Fight against fraud and protection of the Community's financial interests. 1998 annual report

2000/2032(COS) - 16/05/2000 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted the resolution drafted by Herbert BOSCH (PES, Austria) on the Commission's 1998 annual report on protecting the Communities' financial interests and the fight against fraud. -In anticipation of the creation of the European Public Prosecutor's office, the Parliament called on the Commission to present, by 30 June 2000, a proposal to extend the OLAF Regulation, to allow the early appointment of a prosecutor whose task for the time-being would be to investigate criminal offences committed by members and employees of the EU institutions. -It asked for legislative proposals to be submitted by 30 June 2000 on a comprehensive legal and judicial framework for the protection of the Union's financial interests. -Parliament also called for the strengthening of OLAF's role by assigning to it a hearing officer modelled on the hearing officers for competition procedures before the Commission. -It required a full list of all cases under investigation of fraud, corruption or other unlawful activities against the Community budget. -With regard to the priorities for OLAF's work, Parliament considered that OLAF must adopt transparent operating rules, which must be made public. -Member States should be placed under an obligation to report VAT fraud cases to the Commission. The Commission and Member States must work together to improve the accuracy of the analysis of 'fraud' as a proportion of the overall financial irregularities affecting the EU programmes. There should be more effective Community-wide commitment to solving the problems of VAT fraud. -OLAF should consider whether it might expand the network of specialist task forces established by UCLAF to deal with smuggling, piracy and counterfeiting.