



SEGUNDO EJERCICIO (ASPIRANTES FORMA DE ACCESO LETRA A, G Y L)

ON THE RE-USE OF PUBLIC SECTOR INFORMATION

The evolution towards an information and knowledge society influences the life of every citizen in the Community, *inter alia*, by enabling them to gain new ways of accessing and acquiring knowledge.

Digital content plays an important role in this evolution. Content production has given rise to rapid job creation in recent years and continues to do so. Most of these jobs are created in small emerging companies.

The public sector collects, produces, reproduces and disseminates a wide range of information in many areas of activity, such as social, economic, geographical, weather, tourist, business, patent and educational information.

One of the principal aims of the establishment of an internal market is the creation of conditions conducive to the development of Community-wide services. Public sector information is an important primary material for digital content products and services and will become an even more important content resource with the development of wireless content services. Broad cross-border geographical coverage will also be essential in this context. Wider possibilities of re-using public sector information should *inter alia* allow European companies to exploit its potential and contribute to economic growth and job creation.

There are considerable differences in the rules and practices in the Member States relating to the exploitation of public sector information resources, which constitute barriers to bringing out the full economic potential of this key document resource. Traditional practice in public sector bodies in exploiting public sector information has developed in very disparate ways. That should be taken into account. Minimum harmonisation of national rules and practices on the re-use of public sector documents should therefore be undertaken, in cases where the differences in national regulations and practices or the absence of clarity hinder the smooth functioning of the internal market and the proper development of the information society in the Community.

Moreover, without minimum harmonisation at Community level, legislative activities at national level, which have already been initiated in a number of Member States in order to respond to the technological challenges, might result in even more significant differences. The impact of such legislative differences and uncertainties will become more significant with the further development of the information society, which has already greatly increased cross-border exploitation of information.