



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

# Rules of Procedure

(3<sup>rd</sup> edition)

JUNE 1984



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These Rules of Procedure were adopted by Parliament at its sitting of 26 March 1981 and amended on 10 March and 15 December 1983, and 27 March 1984. In accordance with Rule 111 (5), the interpretations given by the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions are appended to the relevant Rules in italic print.

JUNE 1984

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## CHAPTER I

### MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

#### Rule 1

**The European Parliament**

1. The European Parliament is the Assembly elected on the basis of the Treaties, the Act of 20 September 1976 concerning the election of the representatives of the Assembly by direct universal suffrage and national legislation which derives from the Treaties.

2. Persons elected to the European Parliament shall be referred to as:

'Medlemmer af Europa-Parlamentet'  
in Danish,

'Mitglieder des Europäischen Parlaments'  
in German,

'Βουλευτές του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου'  
in Greek,

'Members of the European Parliament'  
in English,

'Députés au Parlement européen'  
in French,

'Deputati al Parlamento europeo'  
in Italian,

'Leden van het Europese Parlement'  
in Dutch.

#### Rule 2

**The Independent Community mandate**

1. Members of the European Parliament shall be elected in general, direct and secret elections in the Member States of the European Community.

2. Members of the European Parliament shall vote on an individual and personal basis. They shall not be bound by any instructions and shall not receive a binding mandate.

3. Members shall enjoy privileges and immunities in accordance with the Protocol on the Privileges and Immunities of the European Communities, annexed to the Treaty of 8 April 1965 establishing a single Council and a single Commission of the European Communities.

4. Passes to allow Members to circulate freely in the Member States shall be issued to them by the President of Parliament as soon as their election has been notified to him.

### **Rule 3**

#### **Attendance of Members at sittings and votes**

1. A register of attendance shall be laid open for signature by Members at each sitting.

2. The names of Members present, as shown in the register of attendance, shall be recorded in the minutes of each sitting.

3. In the event of a roll-call vote the minutes shall record the names of Members who took part in the vote and how they voted.

### **Rule 4**

#### **Financial situation of Members**

The Bureau shall adopt rules governing the payment of expenses and allowances to Members.

### **Rule 5**

#### **Waiver of immunity**

1. Any request addressed to the President by the appropriate authority of a Member State that the immunity of a Member be waived shall be communicated to Parliament in plenary sitting and referred to the appropriate committee.

2. The committee shall consider such a request without delay but shall not go into the merits of the case. It shall hear the Member concerned at his request. If he is in custody, he may have himself represented by another Member.

3. Should a Member be arrested or prosecuted after having been found in the act of committing an offence, any other Member may request that the proceedings be suspended or that he be released.

4. The report of the committee shall be placed at the head of the agenda of the first sitting following the day on which it was tabled.

Discussion shall be confined to the reasons for or against the waiver of immunity.

*The committee's report contains a proposal for a decision which simply recommends the adoption or rejection of the request for the waiver of immunity. No amendments may be tabled to the proposal for a deci-*

sion. After Parliament has considered the matter, a single vote is taken on the proposal contained in the report. If this proposal is rejected, the contrary decision is deemed adopted.

5. The President shall immediately communicate Parliament's decision to the appropriate authority of the Member State concerned.

### **Rule 6**

#### **Verification of credentials**

1. Parliament shall verify the credentials of newly elected Members and rule on any dispute referred to it pursuant to the provisions of the Act of 20 September 1976, except those based on national electoral laws.

2. Credentials shall be verified without delay on the basis of a report drawn up by the Committee on the Verification of Credentials set up pursuant to Rules 91 and 96.

3. Until such time as a Member's credentials have been verified or ruling has been given on any dispute, the Member shall take his seat in Parliament and on its committees and shall enjoy all the rights attaching thereto.

### **Rule 7**

#### **Term of office**

1. A Member's term of office shall begin and end as laid down in the Act of 20 September 1976. It shall also end on death or resignation.

2. A Member who fails to gain re-election shall continue to sit until the opening of the first sitting of Parliament following the elections.

3. A Member's resignation shall be notified by him in writing to the President, who shall inform Parliament, which shall establish that there is a vacancy.

*Written notification of resignation to the President is made in an official record drawn up in the presence of the Secretary-General or his representative, signed by the latter and by the Member concerned and immediately submitted to the President.*

*The establishment of a vacancy shall follow automatically on the official notification of resignation. There shall be no vote in Parliament on the subject.*

4. Incompatibilities resulting from national legislation and appointments by the Member States shall be notified by the

latter to the President, who shall inform Parliament, which shall take note thereof.

