


Procedure file

Basic information		
INI - Own-initiative procedure	2010/2274(INI)	Procedure completed
Universal service and '112' emergency number See also 2013/2681(RSP) Subject 2.40.02 Public services, of general interest, universal service 4.20.06 Health services, medical institutions 4.60.04 Consumer health		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	IMCO Internal Market and Consumer Protection		27/09/2010
		S&D RAPTI Sylvana	
		Shadow rapporteur	
		PPE THUN UND HOHENSTEIN Róza	
		ALDE PARVANOVA Antonyia	
		Verts/ALE CANFIN Pascal	
		Verts/ALE RÜHLE Heide	
		ECR HARBOUR Malcolm	
		EFD SALVINI Matteo	
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	ENVI Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (Associated committee)		15/12/2010
		PPE FERNANDES José Manuel	
European Commission	Commission DG Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union	Commissioner KROES Neelie	

Key events			
25/11/2010	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
25/11/2010	Referral to associated committees announced in Parliament		
25/05/2011	Vote in committee		Summary
01/06/2011	Committee report tabled for plenary	A7-0220/2011	
04/07/2011	Debate in Parliament		

05/07/2011	Results of vote in Parliament		
05/07/2011	Decision by Parliament	T7-0306/2011	Summary
05/07/2011	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2010/2274(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
	See also 2013/2681(RSP)
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 54
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 159
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	IMCO/7/04575

Documentation gateway

Committee draft report		PE458.562	25/03/2011	EP	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE462.898	20/04/2011	EP	
Committee opinion	ENVI	PE458.854	24/05/2011	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A7-0220/2011	01/06/2011	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T7-0306/2011	05/07/2011	EP	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary		SP(2011)8297	15/11/2011	EC	

Universal service and '112' emergency number

The Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection adopted the own-initiative report by Sylvana RAPTI (S&D, EL) on universal service and the 112 emergency number.

Universal service: Members underline the importance of Universal Service Obligations (USOs) as a safety net for social inclusiveness where market forces alone have failed to provide citizens and businesses with basic services. They call on the Commission to provide guidelines on how best to implement and enforce Directive 2002/22/EC, as amended by Directive 2009/136/EC (Universal Service Directive or USD), avoiding market distortions and, at the same time, allowing Member States to adopt the provisions that best suit their national circumstances. The committee states its support for the Digital Agenda's 'Broadband for all?' and calls on the Commission to give more financial support to local projects which provide digital access and to all communities which help disadvantaged groups to access technological devices by providing connections in public buildings offering free Internet access. However, making broadband availability obligatory will not automatically result in higher take-up. The committee calls therefore on the Commission and the Member States to reinforce measures to drive demand and stimulate take-up, rather than just ensuring a connection. It also calls on the Commission to:

- complete the ongoing impact assessment and provide legislators with sound data on the existing take-up, the expected demand for and improvement of USOs through broadband, and an analysis of the most effective financing mechanism for Member States, consumers and undertakings for rolling out USOs while avoiding inefficient costs and excessive burdens;
- in parallel and in collaboration with the National Regulatory Authorities (NRAs), to monitor markets carefully to ensure that those Member States which are already able to, or wish to, provide USOs across the range of broadband technologies and speeds, are able to do so in cases of market failure without actually causing distortions in the market;
- examine the options for an even application of USOs and users' rights provisions which would assure accessibility for vulnerable groups, and especially for people with disabilities, not only through the introduction of special terminal equipment and affordable tariffs, but also through the availability of adequate information and a real choice for consumers of available services and after-sales services.

The committee considers nevertheless that the basic provision for funding universal service, ensuring it is handled in a non-discriminatory and transparent manner, should remain in EU legislation and should be extended to cover data as well as voice obligations.

The 112 European Emergency Number: Members stress that the European 112 emergency number can be a life saving number and increases EU citizens' protection by serving as a major support system for citizens and consumers living within the Single Market. They underline the importance of ensuring the smooth operation of the 112 number throughout the Union, and regret that the European 112 emergency number is far from having reached its full potential: according to the Eurobarometer survey published in February 2011, only 26% of EU citizens can spontaneously identify 112 as the number to call for emergency services in the EU and 58% of EU citizens still disagree with the statement that people in their country are adequately informed about the existence of the 112 emergency number. Members urge the Commission and Member States to intensify their efforts to increase public awareness of the existence and use of the 112 number, namely through the development of a targeted and far-reaching communication strategy which addresses the preoccupations and queries that citizens have with regard to the mechanics of the system, and they make a number of suggestions in this regard.

