

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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WRITTEN DECLARATION

pursuant to Rule 116 of the Rules of Procedure

by Lidia Joanna Geringer de Oedenberg

on the subtitling of all public-service television programmes in the EU

Lapse date: 26.2.2008

0099/2007

Written declaration on the subtitling of all public-service television programmes in the EU

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Articles 3, 13, 149 and 151 of the Treaty establishing the European Community,
- having regard to Rule 116 of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the European Union should ensure that citizens have equal access to information, education and culture,
- B. whereas partial or complete loss of hearing is a condition that affects more than 83 million people in the European Union; whereas, given the ageing of the European population, this problem will continue to grow,
- C. having regard to universal access to television in Europe and to the fact that public-service television has a public-service mission consisting, among other things, in informing and educating viewers,
- D. whereas today's technology enables television programmes (including live programmes) to be subtitled as they go out, one example of this being the BBC, which has undertaken to subtitle all of its programmes from April 2008,
 1. Considers subtitling of all public-service television programmes in the EU to be essential with a view to ensuring that all viewers, including deaf and hard-of-hearing persons, have full access to them; takes the view that this would also help with foreign-language learning;
 2. Calls on the Commission to put forward a legislative proposal requiring public-service television broadcasters in the EU to subtitle all of their programmes;
 3. Instructs its President to forward this declaration, together with the names of the signatories, to all the governments of the Member States and to the Commission and Council.