

# Electricity: common rules for the internal market

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In briefly tracing the long odyssey of the Directive on the internal electricity market Mr Desama (PSE, B) declared that he was satisfied with the very meticulous wording of the compromise that had resulted from the conciliation procedure; while underlining that the common position had taken over no less than 80% of the amendments voted for by Parliament at first reading, the rapporteur pleaded for at least two other important points to be retained in the wording of the Directive undergoing approval: the general introduction of eligibility criteria for distributors, which was currently beset with political difficulties, and the need for harmonisation in the areas of environmental protection, security and social standards. As far as the latter was concerned he called on the Commission to issue a communication setting out the general objectives of future harmonisation directives. Commissioner Papoutsis was in complete agreement with this, but stressed that the common position of the Council, which was the result of a compromise negotiated at the highest political level with most of Parliament's amendments already having been taken over, could not subsequently be changed without having to wait eight years in order to achieve unanimity within the Council.