolf rapporteur.

The Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and Industrial Policy considered the Commission proposal and the draft report at its meetings of 25 November 1998, 20 January, 25 January and 23 February 1999.

At its meeting of 25 January 1999 it decided to apply the procedure without debate pursuant to Rule 99(1) of the Rules of Procedure.

At the last meeting it adopted the draft legislative resolution unanimously.

The following were present for the vote: von Wogau, chairman; Secchi and Garosci, vice-chairmen; Hautala (for Wolf, rapporteur); Anttila (for Cox), Areitio Toledo, Arroni, Berès, Camisón Asensio (for de Brémond d'Ars), Carrozzo, Cassidy (for Carlsson), Caudron, Cunningham (for Billingham), Fayot, Fourçans, Harrison, Hendrick, Herman, Hoppenstedt, Ilaskivi, Jarzembowski (for Christodoulou), Kuckelkorn, Langen, Metten, Miller, Paasilinna, Peijs, Porto (for Lulling), Randzio-Plath, Rapkay, Read, Rübige, Svensson, Thyssen, Watson and Wibe.

The opinion of the Committee on Culture, Youth, Education and the Media is attached.

The report was tabled on 24 February 1999.

The deadline for tabling amendments will be indicated in the draft agenda for the relevant part-session.

A
LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL

Draft Council Decision establishing a Community statistical information infrastructure relating to the industry and markets of the audiovisual and related sectors (SEC(98)1325 - C4-0548/98 - 98/0269(CNS))

The proposal is approved with the following amendments:

Text proposed by the Commission¹

Amendments by Parliament

(Amendment 1)
Recital 4a (new)

Whereas Annex 1, Title III of the Community Statistical Programme 1998-2002 refers to undertaking user requirement analyses, source assessment, data collection and testing of methods by pilot studies in the audiovisual sector;

(Amendment 2)
Recital 5

Whereas individual statistical actions are governed by Council Regulation (EC) No 322/97 on Community Statistics;

Whereas individual statistical actions are governed by Council Regulation (EC) No 322/97 on Community Statistics; whereas this Regulation sets out the principles of impartiality, reliability, relevance, cost-effectiveness, statistical confidentiality and transparency;

¹ OJ not yet published.

(Amendment 3)
Recital 7b (new)

Whereas these pilot studies should be reviewed to ensure that they meet the user requirements; whereas this could be undertaken as part of the mid-term evaluation of the 1998-2002 Community Statistical Programme; whereas the results of this review should be made known to the Council and the European Parliament; whereas the results of this review could lead to a revision of this current proposal;

(Amendment 4)
Recital 7c (new)

Whereas these pilot studies must be assessed within two years in order to ensure that they meet user requirements; whereas the results must be communicated to the Council and the European Parliament; whereas, if user requirements are not commensurate with what is expected from this proposal or if the burdens, in particular for SMEs, exceed the benefit which is sought after, the Decision must be modified or rescinded;

(Amendment 5)
Recital 7d (new)

Whereas the collection of statistical information on the audio-visual sector by the Community must be distinct from statistical analysis undertaken by the European Audiovisual Observatory;

(Amendment 6)
Article 2
Individual statistical actions

The objective described in Article 1 shall be implemented by individual statistical actions in accordance with Council Regulation (EC) No 322/97 on Community Statistics as follows:

1. by the national authorities:
 - (a) analysis and evaluation of the demand for statistics (firms, functions and products) on the audiovisual sector from users (Community institutions, government departments, national sectoral bodies, international organisations, economic operators);
 - (b) analysis of existing statistics (firms, functions and products) and their sources;
 - (c) annual forwarding to Eurostat of statistics (firms, functions and products) already on hand or available from the competent national authorities;
 - (d) voluntary participation in pilot studies to test working methods in practice and promote the creation of Community statistics (firms, functions and products);

2. by Eurostat:
 - (a) preparation of a Community institutional and functional methodological framework (firms, functions and products);
 - (b) creation of a database for statistics forwarded in accordance with paragraph 1(c) and data gathered from international organisations;
 - (c) comparison of existing statistical

The objective described in Article 1 shall be implemented by individual statistical actions, with data collection and the testing of methods by means of voluntary pilot studies, in accordance with Council Regulation (EC) No 322/97 on Community Statistics as follows:

1. by the national authorities:
 - (a) analysis and evaluation of the demand for statistics (firms, functions and products) on the audiovisual sector from users (Community institutions, government departments, national sectoral bodies, international organisations, economic operators) and the effect on businesses, especially SMEs, of the collection of statistics in the audio-visual sector;
 - (b) analysis of existing statistics (firms, functions and products) and their sources;
 - (c) annual forwarding to Eurostat of statistics (firms, functions and products) already on hand or available from the competent national authorities;
 - (d) voluntary participation in these pilot studies to test working methods in practice and promote the creation of Community statistics (firms, functions and products);

2. by Eurostat:
 - (a) preparation of a Community institutional and functional methodological framework (firms, functions and products);
 - (b) creation of a database for statistics forwarded in accordance with paragraph 1(c) and data gathered from international organisations;
 - (c) comparison of existing statistical

systems in Member States and some non-member states,

systems in Member States and some non-member states, especially the pre-accession states;

(d) assessment of the relevance and future needs for statistics in the audiovisual sector, especially in terms of data needed for the development and follow-up of employment, training, and equal opportunities policy.

