Public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents

2000/0032(COD) - 11/02/2003 - Implementing legislative act

COMMUNITY MEASURE : Committee of the Regions Decision No 64/2003 on public access to Committee of the Regions documents. CONTENT : having regard to Regulation 1049/2001/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council regarding public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents, these institutions request the other institutions to adopt internal rules regarding public access to documents, taking into account the principles and limits set out in this Regulation. This Decision stipulates that any citizens of the Union and any natural or legal person residing or having its registered office in a Member State shall have a right of access to Committee of the Regions documents, subject to the principles, conditions and limits set out in Regulation 1049/2001/EC and the specific provisions laid down in this decision. The Decision states that: - a register of documents shall be established within the Committee of the Regions; - the register thus created shall contain references to documents drawn up or received by the institution as from the date from which Regulation 1049/2001/EC is applicable; - the full texts of documents shall be published on the Committee's Internet site; - any document drawn up by the Committee shall be entered in the register as soon as possible. The Secretary-General shall adopt the necessary internal implementing measures to ensure that all documents drawn up by the Committee are recorded; - documents drawn up under the consultative procedure or for the purpose of other Committee business shall be entered in the register as soon as they have been tabled or made public, under the responsibility of the body or service which is the originator of the document; - other documents which fall within the remit of the administrative services of the Secretariat-General of the Committee shall, as far as possible, be entered in the register as soon as authorised by the originating service; - any document received by the Committee from a third party shall be forwarded by the official mail service to the register, which shall enter it, unless it is a sensitive document; - all documents drawn up or received by the Committee under the consultative procedure must be accessible to citizens in electronic form, as far as possible; - in this connection, the Committee will make all consultative documents accessible through the register, to enable citizens to have direct access to the full texts of documents: - the Committee will make this register electronically accessible on its Internet site and will provide on-line assistance to citizens concerning arrangements for submitting applications for access to documents; - other documents, in particular more political or strategic documents, shall be made directly accessible as far as possible. - documents drawn up or received by the Committee outside the consultative procedure shall, as far as possible, be directly accessible to citizens through the register; - where entry of a document in the register does not permit direct access to the full text, either because the document is not available in electronic form or because the exceptions provided for are applicable, the applicant may apply for accessto the document in writing, or using the electronic form available on the website. The Committee may either grant access to the document or give the reasons for its total or partial refusal in writing. Technical conditions concerning the delivery of documents and the cost are also stipulated. Within a time limit of 15 working days from the registration of the application, the service responsible for the register shall grant access to the requested document and shall supply it within the same time limit. Where the Committee is unable to grant access to the requested document, it shall notify the applicant in writing of the grounds for its total or partial refusal and inform the applicant of his or her right to make a confirmatory application. Lastly, concerning the issue of documents and cost of the reply, the Decision states that documents are to be supplied in the form of a copy, or in electronic format, with full regard to the applicant's preference. If a document has already been released by the Committee or by another institution and is easily accessible, the Committee may facilitate access to the document by informing the applicant how to obtain the requested document. The cost of producing and sending copies may be charged to the applicant. This charge may not exceed the real cost of the operation. Consultation on the spot, copies of less than 20 A4 pages and direct access in electronic form or through the register shall be free of charge. ENTRY INTO FORCE : This Decision repeals the Committee of the Regions Bureau

Decision No 165/1997 of 17 September 1997 on public access to Committee of the Regions documents.
This decision shall enter into force on 28/06/2003 and shall take effect from 1 June 2003.