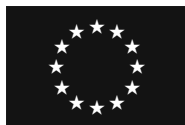


# EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

1999



2004

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*Committee on Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities*

**2002/0071(COD)**

26 June 2002

## **OPINION**

of the Committee on Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities

for the Committee on Citizens' Freedoms and Rights, Justice and Home Affairs

on the proposal for the European Parliament and the Council decision on amending Decision No 276/1999/EC adopting a multiannual Community action plan on promoting safer use of the Internet by combating illegal and harmful content on global networks

(COM (2002) 0152– C5-0141/2002 – 2002/0071(COD))

Draftsperson: Anna Karamanou

## PROCEDURE

The Committee on Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities appointed Anna Karamanou draftsperson at its meeting of 18 April 2002.

It considered the draft opinion at its meetings of 17 and 18 June 2002.

At the last meeting it adopted the following amendments unanimously.

The following were present for the vote: Olga Zrihen Zaari, acting chairperson; Anna Karamanou, draftsperson; María Antonia Avilés Perea, Regina Bastos, Lissy Gröner, María Izquierdo Rojo, Miet Smet, Elena Valenciano Martínez-Orozco, (for Helena Torres Marques), Olle Schmidt (for Lousewies van der Laan).

## SHORT JUSTIFICATION

In 1999, the European Parliament and the Council adopted a multiannual Community action plan on promoting safer use of the Internet by combating illegal and harmful content on global networks (Decision No 276/1999).

This Safer Internet Action Plan has been a major element in the Commission's activity in the field but ends on 31 December 2002. In view of its success (19 projects running and 9 additional projects selected for 2001) as well as the foreseeable increase of use of Internet and other new online technologies, which will entail a corresponding increase and diversification of illegal and harmful content, the Commission proposes to prolong the current Action Plan for further two years and to expand its scope.

The new Action Plan will thus allow users to report illegal content, increase awareness about safer use, extend the methods of implementation and the corresponding financial envelope and include the candidate countries.

While the widening of child protection in this field to include other types of illegal and harmful content (racism, violence, etc.) is an essential and long overdue step, the protection of human dignity does not seem to be satisfactorily taken into account. Human dignity can be impaired also by any derogatory or unnatural depiction which can harm the sensibilities of the young or which distorts reality in the purpose of inducing certain more vulnerable categories of people to spend in products or services.

It is therefore necessary for the new Action Plan to include a proviso for the protection of the human dignity as well as the protection of certain categories of consumers.

## AMENDMENTS

The Committee on Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities calls on the Committee on Citizens' Freedoms and Rights, Justice and Home Affairs, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following amendments in its report:

Text proposed by the Commission<sup>1</sup>

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Amendments by Parliament

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### Amendment 1 Article 1(3)(a) new

Decision No 276/1999/EC is amended as follows:

- promotion of industry self-regulation and content monitoring schemes for example, dealing with content such as child pornography or content which incites hatred on grounds of race, sex, religion, nationality or ethnic origin),

Decision No 276/1999/EC is amended as follows:

**3)(a). Article 3, first indent to amend as follows:**

- promotion of industry self-regulation and content monitoring schemes for example, dealing with content such as child pornography **or content which is likely to result in physical or mental harm** or content which incites hatred on grounds of race, sex, religion, nationality or ethnic origin),

### *Justification*

*The protection of minors should not be limited to protection against child pornography but should also cover aspects, which create a risk for their development; equally, other persons should also be protected by such contents.*

### Amendment 2 Article 1(3)(b) new

**3)(b). Article 3, after the third indent, add the following:**

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<sup>1</sup> OJ C .....

**- providing consumers, in particular women who are the most frequent users of commercial communication on line, with a high level of protection, while addressing special attention to children's credulity, loyalty and vulnerability to advertising and promotions;**

*Justification*

*Protection of special categories of users who are more open to certain types of harmful contents or commercial exploitation via the internet should be provided for.*

Amendment 3  
Article 1(3)(c) new

Decision No 276/1999/EC is amended as follows:

- support actions such as assessment of legal implications,

Decision No 276/1999/EC is amended as follows:

**(3)(c). Article 3, fourth indent to be completed as follows:**

**- support actions such as assessment of legal implications *for each physical or legal person(s) responsible for harmful or/and illegal content;***

*Justification*

*Although criminal law and thus sanctions against perpetrators of such acts are governed by national law in each Member State, given the international nature of the Internet the person(s) or companies responsible for such acts should face a harmonised and severe sanction system applicable in all the EU territory.*