



EUROPEAN COMMISSION - PRESS RELEASE

Commission consults on how best to seize the opportunities for TV and film in the online age

Brussels, 13 July – Digital technology and the internet are rapidly changing the way in which audiovisual works are produced, marketed, and distributed. Consumers increasingly expect to be able to watch anything, anywhere, any time and via any one of a number of devices (TV, personal computer, games console, mobile media device). Business models have to evolve rapidly to keep pace with the ever faster pace of technological change which offers new opportunities for creators and distributors and also new consumer expectations and ultimately more growth and jobs.

To gather views on how Europe can seize these opportunities and move towards a digital single market, the European Commission has published a Green Paper on the initiative of Internal Market Commissioner Michel Barnier, in agreement with Vice-President for the Digital Agenda Neelie Kroes and Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth. The Green Paper serves as the basis for a debate on whether and how the regulatory framework needs to be adapted to allow European industry to develop new business models, creators to find new distribution channels and European consumers to have better access to content throughout Europe. The views of all interested parties are sought on various aspects of online distribution of audiovisual works such as films, documentaries, TV dramas, cartoons etc. Replies can be submitted up until 18 November 2011.

Commissioner Barnier said *"I want to ensure that Europeans can seize the opportunities offered by the internet. It is important for me to hear the views of all stakeholders concerned – creators, performers, producers, distributors and consumers. The results of this consultation will provide a significant contribution to the initiatives I am preparing, including a legislative proposal on collective copyright licensing, an examination of the framework set by the 2001 Information Society Directive, and a review of the Intellectual Property Enforcement Directive."*

The Green Paper looks at a broad range of issues:

- It assesses the pace of change that the audiovisual sector is undergoing as part of the internet revolution and how to best tackle the challenges this poses as well as how best to seize the opportunities a digital single market will offer creators, industry and consumers, such as new business models, more online services and better remuneration for right holders.
- It discusses **rights clearance** for the online distribution of audiovisual media services. An assessment is needed of the extent to which there are problems in this area, the precise nature of such problems and the policy options that could be considered.
- It asks if additional measures should be taken at EU level to ensure the adequate **remuneration of authors and performers** in relation to online use of works and performances for which they hold rights.
- It also deals with certain special uses of audiovisual works such as the public policy missions of film heritage institutions and access by persons with disabilities to cultural material.

Responses to the consultation will contribute to the Commission's assessment of the need for measures to allow EU citizens, providers of online content services and right holders to benefit from the full potential of a digital single market, as well as to the Commission's forthcoming proposal to streamline the collective management of rights.

Background

The cultural industries in Europe, including the audiovisual sector, make a significant contribution to the EU economy, creating about 3% of EU GDP - corresponding to an annual market value of €500 billion - and employing about 6 million people. In addition, the sector plays an important role in fostering innovation, in particular for devices and networks. The EU records the second highest TV viewing figures globally, produces more films than any other region in the world and is home to more than 500 online video services.

The European Commission's MEDIA programme is investing €755 million in the European film industry in the period 2007-2013 (more than €1.5 billion has been granted since its launch in 1991). The aim is to improve the distribution and promotion of European films and to strengthen the competitiveness of the sector. Its objectives include providing support for online distribution of audiovisual works through, for example, video on demand platforms. See

http://ec.europa.eu/culture/media/programme/newtech/vod_dcc/list/index_en.htm

The Commission's Green Paper is published in the context of the [Europe 2020 Strategy](#), which aims to boost smart, sustainable and inclusive growth in Europe, the Single Market Act¹ and concomitant Commission Strategy for Intellectual Property Rights (see [IP/11/630](#)) and the [Digital Agenda for Europe](#) (see [IP/10/581](#)).

See also ([MEMO/11/502](#)).

¹ "Single Market Act - Twelve levers to boost growth and strengthen confidence; Working together to create new growth", COM/2011/0206 final, 13 April 2011

The consultation is available at the following link:

http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/consultations/2011/audiovisual_en.htm

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