EP Rules of procedure: specific provisions for public access to the European Parliament's documents

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In accordance with the principles of transparency and the right of access to EU documents, as laid down in the Amsterdam Treaty and incorporated in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, the committee adopted a report by Hanja MAIJ-WEGGEN (EPP-ED, NL) proposing amendments to parts of Parliament's Rules of Procedure in order to take account of the new provisions governing public access to EU documents. The committee said Parliament should set up a register, which should be operational by 3 June 2002, to enable the public to learn of the existence of documents (and therefore request to see them). Under the rules, the public would be entitled to have access to documents drawn up by MEPs or political groups as soon as they had been tabled. As for Parliament's committees, if their meetings took place behind closed doors, the documents and minutes of the meetings could only be classified as confidential under certain conditions already provided for in the Rules of Procedure (protection of the public interest in the fields of security, defence, international relations, financial, monetary or economic policy, privacy, etc). Lastly, the report said that an interinstitutional committee should be set up to examine best practice.