

# EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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*Session document*

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## **MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION**

further to Oral Questions B5-0045/02, 0053/02, 0080/02 and B5-0082/02

pursuant to Rule 42(5) of the Rules of Procedure

by Geneviève Fraisse, Fausto Bertinotti, Armando Cossutta and Feleknaş Uca

on behalf of the GUE/NGL Group

on media concentration

**European Parliament resolution on media concentration**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to its previous resolutions on media concentration,
- having regard to the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union,
- A. whereas the Commission's Green Paper of December 1992 entitled 'Pluralism and media concentration in the internal market' (COM(92) 480) should now be followed by a directive,
- B. whereas, in October 1997, the Commission abandoned its draft directive on the prohibition of concentrations,
- C. whereas, in March 2000, the Economic and Social Committee adopted an opinion which proposed that codes of conduct and self-regulation should guarantee pluralism and quality of information,
- D. taking into account the predominant position occupied by the issue of media concentration in the political debate in all the Member States,
- E. having regard to the rapid evolution of the media landscape, with the increased power of the new digital broadcasting services and networked services,
- F. concerned at the growing scale of alliances and concentrations between media owners, publishers, telecommunications operators and actors in the information technology industry and at the threats to pluralism and freedom of information arising therefrom,
- G. concerned at the purchase of Vivendi's publishing arm by the Lagardère Group which may be planning to strengthen the audiovisual arm at the expense of the publishing arm,
- H. whereas the large groups active in the audiovisual industry and the new information and telecommunications technologies control the bulk of advertising resources, and whereas this puts the written press at a serious disadvantage,
- I. concerned at the fact that the Commission is drawing up a directive restricting press freedom, with particular regard to the publication of articles which might influence the outcome of court cases,
  1. Deems it necessary to guarantee democracy, transparency, pluralism and the independence of the media vis-à-vis the political authorities and the major economic groupings;

2. Deplores the fact that, in 1997, the Commission abandoned a directive prohibiting concentrations despite Parliament's repeated requests and the undertakings given by the Commission;
3. Deplores the concentration of the media in a large number of Member States, especially Italy;
4. Takes the view that, in order to safeguard the pluralism of ideas, diversity of cultures, support for creative activity and independence of information, restrictions on media ownership should be introduced which go beyond the normal criteria of the right of competition, that the number of shares and the number of different types of media which any one individual may hold should be restricted, with due account being taken of affiliation or dependence relationships vis-à-vis a programme supplier or advertising client and the criterion of the audience;
5. Calls on the Member States and the applicant countries to introduce legislation governing the media, or to strengthen it where it already exists, to combat dominant positions, to guarantee a clear separation between the political authority and media ownership, to prohibit the appropriation of media by groups whose activities are foreign to that sector, to defend the specific role of the public service, to safeguard the existence of publicly-funded television stations and to ensure compliance with the rules on competition in the private sector by taking action against current concentrations and any future such concentrations involving the new media;
6. Calls on the Commission to submit a proposal for a directive seeking to combat media concentration in the EU while strengthening guarantees of pluralism in programme content;
7. Calls on the Commission, in connection with the rules on competition, to bring regulatory and legal proceedings against persons who have successfully achieved media concentration in Europe;
8. Calls on the Commission to abandon its draft directive which would restrict the freedom of the press;
9. Calls for measures to be taken to ensure that advertising resources are shared out fairly in order to safeguard the multiplicity and variety of the means of information, with specific support being given to the written press;
10. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and Commission and to the governments and parliaments of the Member States and of the applicant countries.