Electronic communications and associated services: 1999 review of the regulatory framework

2000/2085(COS) - 13/06/2000 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted the resolution drafted by W.G. van VELZEN (EPP/ED, Netherlands) on the Commission Communication on electronic communciations infrastructure and associated services. The Parliament welcomed the Commission's Communication, but considered that further consideration of a number of themes is required, including general authorisation and auctions. It emphasised that in some Member States, no auctions of UMTS frequencies are held, as a result of which some ICT companies obtain UMTS frequencies at far lower prices than their competitors. This does not create a level playing field. The influence of governments on national ICT companies is regulated in very different ways and this has constituted an obstacle to mergers between European ICT companies. Parliament also asked for guarantees, with respect to pluralism, diversity and quality regarding the content of digital services, the protection of consumers and minors, public information, advertising and the sale of regulated products and intellectual property rights. The auction of frequencies could increase the prices charged to consumers, which would be contrary to the Lisbon decisions concerning an information society accesible to all. The new framework must maintain the possibility for Member States to establish schemes to compensate the universal service provider, if provision is an unfair burden on the operator.