



Brussels, 08/05/2007

Ruth Hieronymi (EPP-ED/CDU):

Television without frontiers: Broad consensus on reform of European television rules

"This is a good opportunity to guarantee television also in the future both as a cultural and an economic good", said Ruth Hieronymi, EPP-ED-spokesperson on media affairs and rapporteur of the European Parliament, commenting on today's results of the Cultural Affairs Committee recommendation for the second reading of the TV without frontiers directive in Brussels.

The actualization of the television law covers classic television as well as TV-related services on demand. Independent from the kind of transmission technology - satellite, cable, Internet - the same conditions should basically be applied to television and TV-related contents, in order to protect the youth like the consumer and to promote cultural variety including media pluralism. Concerning internet transmission, co- and self regulation as tested in Germany shall be introduced for the first time.

In intensive negotiations with Council and Commission the implementation of further demands of the European Parliament could be achieved during the last weeks:

- Broadcasting in all member states (country of origin principle) will be secured and better controlled against abuse.
- Protection of minors and media education is to be developed. Highly youth-endangering contents on the internet can be blocked by the Member States.
- In the case of exclusive rights of high interest there will be in future an EU-wide right on short coverage.
- TV-access for handicapped people will be regulated by law.
- Media pluralism is strengthened and all Member States will be bound to ensure independent supervisory authorities.
- For commercials in children programmes there shall be a particularly strict operator control (code of conduct).
- Product placement, by which a certain product is integrated into a programme for advertising purposes, will only be permitted after a sufficient marking at the beginning, at the end and after each advertising break - subject to agreement by the Member States. The placement of specific topics for advertisement purposes remains generally forbidden.

"The Cultural Affairs Committee has today recommended accepting this common text within the framework of the second reading. Subject to the agreement of the political groups and the plenary as well as the Council on 24 May 2007, the revision of the Directive on TV without frontiers could be finalized with the second reading", concluded the German MEP.

Translation from German original

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