

Electronic communication, open networks safety: electronic signatures, common regulatory framework

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The committee unanimously adopted the draft legislative resolution containing a number of modifications - essentially clarifications - to the proposal for a directive on a common framework for electronic signatures. The rapporteur, Mr Wolfgang Ullmann(V, D), agrees with the broad approach of the Commission's proposal, which is based on free-market principles. In particular, he agrees that the Commission should focus on flexibility (because of the technological nature of the issue and the need for international coordination) and on the need for the regulations to be neutral and open to authentication mechanisms other than public-key cryptography, as it is quite possible that new systems will emerge. The rapporteur also agrees with the key concept of legal recognition of electronic signatures and the establishment of basic responsibilities for service providers. However, as regards the global context of European legislation in this field, he calls for a European framework to take international developments into account to avoid conflicts between the different international initiatives.