Telecommunications : competitive environment (amend. Directives 90/387/EEC, 92/44/EEC)

1995/0280(COD) - 22/05/1996 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted the report by Mr Fernand HERMAN (PPE, B) on the proposal for a directive amending two existing directives for the purpose of adaptation to the competitive environment in the telecommunications sector. The amendments adopted by the European Parliament concern: - the scope of the directive: Parliament excluded radio broadcasting and television; - universal service: Parliament emphasized that "universal service" means a defined minimum service of specified quality which is accessible to all users everywhere, at an affordable price and with no limitation connected with specific national conditions. It called on the Commission to draw up a draft Directive on the costing and financing of universal service before 30 September 1996; - essential requirements: the European Parliament added the protection of the environment and town planning to the "essential requirements" on the basis of which a Member State may restrict access to public telecommunications networks or public telecommunications services; - data protection: Parliament added authentication, i.e. the possibility of knowing where the message received has come from; - regulatory authorities: Parliament confirmed the independence of national regulatory authorities, which must be in possession of all the necessary resources to fulfil their mission, and also called for the establishment of a European Regulatory Authority; - tariffs: tariffs must be non-discriminatory and guarantee equality of treatment, except for restrictions which are compatible with Community law. Also, any charge for access must take into account the principle of fair sharing in the net cost (not the global cost) of the resources used and the need for a reasonable level of return on investment; - finally, the European Parliament called for the Commission to be assisted by an advisory committee composed of the representatives of the national regulatory authorities and chaired by the representative of the Commission. This committee, called the "ONP Committee", would form part of the EUTC Committee in which it would be integrated in due course.