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*(Information)***COUNCIL****COUNCIL RESOLUTION****of 21 January 2002****on culture and the knowledge society**

(2002/C 32/01)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

1. NOTING that culture is a fundamental part of the knowledge society;
2. NOTING that culture is instrumental in promoting mutual respect for and understanding of different ideas and identities, and that such mutual understanding can be developed further through improved access to information in the framework of digital projects;
3. RECALLING that the Lisbon European Council of 23 and 24 March 2000 stated that the shift to a digital, knowledge-based economy, prompted by new goods and services, will be a powerful engine for growth, competitiveness and jobs and that content industries create added value by exploiting and networking European cultural diversity;
4. WELCOMING the fact that at that European Council meeting the Member States were called upon to ensure that every citizen of the European Union is equipped with the skills needed to live and work in the information and knowledge society and that no one is excluded from access to the Internet and to other multimedia resources;
5. WELCOMING the implementation of various European initiatives in this field, particularly in the context of *e-Europe*;
6. NOTING the need to encourage training programmes and initiatives aimed at the mastery of information technologies;
7. NOTING the need to make optimum use of and, where appropriate, consolidate the application in the cultural sector of relevant research programmes aimed at easing the transition to a digital economy and the development of new technologies;
8. Therefore CALLS ON the Commission and the Member States, within their respective spheres of competence, to:
  - (a) make optimum use of and, where appropriate, consolidate relevant programmes, and consider creating new programmes and resources, in particular:
    - (i) to assist in the digitisation of cultural content and in the interoperability of the related systems with a view to preserving, protecting and raising awareness of the European cultural heritage and European cultural diversity;
    - (ii) to support the multilingual dissemination of knowledge;
    - (iii) to promote training in information technologies;
    - (iv) to promote the use of existing networks or of any networks which might be set up in the future in the Member States to facilitate cooperation and to exchange information and good practice at European level;
  - (b) develop the exploitation of digital cultural content so as to encourage cultural cooperation and promote the common cultural heritage making use of existing resources and know-how;
  - (c) facilitate access by cultural operators to the different Community instruments that support content digitisation;
  - (d) encourage 'quality-initiatives' in cultural websites;
  - (e) promote the networking of cultural information to enable all citizens to access European cultural content by the most advanced technological means, particularly by continuing to encourage the development of the European electronic portal started by the Commission and by linking this portal with the digital cultural content that exists in the Member States;
  - (f) promote the participation of all sections of the public in cultural life and their social integration, using the possibilities for interactivity made available by the Internet;
  - (g) encourage the initiation and training of all sections of the public in the use of such technologies in cultural and training centres to allow access to cultural diversity for all.