Relations between the European Parliament and the national parliaments

1996/2145(INI) - 20/05/1997

The Committee has adopted the report by Mrs Annemie NEYTS-UYTTEBROEK (ELDR, B) on relations between the European Parliament and national parliaments. Noting that there is still a serious democratic deficit at Union level, especially with regard to the common foreign and security policy, home affairs and justice, economic and monetary policy in the context of EMU, agricultural policy and international trade agreements, the Committee on Institutional Affairs considers it essential that the general principle of openness be introduced into the Treaty. It advocates strengthening the European Parliament's democratic control and increasing national parliamentary scrutiny of EU matters. The report recommends extending the codecision procedure so it becomes the normal procedure for EU legislation and so that that true budgetary codecision is also introduced. It also wants to extend the scope of the assent procedure, to strengthen the European Parliament's role in approving the President of the Commission and to give Parliament an increased say on second and third pillar matters, international trade agreements, EMU and agriculture.A number of measures should be taken at European level to facilitate the tasks of national parliamentary scrutiny. The committee strongly supports the idea of minimum time limits for consideration of EU legislative documents as proposed by COSAC (Conference of European Affairs Committees).