The role of the regional and local powers in the European construction

2002/2141(INI) - 14/01/2003 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution based on the own-initiative report drafted by Giorgio NAPOLITANO (PES, Italy) on the role of regional and local authorities in building Europe. It called for the relevant provisions of the European Constitution to recognise the role of the regions, provinces, communes and any regional or local organisation which forms part of the Member States in the pursuit of the objectives of the European Union. The European Constitution should define precisely the exercise, application and monitoring of the subsidiarity principle. Where the transposition of directives into national law falls within the competence of the regions, the latter should enjoy the same flexibility as regards the choice of methods as the national authorities when they are competent. The Member States must strengthen the internal mechanisms which provide for participation by the regions and territorial authorities, in particular those endowed with legislative powers, in all aspects of the process of policy formation that are of specific interest to them. Parliament supported the concept set out in the Commission White Paper on European governance which sees the regions and municipalities acting as intermediaries between the individual and the European institutions. It hoped that alongside the direct consultation of regional and local interests, consultation would principally take place via the Committee of the Regions or via the most representative European associations for the defence of regional, urban and local interests. The Commission should, therefore, act on the appropriate proposals of principle set out in the White Paper on European governance. Parliament went on to state that the Convention must ensure that regions and other territorial entities may defend their rights before the Court of Justice under the authority of the Member State concerned, according to its constitutional or national legislation. Finally, Parliament proposed several amendments to the Treaties with respect to the rights, powers and autonomy of regional and local authorities.