

WRITTEN QUESTION E-1335/00
by Pervenche Berès (PSE)
to the Commission

Subject: Free equipment and access to the Internet in schools

A major German telecommunications operator has indicated recently that it is prepared to supply, free of charge and before the end of the year, e-mail addresses, home pages and access to its Internet access provider for 40 000 German schools.

Can the Commission say:

1. Whether it considers that free Internet access for schools forms part of the universal service obligations, as the European Parliament has stated, and whether it agrees that free Internet access for schools is not covered by the Community rules on competition, in accordance with Article 86(2) (ex Article 90(2));
2. Whether it considers that free Internet access for schools is the best way of gradually achieving the aim of linking up all European schools to a trans-European high-speed network, as was decided at the Lisbon European Council meeting of 23 and 24 March?