

WRITTEN QUESTION E-1444/03

by Francesco Rutelli (ELDR), Mariotto Segni (UEN), Graham Watson (ELDR), Enrique Barón Crespo (PSE), Daniel Cohn-Bendit (Verts/ALE), Monica Frassoni (Verts/ALE), Francis Wurtz (GUE/NGL), Teresa Almeida Garrett (PPE-DE), Guido Bodrato (PPE-DE), Luciano Caveri (ELDR), Luigi Cocilovo (PPE-DE), Armando Cossutta (GUE/NGL), Paolo Costa (ELDR), Luigi De Mita (PPE-DE), Giuseppe Di Lello Finuoli (GUE/NGL), Antonio Di Pietro (ELDR), Carlo Fatuzzo (PPE-DE), Fernando Fernández Martín (PPE-DE), Marco Formentini (ELDR), Fiorella Ghilardotti (PSE), Florence Kuntz (EDD), Franco Marini (PPE-DE), Mario Mastella (PPE-DE), Reinhold Messner (Verts/ALE), Luisa Morgantini (GUE/NGL), Pasqualina Napoletano (PSE), Giorgio Napolitano (PSE), Juan Ojeda Sanz (PPE-DE), Elena Paciotti (PSE), Giuseppe Pisicchio (PPE-DE), Giovanni Pittella (PSE), José Pomés Ruiz (PPE-DE), Giovanni Procacci (ELDR), Giorgio Ruffolo (PSE), Guido Sacconi (PSE), Luciana Sbarbati (ELDR), Bruno Trentin (PSE) and Gianni Vattimo (PSE) to the Commission

Subject: Freedom and pluralism of information

In view of:

- the fact that freedom of information, which is vital in guaranteeing the democratic principles on which the European Union is based (Article 6(1) TEU) must, particularly in the perspective of the enlargement, be given a framework of legal guarantees protecting all European citizens and restricting the establishment of legal or de facto monopolies;
- the fact that the specific nature of the information market justifies special protection both in the context of international negotiations (Doha) and within the European Union's internal law 'not only using economic indicators but also in connection to the respect of fundamental rights' (paragraph 58 of European Parliament resolution of 15 January 2003);
- the need to guarantee respect for pluralism and the accuracy of information provided by the media, particularly those playing a public service role;
- the urgent need to resolve the situations condemned in Parliament's resolution of 15 January 2003;
- the fact that this condemnation is backed by the Council of Europe, which considers that in Italy '... the potential conflict of interest (...) is a threat to media pluralism and unless clear safeguards are in place sets a poor example for young democracies' (paragraph 12 of Recommendation 1589 of 28 January 2003);

and since

- the procedure set out in Article 7(1) of the EU Treaty, which entered into force on 1 February 2003, also applies to the protection of the fundamental right to information safeguarded by Article 6 of the EU Treaty,

1. When does the Commission intend to submit a communication on the state of media pluralism in the EU and a directive for safeguarding it, as requested in Parliament's resolution of 20 November 2002?
2. When does it intend to submit to the European Convention, as requested in Parliament's resolution of 20 November 2002, a proposal for a legal basis to protect the principle of pluralism and freedom within the information media in the new constitution?