European Commission: external service, development

2000/2292(COS) - 29/05/2001

The committee adopted the report by Gerardo GALEOTE QUECEDO (EPP-ED, E) on the EU's external service. While agreeing that progress needed to be made in the deconcentration and decentralisation of the external service, the committee nevertheless criticised the Commission's proposals for their lack of ambition, precision and budgetary rigour. It recognised that deconcentration would require more human resources and better staff training, and therefore called for a College of European Diplomacy to be set up. The committee also wanted the EU to open regional delegations as well as delegations to strengthen the EU's presence in south-east Asia (Singapore, Taiwan), Latin America (Paraguay, Ecuador), the Arab and Islamic world (Saudi Arabia), Iran and Switzerland. It also advocated joint representations (embassies of Member States and delegations of the EU) wherever possible. In addition, the report called on the Commission to devise a legal framework governing relations between Parliament and the delegations (involving an annual report, assistance to MEPs on mission and hearings of heads of delegation).