

pean level on issues relating to the information society and is open to all members of the European Parliament and players in the information society world. It will pursue its mission through an on-going programme of live debates, briefings, and special projects and will address the topics of e-democracy, the new economy and social change - identifying emerging policy priorities and helping frame policy intentions.

***Intergovernmental Conference:  
EP Culture Committee opinion***

The European Parliament Culture Committee appointed Mr *Andreasen* as draftsman at their meeting on 12 October 1999 for an opinion on the preparations for the next Intergovernmental Conference. The Committee considered the draft opinion and adopted the conclusions unanimously on 27 January 2000.

The EP Committee on Culture calls on the Committee on Constitutional Affairs, as committee responsible, to include in its report the following items:

- points out that a European information and communication policy based on the principles of pluralism, openness and diversity would enhance public awareness of European cooperation;
- calls for the future reform of the Treaties to include sufficient legal basis for the development of common policies on cultural matters, and for an increase in Community competencies with regard to education;
- calls for the introduction of qualified majority voting in those areas in which the conciliation procedure currently exists alongside unanimity in the Council, especially Article 151 on cultural policy;
- calls for the necessary basis to be provided for the creation of a European dimension of education with a view to enabling the European Community's objectives in this area to be fully achieved, particularly those laid down in Article 149 of the EC Treaty.

In its opinion of 31 January, Mr *Andreasen* notes that the Treaty of Amsterdam did not bring about the institutional reform needed if an enlarged EU is to operate appropriately and effectively. Therefore, in addition to the institutional reforms as the most important part of the intergovernmental conference, there will have to be negotiations on amendments and additions to those provisions of the Treaty falling within the sphere of the Committee on Culture, and those amendments must not entail any form of harmonisation of the member states' rules and administrative provisions.