Satellite navigation programmes EGNOS and Galileo: implementation of the deployment and commercial operating phases 2008-2013. GNSS Regulation

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The Council reached a general approach on an amended proposal for a Regulation on the further implementation of the European satellite radio navigation programmes (EGNOSand Galileo), which constitute a key project for the European Union.

The agreed text is the result of work carried out within the Council's bodies and of the presidency's informal negotiations with the European Parliament. On this basis, the European Parliament will adopt its first-reading opinion at its April or May session. This amended proposal constitutes the legal basis for the budgetary implementation of the programmes during the current financial period 2007-2013. It therefore needs to be finalised as quickly as possible and adopted by both institutions in the framework of the codecision procedure.

Due to significant changes in the course of the programme, the draft regulation provides for a series of amendments to the Commission's initial proposal, taking into account the abandonment of the concession scheme for the deployment phase in particular. The main modifications are the following:

- the European Community will assume responsibility for the deployment of the system;
- budgetary resources needed to finance both programmes for the period from 1 January 2007 to 31 December 2013 are set at EUR 3.4 billion;
- the EGNOS programme is included in the regulation as one of the two pillars of European satellite radio navigation policy and the EGNOS system should be declared operational as soon as possible ;
- the public governance of the programme is strengthened by strictly defining the responsibilities of the European Community (represented by the Commission), the European GNSS Supervisory Authority and the European Space Agency, and by declaring the Commission responsible for the management of the programme.

Further modifications in the text agreed by the ministers are the result of the negotiations with the European Parliament. They concern the following issues in particular:

- the role of the European GNSS Supervisory Authority: the GSA will ensure the security accreditation of the system and the operation of the Galileo security centre, and contribute to the preparation of the commercialisation of the systems. In addition, the GSA will also be able to accomplish other tasks entrusted to it by the Commission, in particular the promotion of applications and services and ensuring the certification of the components of the systems;

- the Galileo Interinstitutional Panel: the European Parliament, the Council, and the European Commission agreed to meet in the GIP, which will follow the progress on the implementation of the programmes in particular, and its main purpose will be to ensure a comprehensive exchange of information. The GIP will be composed of three representatives from the Council, three from the European Parliament and one from the Commission and will meet, in principle, four times a year;

- comitology issues: in the framework of the comitology procedure, in particular the regulatory procedure with scrutiny, the institutions agreed on a balanced solution providing for further involvement of the European Parliament.

The Commission will present an annual report to the European Parliament and to the Council on the implementation of the programmes. A mid-term review of the programmes will be carried out in 2010. In particular, it will include a review of costs, risks and likely revenues from the services offered by Galileo.