Economic and monetary union EMU and the euro: strategy of communication and information up to 2002

2000/2019(COS) - 02/02/2000 - Non-legislative basic document

PURPOSE : the purpose of the present Communication is to report on the communications strategy in the last phases of the completion of the EMU. CONTENT : the European Union is in the final phase of a journey into Economic and Monetary Union. From 01/01/2002, banks will issue only euro notes and coins. Member States will make their best efforts to ensure that the bulk of cash transactions will be made by euro by the end of a fortnight from 01/01/2002, and, by the beginning of March 2002, the withdrawal of national notes and coins should be complete. Preparing for this is a formidable challenge. It calls for sustained and concentrated communication campaigns so that all actors can meet it successfully. Turning to what remains to be done before 2002, we notice that SMEs are still not taking the changeover to the euro seriously enough; the use of the euro has been significantly less than was anticipated before the introduction of the euro on 01/01/1999; and most people have received some information on the single currency but may be ignoring it. The Commission specifies that the campaigns should be targeted at a number of groups such as, enterprises (especially SMEs); the general public and non-participant countries. The sequence of events is as follows: - in 2000, enterprises should be targeted intensely so that they can take all the necessary actions in good time. A steady flow of information to the general public should also be maintained: not only do people need to know that an intensive campaign will give them all the information they need in good time but they also need to be reassured of the benefits of the single currency and kept informed of details of the changeover. The Commission has stressed the importance of transmitting the message to children, of primary school age, so that they, in turn, can teach adults. National and local authorities should also make a start on training trainers and identifying and mobilising individuals and groups able to help the vulnerable; - in 2001, the campaign will target both the general public and its more vulnerable sections should be intensified: citizens need to become acquainted with the look of the notes and the coins. The campaign for businesses must be continued and be readjusted as necessary to take account of the changing situation. The campaign will need to continue into the early months of 2002, during the period of dual circulation and possibly beyond.