Fight against fraud and protection of the Communities' financial interests. Action plan 2001-2203, annual report 2000

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The committee adopted the report by Herbert BÖSCH (PES, A) on the Commission's 2000 annual report. MEPs voiced concern that the real scale of the problem of fraud was being obscured by under-reporting, i. e. cases that are not detected at all and cases that are detected in the Member States but not reported to OLAF. The committee wanted to strengthen OLAF's investigation activities and therefore called for closer cooperation between OLAF and the competent national authorities. It also wanted the Commission to initiate the relevant investigations in suspected cases of fraud and favouritism relating to former Commissioners. The report also supported the establishment by mid-2002 of a European Public Prosecutor, whose remit would initially be confined to internal investigations. MEPs looked forward to receiving the Green Paper on this subject by the end of 2001 and welcomed the Commission proposal to amend the EC Treaty at the earliest opportunity, conferring more extensive powers on the European Public Prosecutor.