

Procedure file

Basic information		
COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)	1995/2261(COS)	Procedure completed
Telecommunications: future development of the market in directories and other information services		
Subject 3.30.03 Telecommunications, data transmission, telephone		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	ECON Economic and Monetary Affairs, Industrial Policy	PPE CASSIDY Bryan M.D.	28/11/1995
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	ENER Research, Technological Development and Energy	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
	JURI Legal Affairs, Citizens' Rights	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
	FEMM Women's Rights		21/03/1996
		PSE READ Imelda Mary	
Council of the European Union	Council configuration	Meeting	Date
	Telecommunications	1910	21/03/1996

Key events			
18/09/1995	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(1995)0431	Summary
24/10/1995	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
21/03/1996	Debate in Council	1910	
25/04/1996	Vote in committee		Summary
25/04/1996	Committee report tabled for plenary	A4-0141/1996	
21/05/1996	Debate in Parliament		
22/05/1996	Decision by Parliament	T4-0246/1996	Summary
22/05/1996	End of procedure in Parliament		
10/06/1996	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	1995/2261(COS)
Procedure type	COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)
Procedure subtype	Commission strategy paper
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 142
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	ECON/4/07157

Documentation gateway					
Non-legislative basic document		COM(1995)0431	18/09/1995	EC	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A4-0141/1996 OJ C 152 27.05.1996, p. 0004	25/04/1996	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T4-0246/1996 OJ C 166 10.06.1996, p. 0056-0106	22/05/1996	EP	Summary

Telecommunications: future development of the market in directories and other information services

OBJECTIVE: the Commission communication aims to set out guidelines for the future development of the market in directories, give that directory enquiry services will play an essential role for the use of telecommunications services in a competitive environment. CONTENT: the Commission stresses that directories are an important medium (7.5% of the advertising market in the EU) and that they are the most important access route to telecommunications services. In addition, thanks to new technologies, especially interactive services such as videotex, the sector was only now entering the multimedia sector and could help considerably in developing this new market. The introduction of a competitive environment in the telecommunications sector means that Community telecommunications rules need to be extended to directory and information services. It also means that a universal directory needs to be maintained, together with an information service which is easily accessible to and affordable by all users. Consequently, the Commission proposes the following guidelines for developing this sector: - maintaining a universal directory and a directory enquiries service in a competitive environment: users of voice telephony services should be given at least one complete "white pages" directory in each Member State and should be able to access an information service at an affordable price; - abolishing exclusive and special rights on the telecommunications directories market contained in certain national regulations; - access and marketing conditions: access to raw data on subscribers should be granted on the basis of objective, transparent, non-discriminatory criteria. In addition, access should comply with Community legislation on competition rules, the provision of an open network and protection of personal data and privacy; - promotion of new technologies (electronic directory, CD-ROM and X500 service) and promotion of multimedia; - protection of privacy: protection of personal data should be guaranteed during the provision of directory services; - protection of intellectual property rights: the benefit of national and Community provisions on copyright should be extended to directories.?

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The Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs adopted the report by Mr Bryan CASSIDY. The aim of the communication was not to establish European legislation on directories with each Member State having its own rules, but to ensure that the liberalisation of the telecommunications market was accompanied by liberalisation of the market in telephone directories. The report supported the points made in the communication, although it drew attention to certain aspects: - it was important to guarantee the protection of privacy, which was essential for consumers and to ensure the smooth development of the market in directories, - consumers should be permitted to withhold their details from public directories or restrict the use of that information for commercial purposes without having to pay, - the telephone directories of the various operators should contain the telephone and other telecommunications numbers of each other's subscribers, - new operators should be given access to the names, addresses and telephone numbers of all subscribers at marginal cost and existing operators should not be able to abuse their dominant position by charging unreasonable prices for the information provided, - it was essential to develop pan-European directory and enquiry services or interconnected and interoperable databases, - consumers should have access to the telephone numbers of subscribers in a specific area, even if several operators were involved, and they should be entitled to have free printed copies of their local "white pages" and "yellow pages", - directory enquiry services should be available at a nominal charge or on a "cost-plus" basis. ?

Telecommunications: future development of the market in directories and other information services

Adopting the report by Mr Bryan CASSIDY (PPE, UK), the European Parliament supported the liberalization of the market in directories, while insisting on respect for privacy and setting out certain procedures and conditions for liberalization. Parliament drew attention to the following

points: - the need to offer adequate protection to consumers and to provide, where the operator has recorded data incorrectly, for the consumer to be compensated for any loss of income and any resultant inconvenience; - protecting consumers from misuse of directory information for criminal purposes; - the option for consumers, free of charge, to withhold their details from public directories or to restrict the use of that information for commercial purposes; - the option for consumers to be given access to the telephone numbers of subscribers in a particular area, even if more than one operator is present; telephone subscribers should be entitled to have free printed copies of their local "white pages" and "yellow pages"; - the telephone directories of the various telecommunications operators should contain the telephone and other telecommunication numbers of each other's subscribers. Parliament also called for: - all operators who planned to be present on the directories' market and other telecommunications information services to contribute to the provision of universal services; - new entrants into the directories market to be given access on fair, reasonable and non-discriminatory terms to the names, addresses and telephone numbers of all telephone customers and for existing operators not to be able to abuse their dominant positions by charging unreasonable prices for the information provided; - the development of pan-European directory and enquiry services either in printed form or in the form of interoperable data bases, and the development of a pan-European directory enquiries number system; - telephone subscribers to be listed in directories free of charge, including the name of their spouse or partner living with them, if they so request; - directory enquiry services to be made available at a nominal charge or on a "cost-plus" basis. Parliament also called for innovative services, such as the French Minitel electronic directory, to be extended to other Member States.?