Series of guidelines for trans-European telecommunications networks

1995/0124(COD) - 14/05/1997 - Text adopted by Parliament, 3rd reading

In adopting the report by Mr Karsten Friedrich HOPPENSTEDT (PPE, D), the European Parliament accepted the joint text approved by the Conciliation Committee on trans-European telecommunications networks. The agreement stipulated that the networks could take various forms, including, for example, networks linking universities and research centres or those capable of linking, on a Community scale, all those involved in the health sector (doctors, hospitals, laboratories etc.). On the technical side, Parliament obtained satisfaction on a number of points: - concentration solely on real applications making use of networks which are available and can be used by broad sections of the general public; - assessment of the social consequences of the deployment of networks (e.g. with regard to teleworking); - the transnational character of projects to be guaranteed; - account to be taken of the linguistic needs and specific requirements of less developed regions; - in the cultural sphere, action should not be confined to preserving the heritage but should also promote creative work. The agreement also provided for the drawing-up of an exhaustive list of those of the common-interest projects which it was felt should enjoy a certain priority. These are generic services (European directories, a trans-European 'kiosk', electronic signature, etc.), applications of distance learning of public interest, services to SMEs, telematics services for transport, environment, health and culture. Following protracted negotiations, the agreement also included satellite communications as a common-interest project. Lastly, as regards institutional questions, the solution allows the Commission the elbow-room and flexibility which will be vital when issuing calls for tenders. Common-interest projects are identified in Annex I to the text. The annex is to be reviewed, using the codecision procedure, after three years. However, the actual projects will be selected by a committee on the basis of a work programme drawn up by the Commission.