



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

PRESS RELEASE

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Internet on TV, TV on Internet: Commission seeks views on rapidly converging audiovisual world

Millions of Europeans catch up with their favourite TV series on a smartphone on the way to work, watch online content on their living room TV, or put their own user-generated content online. There are more than 40.4 million "connected TVs" in Europe, and they could be in the majority of EU households by 2016. These changes are sweeping away traditional boundaries between consumers, broadcast media and the internet. The Commission wants to explore what this convergence of technology and content could mean for Europe's economic growth and innovation, cultural diversity, and consumers (especially those that may need protection, such as children.)

Neelie Kroes, European Commission Vice-President said: *"Connected TV is the next big thing in the creative and digital worlds. Convergence between sectors means people can enjoy a wider choice of great content - but it also creates disruptions and challenges. We need a converged and EU-wide debate to help deal with these changes. To help business flourish, nurture creativity and protect our values".*

A [Green Paper](#) adopted by the Commission today invites stakeholders and the wider public to share their views between now and the end of August 2013, on issues such as:

1. **The rules of the game.** Fostering the right conditions for dynamic EU businesses to deal with international (especially US) competition; especially given that competing players may be subject to different rules;
2. **Protecting European values** (including media freedom) and user interests (e.g. protecting children, accessibility for users with disabilities). Do people expect higher protection for TV programmes than for internet content; and where is the line to be drawn?
3. **Single market and standards.** Seemingly, some devices do not work the same way across Member States. How can we promote the right technological environment?
4. **Financing.** How will convergence and changing consumer behaviour influence how films, TV shows and other content is financed? How are different actors in the new value-chain contributing?
5. **Openness and media pluralism.** Should pre-defined filtering mechanisms, for example in search engines, be subject to public intervention? Are the existing practices relating to premium content – for example, major sport events and successful recently released films - at wholesale level affecting market access and sustainable business operations? Are platforms sufficiently open?

This new reality is already being discussed in several EU countries and in the European Parliament. Views differ on how to respond. Some parties call for immediate changes to rules and regulations; some remain satisfied with the status quo for the time being, while others point to self and co-regulation. The Green Paper does not pre-suppose any action, but in following up, the Commission might explore regulatory and policy responses, including self-regulation.

Background

Convergence has been under way for many years, and is rapidly picking up pace. It opens up opportunities:

- Manufacturers and developers can serve a growing market with innovative, user-friendly, accessible devices.
- Internet network operators can see increasing demand for bandwidth, giving an incentive to invest in high-speed networks.
- Content creators can experiment with new ways to produce and offer content.
- Broadcasters and new players can offer content and added-value services to their consumers.
- Established and new broadcasters can find more platforms to distribute and enhance their shows, and make them interactive.

The European legislation which may be affected by follow-up to this Green Paper is mainly the Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD) ([2010/13/EU](#)), which aims to ensure a Single Market and legal certainty for Europe's TV and audiovisual industry, by creating a level playing field for broadcast and on-demand audiovisual media. As convergence with online services progresses, the Green Paper asks whether the current approach will also be appropriate in the future.

The Commission has also recently launched related public consultations on media freedom and pluralism, and in particular on the independence of audiovisual regulatory bodies (see [IP/13/267](#)).

Useful links

[MEMO/13/371](#) Frequently Asked Questions

Email (CNECT-CONVERGENCE-AV@ec.europa.eu) for contributions on Green Paper on Preparing for a Fully Converged Audiovisual World: Growth, Creation and Values

[Connected TV](#)

[Audiovisual Media Services Directive](#)

Hash Tags: #connectedTV; #convergence

[Digital Agenda](#)

[Neelie Kroes](#)

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Contacts :

[Ryan Heath](#) (+32 2 296 17 16), Twitter: [@RyanHeathEU](#)

[Linda Cain](#) (+32 2 299 90 19)