EP Rules of procedure, rule 156.3: right of petition

1995/2219(REG) - 26/05/1998

The committee adopted unopposed, with one abstention, the motion for a resolution concerning the right of petition and language use. The rapporteur, Mr Robert EVANS (PSE, UK), recalled that the two judicial institutions, the Court of First Instance and the Court of Justice, may authorise witnesses and experts to make their depositions in a language other than the official languages of the Union. On the basis of these provisions, it would be possible to conclude that the European Parliament may similarly authorise the use of a language other than the official languages for some of its activities. As regards a petitioner's right to make use of this option when petitioning the European Parliament, the committee has amended Rule 156 (3) of the Rules of Procedure so as to allow citizens who are members of linguistic minorities to submit petitions in their mother tongue; however, if they do so they must enclose a translation or a summary of contents in an official language, but this translation or summary does not necessarily need to be produced by an official authority or any other body that makes a charge for its services. In its correspondence with the petitioner, Parliament will be required to use the official language in which the documents in question have been drawn up, which will enable Parliament to comply with Article 3 of Council Regulation No 1 (governing the languages of the institutions of the Union) and enable the petitioner to make use of the same person or agency that helped him with the translation or summary of contents of the petition in the chosen official language.