Electronic communications: universal service, users' rights relating to networks and services

2000/0183(COD) - 07/04/2006 - Follow-up document

In May 2005, the European Commission published a Communication entitled ?On the Review of the Scope of Universal Services?, which was accompanied by a Commission Staff Working Paper (please refer to previous summary). This first periodic review, based on Article 15 of Directive 2002/22/EC, considered whether or not the scope of universal service should be maintained or changed to include mobile or broadband communications. Prior to forming its conclusions the Commission began a public consultation exercise. A number of long-term questions were addressed in order to encourage a forward-looking policy discussion capable of feeding into the general review of the regulatory framework for electronic communications in 2006. Thus, in accordance with Article 15 this Communication provides a report to the European Parliament and the Council on the Commission?s review, taking account of the public consultation exercise.

The Commission considers that the public consultation has provided widespread support for the preliminary position taken in the Communication of May 2005 and that therefore no new rationale has emerged to change the Commission?s previous conclusions ? i.e. that neither mobile nor broadband communications fulfils the conditions of the Universal Service Directive. They should, therefore, not be incorporated into the scope of the Directive.

Taking account of technological and market developments, the Commission will shortly revisit the whole eCommunications regulatory framework in order to ensure that the overall objectives continue to reflect the Lisbon agenda. In addition, this review will allow the Commission to address the necessity of securing technology neutral provisions of a universal service.