Telecommunications: future development of the market in directories and other information services

1995/2261(COS) - 25/04/1996

The Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs adopted the report by Mr Bryan CASSIDY. The aim of the communication was not to establish European legislation on directories with each Member State having its own rules, but to ensure that the liberalisation of the telecommunications market was accompanied by liberalisation of the market in telephone directories. The report supported the points made in the communication, although it drew attention to certain aspects: - it was important to guarantee the protection of privacy, which was essential for consumers and to ensure the smooth development of the market in directories, - consumers should be permitted to withhold their details from public directories or restrict the use of that information for commercial purposes without having to pay, - the telephone directories of the various operators should contain the telephone and other telecommunications numbers of each other's subscribers, - new operators should be given access to the names, addresses and telephone numbers of all subscribers at marginal cost and existing operators should not be able to abuse their dominant position by charging unreasonable prices for the information provided, - it was essential to develop pan-European directory and enquiry services or interconnected and interoperable databases, - consumers should have access to the telephone numbers of subscribers in a specific area, even if several operators were involved, and they should be entitled to have free printed copies of their local "white pages" and "yellow pages", - directory enquiry services should be available at a nominal charge or on a "cost-plus" basis.