

Electronic communications: universal service, users' rights relating to networks and services

2000/0183(COD) - 27/11/2001

The committee adopted the report by Malcolm HARBOUR (EPP-ED, UK) amending the Council's common position under the codecision procedure (2nd reading). A number of the amendments were designed to improve provision for disabled users. For example, the committee wanted Member States and /or NRAs to ensure that public pay-phones, as well as the directory inquiry services of another Member State, were accessible to disabled people. It also said that "must carry" obligations which Member States may impose on undertakings under their jurisdiction could include services specifically designed to improve access for disabled users. In an amendment which went further than the common position, the committee said that Member States should be able to impose reasonable "must carry" obligations for the transmission of specified radio and television broadcast channels and services, not only on undertakings providing electronic communications networks used for the distribution of radio or television broadcasts to the public, but also on undertakings providing conditional access systems and other associated facilities. The aim was to ensure that "must carry" obligations also applied to satellite, conditional access systems and undertakings providing access to digital television platforms. Finally, in order to increase price transparency, the committee called on Member States and in particular NRAs to make accurate and up-to-date information available to both end-users and consumers.