European Ombudsman. Annual report 1997

1998/2084(COS) - 22/06/1998

The Committee adopted the report of Edward NEWMAN, PES, UK). The Ombudsman, Mr Söderman called for steps to be taken to enable:his service to be made fully operational;the standard of EU administration to be improved, with a clear definition of "mal-administration" for which purpose the EU institutions would have to adopt an administrative code of conduct;closer links to be established with national ombudsmen and national parliamentary petitions committees, with a view in particular to the application of EU law in the Member States. Mr Newman congratulated Mr Söderman on the excellent work he had performed in 1997 and in particular his efforts to conduct an information campaign, which had proved a success: in 1997 there had been a 40% increase by comparison with 1996 in the number of complaints received. During the debate, Members reiterated a point of constant concern to them: an incorrect interpretation or inadequate application of EU law was an obstacle to any real possibility of exercising the right of citizenship. Hence the importance of petitions, in the committee's view, since they enabled shortcomings or inadequacies to be identified and then taken into account when Community laws were reviewed or replaced.