The report regrets that Member States do not yet ensure that timely, accurate and reliable location information is provided to the 112 services. It calls on the Commission, in close cooperation with the Member States, to improve significantly the accuracy and reliability of caller location information under the new EU telecoms rules and to upgrade technology with the ultimate goal of mandatory automatic localisation for all 112 calls, including those from roaming customers, within a few seconds in order to provide dispatchers and first responders with this crucial information. The Commission is asked to envisage taking action against Member States that do not fulfil their obligations in this respect. Members ask for the ICT-PSP funds indicated in the EU Budget 2009, 2010 and 2011 to be allocated to support the testing and implementation of innovative services (based on VoIP and IP-access to 112) that could be initiated through network-independent applications in anticipation of the establishment of a Next Generation 112 system in the EU.

The committee goes on to recommend the establishment of an action programme to support experience sharing and exchange of best practices between the NRAs, emergency services and civil society organisations in the Member States, extending this exchange to organisations in EU candidate and neighbouring countries. It suggests that, to this end, a network of experts could be set up.

Lastly, Members call on the Member States and the Commission to promote the establishment of a 'reverse 112 system', i.e. an EU-wide, universal, multilingual, accessible, simplified and efficient interconnected system for warning and alerting citizens in case of imminent or developing natural and/or man-made major emergencies and disasters of any type.

Universal service and '112' emergency number

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on universal service and the 112 emergency number.

Universal service: Members underline the importance of Universal Service Obligations (USOs) as a safety net for social inclusiveness where market forces alone have failed to provide citizens and businesses with basic services. They call on the Commission to provide guidelines on how best to implement and enforce Directive 2002/22/EC, as amended by Directive 2009/136/EC (Universal Service Directive or USD), avoiding market distortions and, at the same time, allowing Member States to adopt the provisions that best suit their national circumstances. Parliament states its support for the Digital Agenda's 'Broadband for all' and calls on the Commission to give more financial support to local projects which provide digital access and to all communities which help disadvantaged groups to access technological devices by providing connections in public buildings offering free Internet access. However, making broadband availability obligatory will not automatically result in higher take-up. Parliament calls therefore on the Commission and the Member States to reinforce measures to drive demand and stimulate take-up, rather than just ensuring a connection. It also calls on the Commission to:

- complete the ongoing impact assessment and provide legislators with sound data on the existing take-up, the expected demand for and improvement of USOs through broadband, and an analysis of the most effective financing mechanism for Member States, consumers and undertakings for rolling out USOs while avoiding inefficient costs and excessive burdens;
- in parallel and in collaboration with the National Regulatory Authorities (NRAs), to monitor markets carefully to ensure that those Member States which are already able to, or wish to, provide USOs across the range of broadband technologies and speeds, are able to do so in cases of market failure without actually causing distortions in the market;
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Parliament considers nevertheless that the basic provision for funding universal service, ensuring it is handled in a non-discriminatory and transparent manner, should remain in EU legislation and should be extended to cover data as well as voice obligations.

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Parliament regrets that Member States do not yet ensure that timely, accurate and reliable location information is provided to the 112 services. It calls on the Commission, in close cooperation with Member States, to improve significantly the accuracy and reliability of caller location information under the new EU telecoms rules and to upgrade technology with the ultimate goal of mandatory automatic localisation for all 112 calls, including those from roaming customers, within a few seconds in order to provide dispatchers and first responders with this crucial information. The Commission is asked to envisage taking action against Member States that do not fulfil their obligations in this respect. Members ask for the ICT-PSP funds indicated in the EU Budget 2009, 2010 and 2011 to be allocated to support the testing and implementation of innovative services (based on VoIP and IP-access to 112) that could be initiated through network-independent applications in anticipation of the establishment of a Next Generation 112 system in the EU.

Parliament goes on to recommend the establishment of an action programme to support experience sharing and exchange of best practices between the NRAs, Parliament emergency services and civil society organisations in the Member States, extending this exchange to organisations in EU candidate and neighbouring countries. It suggests that, to this end, a network of experts could be set up.

Lastly, Members call on the Member States and the Commission to promote the establishment of a 'reverse 112 system', i.e. an EU-wide, universal, multilingual, accessible, simplified and efficient interconnected system for warning and alerting citizens in case of imminent or developing natural and/or man-made major emergencies and disasters of any type.