

Telecommunications: interconnection, universal service and interoperability of networks and services, open network provision ONP

1995/0207(COD) - 11/11/1996 - Commission opinion on Parliament's position at 2nd reading

The Commission amended its proposal by incorporating, in full or in part, 21 of the 31 amendments adopted by the European Parliament at second reading. The main amendments accepted by the Commission relate to the following eight areas: - study into the creation of a European regulatory authority: the Commission agreed to examine in the report which it is required to submit by the end of 1999 the possibility of introducing a European telecommunications regulatory authority, although it considered it premature at this stage to specify the tasks which it would be required to carry out; - procedure for settling cross-border disputes on interconnection at Union level: reintroduction of a binding procedure; - postponement, for certain Member States, of certain obligations provided for in the directive: support for amendments requiring that Member States granted transitional periods for complete deregulation in accordance with Commission directive 96/19/EC call for the corresponding postponement of certain obligations provided for in the directive, where this is justified by special or exclusive telecommunications rights; - definition of interconnection: service providers must be included in the definition of interconnection; - re-examination of the need for the directive once there is real competition; - number portability: the Commission supports the demand for calls to be rerouted to the new number or for the caller to be given the new number. This service should be provided for a reasonable charge approved by the national regulatory authority (for portable numbers and call rerouting) or free of charge (for giving callers the new number); - strengthening of the requirement for the positions of Member States to be coordinated in international bodies and fora where decisions are taken on numbering; - guidelines laid down by the Commission: the Commission reintroduced guidelines on cost accounting and separation of accounts in the field of interconnection. These guidelines, which the Commission will draw up, will not be binding. It should be noted that the Commission did not accept amendments seeking: - the establishment by the Member States of a mechanism for funding the universal service in order to finance the net cost of the universal service requirement; - the elaboration by the Commission, by 31 December 1996, of a proposal for a directive on the evaluation of the cost and funding of the universal service. - separation of accounts; - comitology (the Commission accepted the type IIIa regulatory committee).