EP Rules of procedure, rule 136: provisions governing the right of inquiry

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The rapporteur, Mr FAYOT (PSE, L), stressed that Parliament’s right of inquiry was primarily addressed to the Commission and the Member States. However, some of the amendments tabled, which were not supported by the majority of the committee, sought to exclude the Member States from the scope of Parliament’s right of inquiry. As regards the establishment of a committee of inquiry, faced with the proposal for a legal body (automatic) at the request of one quarter of Members, the committee preferred to allow Parliament, and thus the majority, to decide whether or not to set up a committee of inquiry, on the basis of a proposal by the Conference of Presidents. The request to set up such a body should specify the subject of the inquiry and include a detailed statement of the grounds for it. Composition of the committee would be subject to the provisions of Rule 137. In addition, the Committee on Budgetary Control had asked that if the inquiry related to allegations of budgetary offences, half of the members of the competent body, the chairman and the rapporteur should be members of the Committee on Budgetary Control. The Committee on the Rules of Procedure decided not to support this proposal. As regards the duration, some Members had proposed 9 months, but the committee agreed to 12 months with the possibility of extending this deadline twice by an additional three months. Rule 102 applied where languages were concerned. However, two restrictions were envisaged: the bureau of the temporary committee could restrict interpretation to the official languages of the participants and could restrict translation of the documents received by the committee.