

Radio equipment and telecommunication terminal equipment and mutual recognition of their conformity

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The EP and Council Delegations to the Conciliation Committee reached agreement on the directive on radio equipment and telecommunications terminal equipment and the mutual recognition of their conformity. Council incorporated the most important EP amendments in its common position and rapporteur Mel READ (PES, UK) will now recommend that the House adopt the common position. The EP Delegation was chaired by Vice-President Renzo IMBENI (PES, I). Placing radio and telecommunications equipment on the market is currently subject to approval by a telecommunications authority or assessment body in the Member States. In 1991, a mutual recognition principle was introduced by Directive 91/263 but failed to achieve maximum impact because of the restrictive way in which it was implemented in Member States' national laws. At the same time, the telecom market has changed dramatically over the last few years, with the arrival of many new products with relatively short life-cycles. The Commission originally put forward a proposal for a more flexible regime based on self-testing by manufacturers and unilateral declarations of conformity. This approach is already used for other technologically similar devices such as TV sets, audio equipment and computers. In her recommendation for second reading, the rapporteur proposed 18 amendments to the Council text, of which many were accepted by Council, including those on telecommunications terminal equipment and harm to the network. The EP Delegation accepted a Council text which strengthens the position of consumers in cases where operators have to disconnect apparatus to protect the network. Council also finally agreed to an amendment on safeguard clauses. Council's own proposal for a new recital to clarify the conditions for displaying telecom apparatus which does not comply with the directive at trade fairs was also accepted.