Use of standards for the transmission of television signals (repeal. Directive 92/38/EEC)

1993/0476(COD) - 15/11/1993 - Legislative proposal

Council Directive 92/38/EEC aimed to facilitate Europe's transition from normal definition television (provided by the current PAL and SECAM systems) to high definition television (HDTV). The approach was based on compatibility developed for satellite and cable distribution, relying on the D2-MAC and HD-MAC transmission systems. In view of the development of the market and the current state of technological progress, it was appropriate to repeal Council Directive 92/38/EEC and to adopt a new directive to guarantee the establishment of a single market covering the production and transmission of and receiver equipment and transmission services for wide-screen 16:9 format television programmes throughout the Community by harmonising the transmission format. The new directive provided for all wide-screen television services to be in the 16:9 format irrespective of the transmission method used (cable, satellite or terrestrial network). Service providers would be able to choose the European standard for the television system which suited them best. For services in normal definition (625 lines), they would be able to choose between the current D2-MAC, any new analogue system that was fully compatible with PAL or SECAM, or any new fully digital system. High definition services offered the choice between HD-MAC and a fully digital system which had been standardised by a recognised European standardisation body. Producers of products intended for the general public had to meet a minimum requirement guaranteeing that the whole range of decoders likely to be marketed could be connected to the television receiver. The incorporation of a standard open interface socket in television receivers with screens beyond a certain size should provide this guarantee. Finally, the proposal required all cable network operators who decided to redistribute television services to retransmit in the wide-screen 16:9 format television services which they received in wide-screen format. The directive would be evaluated every two years.