

II

(Preparatory Acts)

COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS

Opinion of the Committee of the Regions on:

- the ‘Communication from the Commission concerning the evaluation of the IDA programme and a second phase of the IDA programme’,
- the ‘Proposal for a European Parliament and Council Decision on a series of guidelines, including the identification of projects of common interest, for trans-European networks for the electronic Interchange of Data between Administrations (IDA)’, and
- the ‘Proposal for a Council Decision adopting a series of actions and measures in order to ensure interoperability of and access to trans-European networks for the electronic Interchange of Data between Administrations (IDA)’

(98/C 251/01)

THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS,

having regard to the Proposal for a European Parliament and Council Decision on a series of guidelines, including the identification of projects of common interest, for trans-European networks for the electronic Interchange of Data between Administrations (IDA) and the Proposal for a Council Decision adopting a series of actions and measures in order to ensure interoperability of and access to trans-European networks for the electronic Interchange of Data between Administrations⁽¹⁾;

having regard to the Decision of the Council of 30 January 1998 to consult the Committee on the subject under Article 129d and the first paragraph of Article 198c of the Treaty establishing the European Community;

having regard to the decision of the COR Bureau of 12 March 1998 to instruct Commission 3 (Trans-European Networks, Transport, Information Society) to draw up the opinion;

having regard to draft opinion (CdR 44/98 rev.) adopted by Commission 3 on 27 March 1998 (rapporteur: Mr Bourg);

having regard to the Proposal for a Council Decision on a series of guidelines for trans-European data communications networks between administrations and the Proposal for a Council Decision adopting a multiannual Community programme to support the implementation of trans-European networks for the interchange of data between administrations (IDA)⁽²⁾;

having regard to the opinion of the Committee of the Regions (CdR 48/94) on these proposals⁽³⁾;

⁽¹⁾ COM(97) 661 final - 97/0340 (COD) - 97/0341 (SYN) — OJ C 54, 21.2.1998, p. 3-12.

⁽²⁾ COM(93) 69 final — OJ C 105, 16.4.1993, p. 10-12.

⁽³⁾ OJ C 217, 6.8.1994, p. 32.

having regard to the amended Proposal for a Council Decision adopting a multiannual Community programme to support the implementation of trans-European networks for the interchange of data between administrations (IDA)⁽¹⁾ and the amended Proposal for a European Parliament and Council Decision on a series of guidelines for trans-European data communications networks between administrations⁽²⁾;

having regard to the Council Decision of 6 November 1995 on a Community contribution for telematic interchange of data between administrations in the Community (IDA)⁽³⁾;

whereas the new legal basis (Article 129d of the Treaty) for the second phase of the IDA programme provides grounds for hope that the views set out below will be taken into greater consideration by the European Parliament and the Council,

adopted at its 23rd plenary session (meeting of 13 May 1998) the following opinion by a unanimous vote.

The Committee of the Regions

1. considers completely unsatisfactory the Commission Communication's evaluation of the current operation of the IDA programme;

2. welcomes, however, the reorganization of priorities for the second phase of the programme, which should in future stress coordination and support for certain administrative sectors;

3. endorses the European Commission's emphasis on the importance of interoperability of network infrastructures;

4. calls therefore for Article 9 of the proposal for a Council Decision to be amended to take the local and regional dimension into consideration;

5. expects an increase in the resources allocated to bring the overall budget for the IDA programme up to an appropriate level;

6. welcomes the fact that the European Commission's initiative has placed greater emphasis on the interests of the private sector and has taken greater account of the concerns of citizens;

7. calls for improved coordination of Community initiatives in the field of inter-administration telematics, and in particular activities falling within the scope of TEN-telecom and R&D, and those aimed at supporting SMEs;

8. deplores the approach adopted by the European Commission, which appears to neglect the place of regional and local authorities and their administrative bodies, although they can make an important contribution to the realization of European objectives;

9. stresses once again that 'administration' means any national, regional or local authority whose activities are in the nature of a project of common interest, as defined by the proposal for a decision;

10. consequently renews its call for account to be taken in the IDA programme of the fact that the programme is implemented by the competent authorities in the individual Member States. In allocating costs appropriate account should be taken of different regional and local conditions. The financial burden which trans-European Information and Communications procedures entail for the Member States, the provinces and the regions must be kept down to the unavoidably necessary level. The EU institutions must fund their projects from their own budgets. We regret any attempt to lay off costs, to calculate the cost of services on an individual basis or to introduce flat-rate funding arrangements. Conversely the Member States, the provinces and regions must shoulder the costs for which they are responsible;

11. urges that, in addition to the globalization of IDA networks referred to in paragraph D of the annex to the first proposal for a Decision, regionalization also be envisaged;

12. welcomes the establishment of a single management committee (variant 2a) responsible for the im-

⁽¹⁾ COM(95) 436 final — OJ C 318, 29.11.1995, p. 13.

⁽²⁾ COM(95) 446 final — OJ C 321, 1.12.1995, p. 11.

⁽³⁾ OJ L 269, 11.11.1995, p. 23.

plementation of the two decisions, but calls on the Member States, in establishing the membership of these committees, to take full account of the interests of the local and regional administrative bodies;

13. asks that the Committee of the Regions, as an administration, be involved in trans-European networks for the electronic interchange of data planned under IDA.

Brussels, 13 May 1998.

The Chairman
of the Committee of the Regions
Manfred DAMMEYER

Opinion of the Committee of the Regions on the 'Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on a Community strategy and framework for the deployment of road transport telematics in Europe and proposals for initial actions'

(98/C 251/02)

THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS,

having regard to the Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on a Community strategy and framework for the deployment of road transport telematics in Europe and proposals for initial actions⁽¹⁾;

having regard to the decisions of its Bureau of 11 June 1997 and 18 February 1998, in accordance with the fourth paragraph of Article 198c of the Treaty establishing the European Community, to draw up an opinion on the subject and to instruct Commission 3 for Transport and Communications Networks to carry out the preparatory work;

having regard to the draft opinion (CdR 256/97 rev. 2) adopted by Commission 3 on 13 November 1997 (rapporteur: Mr La Forgia, replacing Mr Kurth);

having regard to the Council Resolution of 17 June 1997 on the development of telematics in road transport, in particular with respect to electronic fee collection⁽²⁾;

having regard to the working document of the high-level group on road transport telematics, entitled Final report on activities within the EU in the field of road transport telematics, of 7 March 1997;

having regard to the decision of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 July 1996 on Community guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network⁽³⁾;

having regard to the Council Resolution of 28 September 1995 on the deployment of telematics in the road transport sector⁽⁴⁾;

having regard to the Commission Communication of 4 November 1994 on telematics applications for transport in Europe;

having regard to the Council Resolution of 24 October 1994 on telematics in the transport sector⁽⁵⁾,

at its 23rd plenary session of 13 and 14 May 1998 (meeting of 14 May) adopted the following opinion unanimously.

⁽¹⁾ COM(97) 223 final.

⁽²⁾ OJ C 194, 25.6.1997, p. 5.

⁽³⁾ OJ L 228, 9.9.1996, p. 1.

⁽⁴⁾ OJ C 264, 11.10.1995, p. 1.

⁽⁵⁾ OJ C 309, 5.11.1994, p. 1.