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Deal opens door to broadcasting of content across the EU

Today, negotiators from the European Parliament and Member State governments concluded a deal to open up broadcasters' TV programmes, series and news content for online viewers living in another EU country. The deal is limited to 'news and current affairs' programmes as well as fully financed own productions from the broadcaster. This constitutes a weakening of the original European Commission proposal which did not limit the type of productions affected by this law.

Thanks to this new EU law – which will still need to be formally adopted – broadcasters can licence their content to be viewed online across the EU more easily than before. However, the law does not give a right for consumers to access content from broadcasters based in another EU country. Broadcasters may still decide which content they want to open up to foreign viewers.

Monique Goyens, Director General of The European Consumer Organisation (BEUC), commented:

"This deal is not the much-needed leap forward to put an end to geo-blocking in audio-visual services but it is a step in the right direction. It is logical and good for consumers that it will be easier for broadcasters to make their TV programmes available to people living in another EU country.

"In an age when people have instant access to information from all over the globe it beggars belief why European broadcasters still lock away their programmes from foreign viewers. This is anachronistic and bars consumers from enjoying Europe's cultural diversity."

ENDS

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