Simpler legislation for the internal market: review of SLIM, 3rd and 4th phases

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The committee adopted the report by Bert DOORN (EPP-ED, NL) on the Commission communication. While taking the view that the Commission was on the right track, the committee expressed doubts about the effectiveness of the SLIM project, pointing out that, since 1996, only 14 legislative areas had been examined and that too much time was tending to elapse between publication of the SLIM teams' conclusions and implementation of those conclusions by the Commission. It therefore called on the Commission to translate the third and fourth phase SLIM proposals into specific legislative proposals as soon as possible. The committee said that Parliament would be willing to consider the SLIM proposals "rapidly and efficiently" and urged the Council to follow this example. In future, the Commission should ensure that the conclusions of SLIM teams were drawn up and published as specific legislative proposals within six months. The committee also advocated giving the Commission department responsible for the SLIM exercises more manpower, resources and authority to enable the preparatory work, monitoring and follow-up of the SLIM teams to proceed rapidly and efficiently. It made a number of other suggestions for improving the SLIM project, such as making use of the methods and techniques of international organisations with experience in the field of evaluating the legislative process (such as the OECD) and more structured cooperation between the Commission and the Member States in the field of simplifying and improving the quality of legislation. It suggested that a survey of best practices in this field in the Member States be published annually. The report stressed that simplification exercises would not be needed if efforts were made from the very beginning to draft high quality legislation, with a clear focus on the administrative and financial consequences. The Council and Parliament should demonstrate the political will to ensure that legislation was clear and simple when it left the Community institutions. Lastly, the committee called on the governments and parliaments of the Member States to guarantee the correct and prompt transposition of Community directives into national legislation.