European Commission: election for the term of office running from 22 November 2004 to 31 October 2009 and resolution on the election of the new Commission

2004/2111(INS) - 18/11/2004 - Text adopted by Parliament, topical subjects

The European Parliament adopted, by 478 in favour to 84 against with 98 abstentions, the resolution which welcomes the steps taken by President-elect Barroso in presenting his new team but regrets, however, that no significant solution has been found so far on the potential problems concerning conflicts of interest. Parliament expects that the specific commitments made by President-elect Barroso during the plenary sitting in October 2004 regarding the active protection and promotion of fundamental rights, equal opportunities and anti-discrimination by his Commission will be fully applied by the new Commission, and will closely monitor their application. Moreover, MEPs call for the Framework Agreement between the Commission and the European Parliament (which governs bilateral relations between those two institutions) to be reviewed and updated as soon as possible on the basis of the commitments made on behalf of the new Commission by its President-elect, Mr BARROSO.

In the light of those commitments, Parliament calls for the following points to be included in that agreement:

- if Parliament votes to withdraw confidence (subject to political support for such a view, in terms both of substance and of form) in an individual Member of the Commission, the President of the Commission will consider seriously whether he should request that Member to resign; the President shall either require the resignation of that Member or justify his refusal to do so before Parliament;

- in the event of a resignation, the replacement Commissioner shall not appear before Parliament or the Council in an official capacity until his or her nomination has been validated by the normal parliamentary procedure (hearing and vote in plenary);

- if the President reshuffles the portfolios in the Commission during its term of office, the same procedure shall be applied to the Commissioners affected;

- the President of the Commission shall be fully accountable for identifying a conflict of interest which renders a Commissioner unable to perform his or her duties; the President shall likewise be responsible for any subsequent action taken in those circumstances;

- the Union's multi-annual work programme shall be drawn up by the Commission on the basis of close cooperation and coordination with the European Parliament and its bodies;

- ensuring a Commission presence at plenary sittings and meetings of the European Parliament's committees shall be a priority for Commissioners; it is agreed that the Commission shall inform the European Parliament immediately, preferably in plenary sitting, of its decisions, proposals and initiatives;

- in the context of ongoing dialogue with the European Parliament, the President of the Commission and the Vice-President responsible for interinstitutional relations shall establish, and remain in, regular contact with the Conference of Presidents;

- a commitment to follow-up action, if Parliament requests the Commission to submit a legislative proposal pursuant to Article 192 of the Treaty; in any case, the Commission shall regularly inform the European Parliament of the action it intends to take in response to positions adopted by Parliament, particularly if the Commission does not intend to follow them up;

- revision of Regulation 1049/01, with a view to defining better rules on the transparency of legislative preparatory work, comitology and the implementation of EU legislation in Member States, and confidential documents;

- the code of conduct for Commissioners shall be sent to the European Parliament for its opinion, which shall be taken into account;

- the Commission shall take all the necessary steps to ensure that the European Parliament is better informed both about European Union legislation and about international agreements as soon as negotiations are underway.