

European Parliament: Distance selling

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On 13 December 1995, in a second reading, the European Parliament amended the common position of the Council on a directive on the protection of consumers in respect of distance contracts. Any type of contract concerning goods or services between a supplier and a consumer under an organized distance sales or service-provision scheme run by the supplier, who, for the purpose of the contract, makes exclusive use of one or more means of distance communication up to and including the moment at which the contract is concluded, is regarded as a 'distance contract'. Teleshopping programmes come under this definition. The objective of the directive is to promote transfrontier distance selling. The directive contains a minimum set of common rules to protect consumers. Already in 1992, the European Commission proposed these minimum rules to approximate national laws, regulations and administrative provisions of the Member States concerning contracts negotiated at a distance between consumers and suppliers and solicitations with a view to the conclusion of such contracts (see: OJEC of 23.6.1992 No C 156: 14, as later amended and published in: OJEC of 15.11.1993 No C 308: 18). The objective is to prevent each Member State from taking different or diverging measures in this regard.

Decision on the common position established by the Council with a view to adopting a European Parliament and Council directive on the protection of consumers in respect of distance contracts (C4-0369/95 - 00/0411 (COD)). Minutes of the Sitting of 13 December 1995, provisional edition, PE 195.288: 13-22.

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