

Decision extending the applicability of Rule 139 of Parliament's Rules of Procedure until the end of the seventh parliamentary term

2009/2563(RSO) - 11/03/2009 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 612 votes to 36, with 38 abstentions, a decision extending the applicability of Rule 139 of Parliament's Rules of Procedure until the end of the seventh parliamentary term. The decision was adopted on a recommendation of the Parliament's Bureau.

Pursuant to Rule 138 of Parliament's Rules of Procedure, all Parliament's documents are to be drawn up in the official languages, and all Members have the right to speak in Parliament in the official language of their choice, with interpretation into the other official languages. Under Rule 139, derogations from Rule 138 are permissible until the end of the sixth parliamentary term if, and to the extent that, despite adequate precautions, the linguists required for an official language are not available in sufficient numbers.

On 13 December 2006, the Bureau accepted that the difficulties of providing sufficient language cover for Maltese, Romanian, Bulgarian and Irish were such that the conditions were fulfilled for a derogation from Rule 138 in respect of each of those languages. By subsequent Bureau decisions those derogations have been extended such that, from 1 January 2009 until the end of the parliamentary term, a derogation applies in respect of Bulgarian and Romanian (interpretation), Czech (interpretation during the Czech Council Presidency), Maltese (interpretation and translation) and Irish (interpretation, translation and legal-linguistic verification).

Despite all adequate precautions, the capacity in Irish and Maltese is not expected to be such as to allow a full interpretation service in those languages from the beginning of the seventh parliamentary term. Moreover, despite sustained and continuous interinstitutional efforts, the number of qualified translators and lawyer-linguists is still expected to be so limited as regards Irish that, for the foreseeable future, only a reduced coverage of that language can be assured.

During the seventh parliamentary term, other European States may become members of the European Union. For the new languages concerned, linguists may not be available in sufficient numbers from the day of accession, which will require transitional measures.

In the light of the foregoing, the Parliament decided, on a reasoned recommendation from the Bureau, to extend the applicability of Rule 139 of Parliament's Rules of Procedure until the end of the seventh parliamentary term.