Postal sector: rules of competition, assessment of certain state measures relating to the postal services

1995/2305(COS) - 11/06/1995

PREVIOUS COMMUNITY LEGISLATION: This would be the first time that the Community has legislated on the subject (barring a 1979 Commission recommendation seeking to bring the intra-Community tariff for standard mail into line with the Member States' domestic tariffs). However, the Commission has produced a Green Paper (published on 11 June 1992) setting out the key discussion points (main legislative options) and a communication to Parliament and the Council (published on 2 June 1993) summarizing the debate prompted by the Green Paper and proposing guidelines. PREVIOUS STATEMENTS OF THE EP's VIEWS: (a) In a resolution of 22 January 1993 (adopted on the basis of the report by Mr Simpson on behalf of the Committee on Transport and Tourism) the EP endorsed the underlying principles of the Green Paper, in particular the concepts of universal and reserved service and maintained, on the other hand, that direct mail (addressed advertising mail) and cross-border mail should not be liberalized, but rather should remain in the reserved sector; The EP insisted that the Commission should not invoke Article 90(3) of the Treaty in order to issue its own Directive on the reserved service. (b) In a resolution adopted on 25 June 1993 the EP called for the two aspects of the subject, the universal service and the reserved service, to be covered in a single Directive based solely on Article 100a of the Treaty (the demand was repeated in a resolution adopted on 29 October 1993). SITUATION IN THE MEMBER STATES: (a) the proposed components of the universal service are apparently supported by the Member States, although Germany, the Netherlands, and, to a lesser extent, the United Kingdom are in favour of pruning down the service; (b) the vast majority of Member States, however, do not wish direct mail and cross-border mail to be excluded from the reserved sector: only the Netherlands is calling for their exclusion, whereas Germany and the United Kingdom are adopting a wait-and-see attitude.