Public procurement: simplification of the regulatory framework, follow-up of the green paper COM(1996)0583

1998/2062(COS) - 28/10/1998

The Committee has adopted the report by Mr Michael TAPPIN (PES, UK) on the Commission Communication on public procurement in the EU. In general terms, the Committee considers that current procurement rules need to be made simpler, easier to adapt to changes in society, easier to enforce and more effective. When changing the rules, the Committee calls on the Commission to ensure full participation of companies and authorities. As for the rules themselves, the Committee considers that social and environmental concerns should be given a more prominent role in the selection of bids; eg. by allowing public authorities to not only set requirements for products' characteristics, but also for production processes' impact on the environment. Another leitmotif in the reform of public procurement should be greater use of electronic means for publishing tenders and submitting tenders, as well as, to take concrete action to improve SME participation in public procurement. To that end, the Committee calls on the Commission and the Member States to set voluntary targets for SME penetration, and to offer greater assistance for SMEs, for example by setting up national procurement advice centres. In external negotiations, on procurement the Committee calls on the Commission to ensure that the principles of reciprocity, fairness and transparency are respected, and for it to promote the raising of current threshold values.