Technical standards and regulations: procedure for the provision of information. Codification

1996/0300(COD) - 07/07/2000 - Follow-up document

PURPOSE: to inform the European Parliament, and the Economic and Social Committee on the application of Directive 98/34/EC laying down a procedure for the provision of information in the field of technical standards and regulations. CONTENT: This report on the application of Directive 98/34/EC from 1995 to 1998 is intended to inform the European Parliament, the Council and the Economic and Social Committee in accordance with Article 11 of Directive 83/189/EEC, as amended by Directives 88 /182/EEC and 94/10/EC and consolidatd by Directive 98/34/EC. The purpose of the Directive is to prevent the appearance of barriers to intra-Community trade; this basic instrument for the completion of the Internal Market has fulfilled its purpose by initiating a dialogue between the Commission and the Member States, by promoting cooperation among the Member States, and by setting up an information network linking European and national standardiation bodies. The changes made to the Directive, in particular those made during the period covered by this report, and the case-law of the European Court of Justice have contributed to this result and have enhanced the transparency, dialogue, preventive approach and reciprocal control which characterised the system from the start. The report on the operation of this instrument from 1995 to 1998 is divided into three parts: 1) The information procedure for standards. After a brief description of the procedure for standards, this section explains how it worked from 1995 to 1998 and analyses the statistics. It also discusses the quality of the notifications, the use made thereof, and the mandates given to the European standardisation bodies, i.e. the European Committee for Standardisation (CEN), the European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardisation (CENELEC) and the European Telecommunications Standards Institute (ETSI). This section ends with details of improvements which have been made or could be made. 2) The notification procedure for technical rules within the European Community (EC). This section describes how the procedure established by Directive 98/34/EC for national technical regulations has developed. It examines the information flows, including the various reactions from the Commission and the Member States, the possible further procedures, and the results. Particular attention is paid to the factors which contributed to the increase in the number of drafts notified and to the action taken to provide businesses with more information. 3) The exchange of information on technical rules between the Community and the EFTA countries. The Agreement on the European Economic Area (EEA Agreement) entered into force in 1994. It incorporates the provisions of Directive 98/34/EC in an adapted form. Although the Swiss Confederation is not a party to the EEA Agreement, it continues to participate in the exchange of information with the Community by voluntarily following the practice introduced by the Agreement between the Member States of EFTA and the EEC laying down a procedure for the exchange of information in the field of technical regulations. This section analyses the exchange of information between these countries and theCommunity.