Licensing of railway undertakings. Railway package

1998/0266(COD) - 07/04/2000 - Commission communication on Council's position

The Commission is of the opinion that because of the fact that some Member States have extended access rights going beyond the requirements of Article 10 of Directive 91/440/EEC, it is necessary to ensure fair, transparent and non-discriminatory treatment of all railway undertakings that may operate in this market by extending the licensing principles to all railway undertakings. Such a step is also necessary in order to achieve a "level playing field". The Commission took into account as much as possible the views of the European Parliament expressed during the first reading by taking up the amendment proposed in relation to Article 8 (insertion of the notion of non-discrimination) in its meaning. The Commission is of the opinion that the overall compromise found by Council after intensive discussions and efforts of three of its Presidencies is a well-balanced step forward in railway policy. It will contribute to a sustainable development of this mode of transport. The Commission is convinced that this second step of reform of the legal framework for rail transport services represents an important step towards the creation of a "level playing field" for all rail transport enterprises and, therefore, issues a positive opinion.