

Energy: rules for the internal market in electricity. 'Electricity Directive'

2001/0077(COD) - 13/03/2002

The European Parliament has adopted with 351 votes in favour, 79 against, and 114 abstentions the Commission's proposal on the completion of the internal market in electricity and natural gas. The two rapporteurs, Claude TURMES (Greens/EFA, L) for electricity and Bernhard RAPKAY (PES, D) for gas, both agreed on the importance of creating a true functioning internal market for electricity and gas. With the vote, an important step towards an open, liberalised market in electricity and natural gas, was taken. After a lengthy and complicated vote with 160 amendments, the House agreed largely with the opinion of the Energy Committee and adopted most of the amendments submitted by that committee. Parliament agreed that: - The Commission's proposal should be separated into one proposal for Electricity and one for gas, - Member States should ensure that electricity and gas entities supplying final consumers specify certain minimum information, including the origin of the electricity and gas in the bills; - Member States should designate one or more competent bodies as regulatory authorities with the highest possible degree of independence from the Governments, and must be wholly independent of interests of the electricity and gas industry; - Member States should ensure legal unbundling and a fair and non-discriminatory network system; - Funds for decommissioning in the nuclear sector should not be allowed to be used for anything else; - Consideration should be given to initiatives and measures to encourage reciprocal arrangements for access to third country gas networks. - The Commission should come forward with proposals to regulate third-country access to the internal electricity and gas market to avoid price dumping; - Cross subsidisation of any kind shall be inadmissible; - Member States shall bring into force the laws etc necessary to comply with the Directive by 31 December 2002.