Energy, electricity and gas: liberalisation of markets (Directives 96/92/EC, 98/30/EC)

2000/2097(COS) - 23/11/1999 - Document attached to the procedure

PURPOSE : to present the report on harmonisation requirements stemming from Directive 98/30/EC concerning common rules for the internal market for natural gas. CONTENT: pursuant to Article 27 (1) of Directive 98/30/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 June 1998 concerning common rules for the internal market for natural gas (the Gas Directive), "the Commission shall submit a report to the Council and the European Parliament before the first year following the entry into force of this Directive". This harmonisation report shall analyse the harmonisation requirements and, if appropriate, submit proposals aiming at a more efficient interoperability of natural gas networks". In this respect, a study on the interoperability of the different gas networks in the Member States has been carried out. This study has allowed the identificaton of a number of issues, which could potentially represent obstacles to cross-border trade. These issues are the following: - access conditions to pipelines with different gas quality specifications and publication of the range of technically compatible gas qualities; - publication of the range of ancillary services provided for by the network operator and the cost of these services; - odorisation in transmission and distribution networks which may prevent the exchange of natural gas and the interoperability of gas networks; - diversity of national technical codes and standards for the design and construction of pipelines; - in-put/out-put balancing regimes; - access tarification. The objective of this report has been to identify issues relevant in the framework of the effective operation of the internal gas market and which have not been covered by the provision of the Gas Directive. The present report, however, does not claim to be exhaustive in the selection of the questions nor to cover all aspects of the issues discussed. Before making any proposals for harmonisation, further analysis of the different issues identified in this report and possible other issues is therefore considered appropriate. The Commission will invite all relevant and interested parties, including national regulatory authorities, to participate in these analyses with a view to identifying possible harmonisation requirements to ensure the proper functioning of the internal gas market. Following these further analyses, the Commission will submit a second report to the Council and the European Parliament including possible recommendations with regard to harmonisation requirements.