

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT VOTE OFFERS EU CITIZENS A FUTURE FULL OF QUALITY TV

*Confirmation of Legal Affairs Committee position sets
clear EP policy direction in advance of COREPER discussion on Friday.*

BRUSSELS, 12 DECEMBER. The Association of Commercial Television in Europe (ACT) has welcomed the result of today's vote in the European Parliament on the mandate to open discussions with the Council on the proposed Broadcasters ("SatCab") Regulation.

MEPs confirmed by 344 votes to 265 and 36 abstentions that the position of the Parliament is the report agreed by the JURI Committee on 21 November. This will limit to news and current affairs programmes the scope of the so-called "country of origin" principle, which deems online TV viewing and catch-up services to be presented for copyright purposes in the broadcaster's home country, not where they are viewed.

Commercial broadcasters and much of the audio-visual sector argue that wide application of the copyright rule risks reducing investment in film, sport and drama in the EU and resulting in less content being produced.

Agnieszka Horak, ACT's Director of Policy and Legal Affairs, said:

"The European Parliament vote offers EU citizens a future full of quality TV. It is a vote in support of the amount, quality and diversity of TV and movies available to viewers.

"On behalf of ACT, I would like to thank all the Members of the European Parliament who voted for this step towards better legislation.

"We urge the Member States in COREPER to follow the direction of travel set by the Parliament, and limit the scope of the country-of-origin exception so that viewers can continue to be entertained and informed by a wide range of high quality TV programming."

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NOTES FOR EDITORS

1. The Commission proposal for a Regulation laying down rules on the exercise of copyright and related rights applicable to certain online transmissions of broadcasting organisations and retransmissions of television and radio programmes ([COM\(2016\) 594](#)) was published on 14 September 2016. Although the Commission suggested that it offered a legal mechanism for broadcasters to obtain more easily the authorisations they need from right holders to transmit programmes online in other EU Member States, commercial broadcasters and much of the creative sector remain concerned that the measures would interact with the likely outcome of an unresolved anti-trust case in a way which reduces the ability of broadcasters to guarantee territorial exclusivity when they put content online.

2. Territorial exclusivity increases the chance that programme makers and others will be able to recover their investment in programmes. It therefore supports investment in the films, sports events and programmes which citizens want to watch. [Research conducted by Oxera and O&O](#) concluded that if territorial exclusivity was undermined, consumers and the audiovisual industry would be exposed to significant losses in the short run, and in the medium and long term less content would be produced (particularly the less-mainstream content), locally targeted content would be particularly affected, and prices would rise for some consumers while quality fell. The impact would be particularly felt by consumers in the lower income Member States.

3. In May 2017, 411 representatives of Europe’s audiovisual sector joined forces and [wrote](#) to the Presidents of the European Parliament and Council emphasizing that the proposal “leaves considerable uncertainty with regard to the sustainability of financing the development and production of content, distribution business models and the commercial freedom to license of many European content producers, creators and investors to the detriment of cultural diversity, industry growth and, ultimately, European consumers’ choice.”

4. On 21 November 2017, the European Parliament Legal Affairs Committee (JURI) voted by 15 votes to 8 in favour of a mandate to open negotiations with the Council based on a report which proposes the country-of-origin principle should apply only to news and current affairs programmes. This mandate was referred to the European Parliament plenary session for confirmation under Rule 69c of the Parliament’s Rules of Procedure.

5. The Estonian Presidency has proposed a discussion of the draft Regulation in the Committee of Permanent Representatives (COREPER) on Friday 15 December, with a view to reaching a General Approach on the basis of which discussions could begin with the Parliament.

ABOUT THE ASSOCIATION OF COMMERCIAL TELEVISION IN EUROPE



The Association of Commercial Television in Europe (ACT) represents the interests of leading commercial broadcasters in Europe. The ACT member companies finance, produce, promote and distribute content and services benefiting millions of Europeans across all platforms. At ACT we believe that the healthy and sustainable commercial broadcasting sector has an important role to play in Europe’s economy, society and cultures.

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