Framework agreement on relations between the European Parliament and the Commission (amend. codes of conduct 1990, 1995)

2000/2177(ACI) - 05/07/2000 - Text adopted by Parliament, topical subjects

The European Parliament approved the framework agreement on relations between the Parliament and the Commission, which seeks to "strengthen the Commission's responsibility and legitimacy" by boosting democratic scrutiny, extending dialogue and political cooperation between the two institutions and improving the flow of information. Under the agreement, the Commission must take account of, and give a prompt and sufficiently detailed reply to, any requests by Parliament for the Commission to submit legislative proposals. It undertakes to keep the Parliament informed of and is fully associated with the preparation and the conduct of Intergovernmental Conferences. In the sphere of "political responsibility", the agreement says that if Parliament expresses a lack of confidence in a Commissioner, the President of the Commission will "examine seriously whether he should request that Member to resign". Moreover, the President of the Commission shall immediately notify the European Parliament of any decision concerning the allocation of responsibilities to any Members of the Commission. Regarding the flow of information, the Commission shall, within its means, ensure that the Parliament is kept quickly and fully informed at all stages of the preparation, negotiation and conclusion of international agreements, in such a way as to enable the Commission to take account of the Parliament's views. The European Parliament and the Commission undertake to reinforce their existing cooperation in the field of information and communication. They may coordinate their respective activities within the framework of the Interinstitutional Working Group on Information and Communication. In this context, they may draw up joint actions aimed at increasing citizens' awareness, and shall ensure proper coordination of their information activities while respecting the autonomy and distinctive role of each institution. In addition, special arrangements are laid down for keeping Parliament informed about enlargement. More specifically, the Commission will, within its means, provide relevant oral or written information to the Parliament on the major aspects and developments concerning enlargement. The agreement also provides for special rules for forwarding confidential information to the Parliament. Confidential information from a State or an institution or an international organisation shall be forwarded only with the agreement of the state or institution or international organisation in question. In the event of a disagreement, the problem shall be referred to the Presidents of the two institutions so that they may resolve it without delay.