

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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2009

Committee on Culture and Education

2008/2204(INI)

8.12.2008

OPINION

of the Committee on Culture and Education

for the Committee on International Trade

on International trade and the Internet
(2008/2204(INI))

Rapporteur: Maria Badia i Cutchet

PA_NonLeg

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Culture and Education calls on the Committee on International Trade, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Acknowledges that the Internet can become a tool for promoting cultures and languages by developing cultural and creative industries, especially in developing countries, if cultural diversity were to be protected through an agreed sector specific international legal basis with regard to content; insists, therefore, on the importance of promoting equal access to Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) to make an inclusive information society possible, and removing the various existing barriers - with regard to inadequate infrastructure or training, among others - in order to allow for potential trading and to guarantee the full rights of citizenship;
2. Points out that the Internet has brought a new approach to the production, consumption and dissemination of cultural goods and services, which can contribute to cross-cultural understanding on the basis of free and fair access to new ICTs and respect for cultural and linguistic diversity;
3. Highlights that security and credibility of transactions related to cultural goods or services online are essential;
4. Highlights the importance of the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expression as an essential instrument to guarantee that the cultural exemption in international trade transactions in goods and services of a cultural and creative nature is maintained within the international framework of the WTO; calls upon the Council and the Commission to implement quickly the Convention in the internal as well as the external policies of the European Union;
5. Stresses that cultural and artistic products and services have both an economic and cultural nature, and that it is important to maintain this understanding in international trade negotiations and agreements, and through global networks by implementing the UNESCO convention in a legally binding way;
6. Considers that the Internet and new ICTs have a key role in the European online and Internet-based education strategy (e-learning), in the framework of the European lifelong learning policy, which is particularly important in widening access to education in general, so as to achieve the Lisbon goals;
7. Urges the Commission and the Council to ensure that European cultural industries fully exploit the new opportunities brought about by online trading in particular the audiovisual, musical and publishing sectors, whilst at the same time offering effective protection against illicit trafficking and piracy; however, this must not affect the European Community's policy, clearly stated in the negotiating mandate, to refrain from making offers or accepting liberalisation demands in the audiovisual and cultural sector;
8. Stresses the need to educate consumers and undertakings and the need to organise media

information campaigns on the development prospects, rights and obligations of all parties involved in international trade on the internet;

9. Any existing or potential future liberalisation of transmission services must not affect the Commission's position on content related rules.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

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| Date adopted | 2.12.2008 |
| Result of final vote | +: 21 -: 1 0: 0 |
| Members present for the final vote | Maria Badia i Cutchet, Katerina Batzeli, Ivo Belet, Guy Bono, Marie-Hélène Descamps, Věra Flasarová, Milan Gaľa, Vasco Graça Moura, Luis Herrero-Tejedor, Ruth Hieronymi, Manolis Mavrommatis, Doris Pack, Zdzisław Zbigniew Podkański, Christa Prets, Karin Resetarits, Hannu Takkula, Helga Trüpel, Thomas Wise |
| Substitute(s) present for the final vote | Nina Škottová, László Tőkés, Ewa Tomaszewska, Cornelis Visser |