

INSIDE EUROPE

Green Paper

# An evolving audiovisual market

The audiovisual sector, which concerns everything related to moving images, is one of the most thriving sectors in the EU. Europe currently records the second highest TV viewing figures globally, and is producing more films than any other region in the world. In addition, it hosts more than 500 on-line video-on-demand services.

Until recently, audiovisual works would be broadcast mainly by air, satellite or cable, but, in recent years, digital technology and the Internet are rapidly changing not only the way in which audiovisual works are distributed, but also the way in which they are marketed and produced. This offers new opportunities for creators and distributors with more growth and jobs, but also new consumer expectations.

In this context, business models are evolving rapidly to keep pace with this changing situation. So, to gather views on

how Europe can seize new opportunities and move towards a digital single market, the Commission has published a Green Paper on the initiative of Commissioner Michel Barnier, in cooperation with Vice-President Neelie Kroes and Commissioner Androulla Vassiliou.

As Michel Barnier stated: *"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."*

Nowadays, consumers increasingly expect to be able to watch anything, anywhere, any time and via any one of a number of devices now available alongside the TV, like personal computers, games consoles, and mobile media devices.

Even if Europe is one of the biggest producers, European films count for only about 25% of European cinema admissions. The Green Paper therefore questions current licensing and distribution practices

with the aim of promoting distribution of the European film catalogue. It discusses subjects such as rights clearance for on-line distribution of audiovisual media services and the necessity of ensuring that authors' remuneration adequately reflects the success of their works.

The Green Paper should provide empirical data that helps with the analysis of possible obstacles to the development of a digital single market. This debate should also serve to examine possible ways of adapting the regulatory framework to allow for development of new business models and distribution channels, and ensuring European consumers have better access to content.

Stake holders and all interested parties can contribute their views up until 18 November 2011.

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① <http://tinyurl.com/6cgg07o>

## édito

PAR DAVID MIELE

### Un nouveau souffle

Le « non » de la N-VA prolonge, et pour certains empire, la crise identitaire et institutionnelle belge. Il n'est sans doute pas inopportun de tenter de dresser un parallèle avec la crise que subit dans le même temps l'UE. Certes, les différences historiques, culturelles, économiques qui sous-tendent ces deux crises limitent les tentatives de comparaison, mais les similitudes lexicales que l'on trouve ici et là dans les médias – manque de solidarité, repli national ou communautaire, différence de modèle économique... – alertent et interrogent. Alors que les propositions de plan de sortie de crise dressées par maints experts s'accumulent, on ne peut s'empêcher de penser qu'un mal bien plus profond, qui ne se résoudra pas à coup de calculettes, de graphiques ou de discours politiques convenus, existe. Gérard Bossuat, historien de l'unité européenne, déclarait récemment: *« Le désir d'Europe des peuples est émoussé parce que personne ne donne un sens à la construction européenne de notre temps. »* Une idée, un sens, la puissance d'un discours. On ne pourra effectivement manquer de s'interroger sur la place des idées, incarnées ou non, comme véritables moteurs de l'histoire, nécessaires à la résolution de crises qui tiennent peut-être bien plus à la nature humaine qu'à des modèles économiques, aussi complexes soient-ils.

## New Anti-Fraud Strategy

# Safeguarding EU Funds

Fraudulent methods evolve very rapidly requiring continuous adjustment of anti-fraud policies and additional efforts to improve the protection of the EU's financial interests. In addition, it is particularly important to ensure that the budget is effectively spent during a period of economic crisis and budgetary constraints like the one we are facing.

To give an idea of the financial dimension of this problem, in 2009, Member States reported €280 million worth of suspected fraud cases involving the EU budget. This represents less than 0.2% of the EU budget.

Unfortunately, fraud is a highly complex phenomenon which is very tough to completely eliminate. However, the Commission Internal Control Standards cover this issue (risk management), and the Commission has put in place substantial tools to prevent and fight fraud. The Commission is committed to modernising and improving the EU's anti-fraud policies in order to optimise prevention and detection of fraud within Commission Services that manage EU funds. By adopting the new Commission's Anti-Fraud Strategy, the Commission intends to ensure that its services are fully equipped to tackle fraud at all levels and in all sectors. More to it, the Strategy deals with other important elements such as the efficiency of investigations, the use of penalties and the recovery of EU funds unduly perceived.

As Algirdas Šemeta, Commissioner for Taxation and Customs Union, Audit and Anti-Fraud, stated: *"We have an obligation towards EU taxpayers to get the most out of the EU budget. For this, we must lead by example*



Algirdas Šemeta: *"We have an obligation towards EU taxpayers to get the most out of the EU budget."*

*in ensuring that EU money reaches the right beneficiaries and is spent on purposes for which it is intended."*

The intention is to put in place cross-cutting strategies covering specific sectors or regions for all services managing or supervising EU funds. For instance, these new strategies will be set up to cover the work of project officers, finance staff and auditors in charge of dealing with Structural Funds or the European Fisheries Funds. In addition, the Commission could put in place regional strategies, covering specific types of fraud. The first example in this respect is the Commission's Action Plan to fight against cigarette and alcohol smuggling at the EU's Eastern border.

The Commission also proposes that the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) plays a reinforced role in assisting the services by providing support and guidance when designing and implementing anti-fraud strategies.

As Algirdas Šemeta put it: *"The Anti-Fraud Strategy that we adopted is a key element and should help us to further improve budget efficiency, from the very beginning of the chain till beneficiaries of EU funds."*

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① <http://tinyurl.com/Suaoync>

① <http://tinyurl.com/Swhevzk>