(e) This should inter alia encompass data on the development of forms of work and employment, qualification requirements and gender division of labour in this sector.

(Amendment 7)

Article 5

Report

The Commission shall present a report to the European Parliament and the Council on the implementation of the measures provided for in Article 2 no later than four years after the entry into force of the present Decision.

The Commission shall present an interim report and a final report to the European Parliament and the Council on the implementation of the measures provided for in Article 2. This interim report could be undertaken as part of the mid-term evaluation of the 1998-2002 Community Statistical Programme and at least no later than two and a half years after the entry into force of the present Decision. The final report should be presented within five years of the entry into force of the present Decision.

These reports shall consider, *inter alia*, the relevance of collecting statistics in the audiovisual sector field in the light of the priorities set for the 1998-2002 Community Statistical Programmes, and the resources available both at Eurostat and the National Statistical Offices.

Following these reports, the Commission may propose any changes necessary to

improve the functioning of this Decision.

DRAFT LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION

Legislative resolution embodying Parliament's opinion on the draft Council Decision establishing a Community statistical information infrastructure relating to the industry and markets of the audiovisual and related sectors (SEC(98)1325 - C4-0548/98 - 98/0269(CNS))

(Consultation procedure)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Commission proposal to the Council, SEC(98)1325 - 98/0269(CNS)²,
 - having been consulted by the Council pursuant to Article 213 of the EC Treaty (C4-0548/98),
 - having regard to Rule 58 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and Industrial Policy and the opinion of the Committee on Culture, Youth, Education and the Media (A4-0081/99),
1. Approves the Commission proposal, subject to Parliament's amendments;
 2. Calls on the Commission to alter its proposal accordingly, pursuant to Article 189a (2) of the EC Treaty;
 3. Calls on the Council to notify Parliament should it intend to depart from the text approved by Parliament;
 4. Calls for the conciliation procedure to be opened should the Council intend to depart from the text approved by Parliament;
 5. Asks to be consulted again should the Council intend to make substantial modifications to the Commission proposal;
 6. Instructs its President to forward this opinion to the Council and Commission.

² OJ not yet published.

B

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

1. Introduction

The general aim of this draft Decision is, according to Eurostat, to gain a deeper insight into the audiovisual industry and the various markets of the audiovisual and related sectors, their constituent parts and their development, by establishing an appropriate statistical infrastructure.

Difficulties arise in compiling and publishing statistics on the audiovisual sector at Community level because of the complexity and diversity of the markets, and the fact that data currently gathered at national level are not entirely comparable and the concepts and methods used vary from one Member State to another.

The proposed Decision, according to Eurostat, is targeted so as to minimise the additional statistical workload of national government departments by recommending that, wherever possible, existing information be used. It should bring substantial benefits to the European firms concerned and will increase transparency, an important factor with the establishment of the internal market and the increase in international competition.

2. Discussion

Relevance to the audiovisual labour market and to society

Your rapporteur believes that it is important to make these statistics as relevant as possible to as wide a community as possible (a principle of Council Regulation 322/97). Statistical data must be collected in the light of a "need to know" for businesses, but also to manage policies in the sector. Therefore, he is proposing that, quite separate from the planned review, Eurostat should assess how this data can be relevant and useful to different groups in society (e.g. citizens, administrations and politicians). As such, he is proposing that, as a minimum, Eurostat should look at employment levels and trends, qualification requirements as well as gender and age distributions for the sector, which would give some insight into the policies undertaken at a European level.

Burden on business and European Audiovisual Observatory

Your rapporteur also started by wanting to know what would be the burden on business (especially SMEs) on the introduction of this proposal, knowing that this would be a key argument both within the Committee and at Plenary. As such, he is pleased to note, and which has been confirmed in discussions with Eurostat, that this proposal would not increase the burden on business, but would simply use the existing resources better. He is, however, suggesting that this is analysed during the pilot phase and reviewed at the report stage.

Furthermore, he has been concerned about the work being undertaken at the European Audiovisual Observatory, and wanted to be assured that this proposal would not 'double-up' on work already being undertaken at this Observatory (which comes under the Council of Europe). He has seen minutes of a meeting between Eurostat and the Observatory which specifically mentions this problem and the need to "avoid duplication between Eurostat... and the

Observatory". These minutes then specify how work would be shared between the two groups. Your rapporteur finds this encouraging, but has tabled an amendment aimed at reinforcing this division of work.

