Telecommunications: unbundled access to local loops of operators having significant market power

2000/0185(COD) - 12/10/2000

The committee adopted the report by Nicholas CLEGG (ELDR, UK) under the codecision procedure (first reading) approving, with a number of amendments, the Commission proposal for a regulation on unbundled access to the local loop. The text proposed by the committee was the result of an ongoing dialogue with the Council, with which Mr Clegg had already begun negotiations. Specific additions requested by the committee and included by the Council in a political agreement of 3 October included enhanced intervention powers for national regulatory authorities, confirmation of the date of 31 December 2000 as the deadline for the regulation to enter into force, confirmation of the possibility of shared unbundling and inclusion of a technical annex detailing the obligations of the incumbent operator. The amendments adopted by the committee reflected a number of points not taken on board in the Council agreement and also sought to clarify the original Commission position. They emphasised that refusal to allow unbundled access would prevent, restrict or distort competition in this sector. They also stressed the need for compensation for beneficiaries (i.e. new market entrants) if the existing "notified operators" failed to meet lead times, so as to avoid procrastination by the former monopolies. By voting in favour of the proposal the committee hoped to ensure the legislation was adopted by the end of the year, as laid down by both the Lisbon and Feira European Councils, which emphasised this part of the telecommunications package as a priority.