Digital television: use of standards for the transmission of signals

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The committee adopted the report by Astrid THORS (ELDR, FIN) on the Commission communication on digital television drawn up in the context of the 1995 directive on the use of standards for the transmission of television signals. The report noted that, as the technology and markets had evolved beyond the scope of the directive, it should be adapted to cover in particular the new bottlenecks/gateways in the distribution of digital TV. A balance needed to be struck between fulfilling obligations to ensure diversity of culture and content in TV networks and at the same time not putting too many restrictions on the development of the industry. The committee called for open access for digital TV, similar to the open network provision (ONP) in the telecommunications sector, and for a policy guaranteeing that different systems of access to the digital TV world were interoperable at consumer level. It also pointed out that broadcasting rights were sold on a purely national basis with the result that it was impossible to subscribe to TV services from another Member State, and therefore urged that a single internal market be implemented for digital TV.