Context in relation to 5 Year Statistical Programme

In the Commission document on the five year statistical programme, which the European Parliament adopted as the Lulling report (A4-0321/98), reference is made to audio-visual statistics under Title III of the annexe (Free movement of persons, services and capital). It states that during the programming period 1998-2002, user requirement analyses, sources assessment, data collection and testing of methods by pilot studies in the audio-visual sector will be undertaken. As such, your rapporteur would wish to see some feedback on these analyses and pilot studies before allowing this proposal to run fully, and has brought forward amendments to cover this. However, the 5 year statistical programme, as agreed by the EP, sets out 3 priorities for Eurostat:

- Economic and Monetary Union - this will become increasingly important once the ECB requires harmonised statistics for the Euro-area;
- Competitiveness, Growth and Employment - especially statistics on the labour market, industry, services, TENs and living conditions;
- EU enlargement - incorporating those areas of statistical indicators of primary importance for accession negotiations.

Your rapporteur believes that the pilot stages of this Decision, which is all that was actually agreed under the Lulling Report, could usefully be reviewed at the same time as the mid-term evaluation of the 5 year statistical programme. This review should also take in one aspect of the Lulling report, which notes that, for a number of years, the budgets offered to national statistical offices have not allowed them to develop in accordance with the needs for Community integration. This financial deficit for statistical requirements within Member States accentuates the problem of Community statistical integration.

Hence, while this proposal may not increase the financial and manpower deficit too much in Eurostat, it could increase the deficit in national statistical offices. The review of this proposal at the same time as the mid-term evaluation would therefore allow the Council and Parliament to judge what effect the pilot stage of this proposal is having on national statistical offices. Your rapporteur was pleased to hear that the resources at the European level for this proposal are being made available from DG X of the Commission and not from Eurostat, but is still concerned by its consequences for national statistical offices.

This should also be seen in conjunction with the fact that once the Treaty of Amsterdam is ratified, statistical proposals under Article 213 will be subject to the co-decision procedure. As such, Parliament must begin to be aware that during the next 5 year programming period, it must assume more responsibility for issues in the field of statistics, and to consider the consequences of proposals more carefully.

OPINION
(Rule 147 of the Rules of Procedure)

for the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and Industrial Policy

on the draft Council Decision establishing a Community statistical information infrastructure relating to the industry and markets of the audiovisual and related sectors (SEC(98)1325 - C4-0548/98 - 98/0269(CNS)) (report by Mr Wolf)

Committee on Culture, Youth, Education and the Media

Letter from the committee chairman to Mr von Wogau, chairman of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and Industrial Policy

Brussels, 19 January 1999

Dear Mr von Wogau,

The Committee on Culture, Youth, Education and the Media considered the above subject at its meeting of 18-19 January 1999.

At that meeting it adopted the following conclusions³:

The Commission is proposing a Council decision designed to improve statistical knowledge on the audiovisual industry and related sectors by establishing a Community statistical information infrastructure. The statistics gathered in this sector at national level are not entirely comparable, with the result that it is very difficult to use this data at Community or pan-European level. The adoption of this decision should not involve an additional statistical workload for national administrations or for small and medium-sized enterprises, since it is based on the use of existing information, proposing the consolidation of an institutional methodological framework and a Community statistical information system.

³ The following took part in the vote: Pex, chairman; Baldi and Hawlicek, vice-chairmen; Escudero, Guinebertière, Mouskouri, Mutin (for Junker), Pack, Rynnänen, Sanz Fernandez and Tongue.

The Member States, economic operators and European industry will benefit from the greater transparency, improved availability and better quality of information, which is undoubtedly of strategic importance in a sector susceptible to continual change at national and international level. In addition, the economic importance of the audiovisual sector has increased to an extraordinary degree, recording growth of 93% between 1985 and 1994, with forecasts pointing to further growth in future years, particularly in the content market.

The need to create a genuine European market in the audiovisual sector could be met if statistical information were more freely available so that its key importance could be analysed. Furthermore, the Commission requires reliable statistical information in order to evaluate, adapt and formulate Community policies in the audiovisual and related sectors, such as the Media programme or in order to monitor the application of the 'television without frontiers' directive.

Conclusions

The Committee on Culture, Youth, Education and the Media:

1. Recognises the importance of the draft Council Decision presented by the Commission establishing a Community statistical information infrastructure relating to the industry and markets of the audiovisual and related sectors;
2. Stresses that the adoption of this decision should not involve an additional statistical workload for the various institutions and administrations involved in gathering data, but rather a rationalisation of the information and the methods and systems used;
3. Wishes that the statistical work done by the European Audiovisual Monitoring Centre should not be duplicated by Eurostat on the audiovisual sector. In order to prevent this, a regular exchange between those two institutions should be established;
4. Agrees with the conclusions highlighting the strategic importance of the audiovisual sector in the European Union and its impact on job creation. The rapid development of audiovisual industries and sectors worldwide mean that it is increasingly important and of strategic value to possess an improved statistical knowledge of these sectors;
5. Reliable statistics which can be compared between the various Member States and with third countries are necessary for the Community decisions to implement Community programmes and actions in the audiovisual sector such as the Media programme and the 'television without frontiers' directive, or to monitor the public service role of state television.

Yours sincerely,

(sgd) Peter Pex