Information society, eEurope 2005: European network and information security Agency

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The European Parliament adopted a resolution based on the draft by Reino PAASILINNA (PES, Finland.) Parliament and Council adopted a series of compromise amendments in order to ensure that the new European Network and Information Security Agency be speedily established and based provisionally in Brussels. The amendments adopted focus on the tasks of the new agency, the operational structure of the new Agency, the initial evaluation of the Agency's work and the seat of the agency. The European Network and Information Security Agency has the task of contributing to a high level of network and information security within the Community and of developing a culture of network and information security for the benefit of citizens, consumers, businesses and public sector organisations in the European Union, thus contributing to the proper functioning of the internal market. A new recital states that, to better understand the challenges in the network and information security field, there is a need for the Agency to analyse current and emerging risks. For that purpose the Agency may collect appropriate information, in particular through questionnaires, without imposing new obligations on the private sector or the Member States to generate data. Emerging risks are to be understood as issues already visible as possible future risks to network and information security. On the question of the composition of the Agency, Parliament stated that this would involve a Management Board, an Executive Director and a Permanent Stakeholders Group. Parliament deleted the Commissions provisions on having an Advisory Board and working groups. The Executive Director will establish the Permanent Stakeholders Group composed of experts representing the relevant stakeholders, such as the Information and Communication Technologies industry, consumer groups, and academic experts in network and information security. The Management Board will be composed of one representative of each Member State, (as opposed to the Commission's proposal of six representatives appointed by the Council) three representatives appointed by the Commission, as well as three representatives, proposed by the Commission and appointed by the Council, without the right to vote. Members increased the term of office for the Executive Director from two and half years to up to five years. He/she will be appointed after an open competition. The procedures regarding in particular the number, the composition, the appointment of the members by the Executive Director and the operation of the Group should be specified in the Agency's internal rules of operation and should be made public. Parliament also stressed that the objectives and the tasks of the Agency are without prejudice to the competencies of the Member State regarding network and information security and to activities concerning public security, defence, State security and the activities of the State in areas of criminal law. As to the seat of the new Agency, both Parliament and Council state, "unless otherwise determined by common accord of the governments of the Member States, the provisional seat of the European Network and Information Security Agency shall be Brussels." (Statement annexed to the Council minutes). Finally, Parliament emphasised that the Agency should payattention to small and medium sized enterprises.