New codecision procedure: Joint declaration on the practical arrangements

1999/2024(ACI) - 16/02/1999 - Non-legislative basic document

PURPOSE: revision of the interinstitutional agreement on the practical arrangements for the new codecision procedure. CONTENT: at the time of the trilogue of 16/02/99, the 3 institutions concluded the final text of a common declaration on the practical arrangements for the new codecision procedure. This common declaration must be ratified by the European Parliament before the end of the current legislature, on the basis of a report adopted by the institutional committee (the Manzella report). This common declaration contains the following elements: - efforts should be made to improve the mutual exchange of information related to codecision procedure between institutions; - with regard to the first reading, every effort should be made to facilitate agreement on a proposal at first reading stage, including by means of better coordinated work timetabling between the institutions. The Commission should facilitate contact between the institutions and should use its right of initiative to help bring the positions of the Council and the European Parliament closer together; - with regard to second reading, the Council is called upon to give the clearest possible explanations as to the of reasons underlying its common position, while the Parliament should take account of this reasoning and of the Commission's opinion at the second reading stage. New provision is made for appropriate follow-up contacts to be established between the institutions in order to better understand their mutual positions and allow a speedy conclusion of the procedure. For its part, the Commission is expected to facilitate reconciliation of the respective positions of the Council and the Parliament, while respecting the role conferred on it by the Treaty. - finally, with regard to conciliation, the conciliation committee should be convened by the President of the Council, in agreement with the European Parliament President. The Commission should take part in this work and try to conciliate the positions of the 2 institutions, in particular by drafting compromise texts in view of the positions of the Council and the Parliament. Clarifications have been made in terms of provisions for agreeing on indicative dates for conciliation meetings between the 2 institutions and by taking better account of the problems posed by recesses, such as during the European Parliament elections campaigns. Clarifications have also been made with regard to voting procedure in committee and the procedure for transmitting the joint text reached by the institutions. Finally, general provisions have been made with regard to publication of the adopted texts in the Official Journal of the Communities.