Access to documents: opening to the public of the historical archives of the Community and the EAEC

2002/0203(CNS) - 18/02/2003

The committee adopted the report by Marcelino OREJA ARBURÚA (EPP-ED, E) amending the proposal under the consultation procedure. It wanted it to be clearly stated that, before the expiry of the 30-year period after which the historical archives are opened to the public, access to these documents should be governed by Regulation 1049/2001 on public access to documents. Moreover, it wanted the proposed regulation to apply also to the "agencies and similar bodies created by the institutions". MEPs also adopted a number of drafting amendments aimed at ensuring that the exceptions provided for in the proposal referred explicitly to Regulation 1049/2001 so that they would be interpreted in the same way. The committee made a number of other recommendations: - where possible, the historical archives should be made available either in electronic form or through a register and also in a format enabling people with sensory difficulties to use them; - each institution should send Parliament an annual report on their part of the Community archives, and the annual report drawn up by the European University Institute in Florence should be formally sent to Parliament; - two years after the Regulation's entry into force, the Commission should conduct a thorough review of the Community archives and of the historical archives, followed by legislative proposals where appropriate, with a view to increasing transparency and improving access for citizens.