Information society: convergence and regulation of telecommunications, media and technologies. Green paper

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The rapid technological development of Information Society Services challenges traditional distinctions between different sectors of the economy for example. It is already possible to make telephone calls over the Internet in a way that was unforseen by regulators only a few years ago. This process is called convergence, where the telecommunications, media and IT Sectors, while not becoming one, increasingly overlap each other. Reporting on the Commission Green Paper on Convergence on behalf of the Committee, Reino PAASILINNA (PES, FIN) underlines that this development necessitates a new approach to regulation. The Committee considers that it would be appropriate to develop a single legislative framework for the various networks and to do a way with distinctions such as those between fixed and mobile telecommunications regulations. As far as the services offered through these networks are concerned, the Committee considers that the EU should exercise caution, and essentially confine itself to act when industry self-regulation fails to adequately safeguard the interests of consumers and the general public. On the other hand, the Committee calls on the EU to concentrate its efforts on promoting open standards and for it to strictly apply its competition rules to prevent consumer choice being restricted by the creation of monopolies or dominant positions which effectively control access to the market. Finally, the Committee calls on the EU to support the development of quality service content, for example by reinforcing the MEDIA II programme.