Monitoring of the application of Community law. 14th annual report 1996

1997/2142(COS) - 29/01/1998 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

In adopting the report by Mrs Astrid THORS (ELDR, Fin), the European Parliament welcomed the European Ombudsman's initiative aimed at improving the procedural rights of individuals who complain to the Commission about breaches of Community law by Member States. It called on the Commission to impose more stringent deadlines on the Member States in order to shorten the relatively long period required for complaints or petitions to be dealt with. More precisely, it called on the Commission to develop further its catalogue of priorities in the processing of complaints and to bring actions under Article 169 taking into account, amongst others, the following criteria: the loss of own resources suffered by the Community; damage to human health or the environment; economic damage suffered by individuals or economic operators; the financial and economic advantages the Member State or businesses might gain as a result of non-transposition of Community law; the number of people affected by the infringement. As regards the system of penalties for Member States which fail to execute the judgments of the Court of Justice in infringement cases, Parliament called on the Commission to state more detailed reasons for the amount of the periodic penalty payment and to have those reasons published in the Official Journal when the action is lodged. Parliament asked for new sections to be added to the annual report to provide an overview of the activities of the Member States and the Commission with regard to such aspects as derogations from internal market rules (Article 100a(4) of the EC Treaty), suspect national 'technical regulations', the application of international agreements and national transposition of social policy directives by means of collective agreements. Parliament was concerned that the Community should inform its citizens better about their rights and Community law, and therefore called for a stepping-up of the institutions' joint measures in this field, with priority for swift and easily accessible electronic dissemination of Community law, especially via the Internet. Parliament called once again on the Member States to ensure that the study of Community law was made compulsory in university courses leading to qualifications which grant access to the legal profession.