

# European Commission Calls for Separation of Telecom and Cable Activities

**IRIS 1998-1:1/21**

*Frédéric Pinard  
European Audiovisual Observatory*

With a view to revising the 1995 "Cable" Directive (Commission Directive 95/51/EC of 18 October 1995 amending Directive 90/338/EEC with regard to the abolition of the restrictions on the use of cable television networks for the provision of already liberalised telecommunications services), the Commission, on the threshold of the development of the multimedia sector and the liberalisation of the telecommunications sector, is envisaging tabling a Directive to separate telecommunications and cable activities where these are carried out by the same operator. The Commission holds the opinion that in certain Member States supply by a single operator of telecommunications networks and teledistribution networks, inherited from previous monopolies, could enable former monopolies to delay the emergence of effective competition and therefore hold back the development of telecom and multimedia applications. The requirement to separate accounting in the case of a single telecommunications operator in a dominant position supplying competitive networks, as provided for in Directive 95/51/EC, is apparently thought to be insufficient. Fearing the appearance of "super monopolies", the Commission is therefore envisaging effective separation involving the exploitation of the two activities in the form of clearly separated legal entities.

IRIS will report on any significant evolution in respect of this draft Directive.

***IP/97/1139, Brussels, 17 december 1997***

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/97/1139&format=HTML&aged=1&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

