Decision setting up a temporary committee on the Echelon interception system

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The European Parliament has adopted a decision to set up a temporary committee on the ECHELON interception system. The temporary committee will have the following powers: 1) to verify the existence of the communication interception system known as ECHELON, whose operation is described in the STOA report published under the title "Development of surveillance technology and risks of abuse of economic information"; 2) to assess the compatibility of such a system with Community law, in light of the following questions: - are the rights of the European citizens protected against activities of secret services? - is encryption an adequate and sufficient protection to guarantee citizens' privacy or should additional measures be taken and if so what kind of measures? - how can the EU institutions be made better aware of the risks posed by these activities and what measures to be taken? - to ascertain whether European industry is put at risk by the global interception of communications; - possibly, to make proposals for political and legislative initiatives. Lastly, the Parliament decides that the temporary committee will have 36 members.