Guidelines for trans-European networks in the area of telecommunications infrastructure

2011/0299(COD) - 18/07/2013 - Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading

The Committee on Industry, Research and Energy adopted the report by Even TOENOVSKÝ (ECR, CZ) on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on guidelines for trans European telecommunications networks and repealing Decision No 1336/97/EC.

The committee recommends that Parliament adopt its position in first reading following the ordinary legislative procedure, and amend the Commission proposal as follows:

Broadband networks: given the rapid evolution of technologies that lead to ever faster internet connexions, it is appropriate today, for all Union households, to target internet connections above 100 Mbps with 50% of the households having access to 1 Gbps.

Projects of common interest must:

- allow open and non-discriminatory access to such networks and digital inclusion, bearing in mind that the more sparsely populated and less developed regions must be included in and served with connection;.
- ensure a safe, inclusive and positive online environment for children and young people.

Implementation: financing must be allocated taking into account the specific needs of the beneficiaries, in particular by balancing the division between subsidies and innovative financial instruments.

Exchange of information, monitoring and review: Members required a yearly overview of that information to be sent to the European Parliament. Member States shall involve local and regional authorities in the process.

The Expert Group may also consider any other issue relating to the development of the trans-European digital networks.

To that end, it will engage in structured cooperation with those involved in the planning, development and management of digital networks and services such as, inter alia, local and regional authorities, national regulatory authorities and the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC), internet access providers, public network administrators and component manufacturers.

The Commission must provide an evaluation of: (i) the progress achieved in the development, construction and commissioning of projects of common interest and, where relevant, delays in implementation; (ii) the funds committed and disbursed by the Union for projects of common interest

Regarding broadband infrastructure, the report stressed the need for:

- assistance in narrowing the digital divide;
- deployment of infrastructures in public transport allowing the use of secure and interoperable mobile proximity services:
- a European Platform for Access to Educational Resources that would serve as a backbone for cooperation between educational institutions facilitating the implementation of other Union programmes such as "Erasmus for All".
- exploiting potential synergies between the roll-out of broadband networks and other utilities networks (energy, transport, water, sewerage, etc.), in particular those related to smart electricity distribution.