

Press release – Media services: same rules needed for TV and internet to protect children better – Committee on Culture and Education

Children should have the same protection whether they are watching TV, a web-shared video or a web-streamed film, said committee MEPs on Tuesday.

Culture Committee MEPs advocated tightening up the child protection provisions of EU rules on audiovisual media services and also those on advertising and promoting European audiovisual works. Their ideas still need to be endorsed by Parliament as a whole.

Protecting children against violence, hatred, terrorism and harmful advertising

Video-sharing platforms will have to take corrective measures if users flag any content as inciting violence, hatred or terrorism, MEPs agreed. To this end, these platforms would need to put in place an easy-to-use mechanism allowing users to report content and be informed of measures taken.

MEPs also propose banning advertising and product placement for tobacco, electronic cigarettes and alcohol in children's TV programmes and video-sharing platforms.

Rapporteur Sabine Verheyen (EPP, DE) said: "One of our main priorities is the protection of minors. We proposed adapting some of the rules applying to programmes on television to internet services, such as rules on advertising, product placement and sponsorship. Certain advertising in programmes aimed at a children's audience will be restricted, allowed only to a very limited extent or will be prohibited in general."

New quotas on TV advertising

For TV advertising, MEPs agreed on new rules imposing a maximum 20% daily quota, giving the broadcaster the flexibility of adjusting their advertising periods.

European content quota of 30% for on-demand platforms

To reflect Europe's cultural diversity, MEPs called for a 30% quota of European works in on-demand platform catalogues, instead of the 20% proposed by the EU Commission. This quote should include works in the languages of the countries where they are distributed.

Under the amended rules, EU member states could ask on-demand platforms to contribute financially to the development of European audiovisual productions, either by investing directly in content or by contributing to national funds. Their contributions should be proportional to their revenues in the country where they would contribute.

Rapporteur Petra Kammerevert (S&D, DE) said: "To increase quotas for video-on-demand offers does not necessarily ensure a stimulation of new European audiovisual content, but it is a clear EU policy signal. Such a quota should be achievable and should not be an undue burden on anybody". "At the same time, we want to enable member countries to commit video on demand platforms to payments of national film funds that can stimulate the production of new European works".

Next steps

Parliament as a whole will decide on 15 May in Strasbourg whether to open inter-institutional talks, for the final approval of the legislation, on the basis of the committee proposals. The Council plans to adopt its negotiating mandate on 23 May.