Incompatibilities resulting from appointments by the competent bodies of the European Communities shall be notified by the latter to the President, who shall inform Parliament, which shall establish that there is a vacancy.

A vacancy shall exist as from the date on which a Member's appointment to a function incompatible with the office of Member of Parliament takes effect.

5. If the notification referred to in paragraph 4 above is contested by the Member concerned or by any other Member, note shall not be taken thereof nor shall the existence of a vacancy be established. Such disputes shall be dealt with in accordance with paragraph 7 below.

6. When Parliament has established that a vacancy exists, it shall inform the Member State concerned thereof.

7. Any dispute concerning the validity of the appointment of a Member whose credentials have already been verified shall be referred to the appropriate committee, which shall report to Parliament not later than at the beginning of the next part-session.

*A. End of the term of office:*

*The following shall be considered as the date of the end of the term of office and the effective date of a vacancy*

- in the event of death: date of death*
- in the event of resignation: the date when the President receives the letter of resignation or a later (but not earlier) date specified in his letter by the resigning Member;*
- in the event of appointment to functions incompatible with the office of a Member of the European Parliament, either in respect of national electoral law, or in respect of Article 6 of the Act of 20 September 1976: the date on which the appointment takes effect (Rule 7(4))*

*B. Beginning of the term of office of the successor:*

*In the event of the death or resignation of a Member, his successor may sit in Parliament and on its bodies once the President has been notified of the successor's name by the Member State concerned.*

*In the event of incompatibility, where Parliament either itself establishes that there is a vacancy or takes note of notification by the Member State concerned, the possibility of contesting the notification, pursuant to Rule 7(5), must not be precluded. Therefore, the successor may not sit in Parliament or on its bodies until it has been established that there is a vacancy, or until Parliament has taken note of this vacancy and until the Member State has notified the successor's name.*

**Code of Conduct**

**Rule 8**

Parliament may lay down a Code of Conduct for its Members. This Code shall be adopted pursuant to Rule 112(2) and attached to these Rules of Procedure as an annex <sup>(1)</sup>.

This Code shall not in any way prejudice or restrict a Member in the exercise of his office or of any political or other activity relating thereto.

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<sup>(1)</sup> See Annex I.

## CHAPTER II

### SESSIONS OF PARLIAMENT

#### Rule 9

**Convening of Parliament** 1. The electoral period shall run concurrently with the term of office of Members provided for in the Act of 20 September 1976.

The session shall be the annual period prescribed by the Act and the Treaties.

The part-session shall be the meeting of Parliament convened as a rule each month and subdivided into daily sittings.

*Sittings of Parliament held on the same day shall be deemed to be a single sitting.*

2. Parliament shall meet, without requiring to be convened, on the second Tuesday in March each year and shall itself determine the duration of adjournments of the session.

3. Parliament shall, moreover, meet without requiring to be convened on the first Tuesday after expiry of an interval of one month from the end of the period referred to in Article 9(1) of the Act of 20 September 1976.

4. The enlarged Bureau may alter the duration of adjournments decided pursuant to paragraph 2 by a reasoned decision of a majority of its members taken at least two weeks before the date previously fixed by Parliament for resuming the session; the date of resumption shall not, however, be postponed for more than two weeks.

5. Exceptionally, the President shall, after consulting the enlarged Bureau, convene Parliament at the request of a majority of its current Members or at the request of the Commission or the Council.

The President may also, by way of exception and with the approval of the enlarged Bureau, convene Parliament at the request of one-third of its current Members.

#### Rule 10

**Venue of sittings and meetings**

1. Parliament shall hold its sittings and its committee meetings at the place fixed as its seat under the provisions of the Treaties.

2. Exceptionally, however, on a resolution a majority of its current Members, Parliament may hold one or more sittings elsewhere than at its seat.

3. Any committee may decide to ask that one or more meetings be held away from the said seat. Its request, with reasons therefor, shall be made to the President, who shall place it before the Bureau. If the matter is urgent, the President may take the decision himself. Should the decision by the Bureau or the President be unfavourable, the reasons therefor shall be stated.

**CHAPTER III**  
**OFFICERS OF PARLIAMENT**

**Rule 11**

**Member**

1. At the sitting provided for under Rule 9(3), and at any other sitting held for the purpose of electing the President and the Bureau, the oldest Member present shall take the Chair until the President has been declared elected.
2. No business shall be transacted while the oldest Member is in the Chair unless it is concerned with the election of the President or the verification of credentials.

*If a question relating to the verification of credentials is raised when the oldest Member is in the Chair, the latter shall refer the matter to the Committee on the Verification of Credentials which is to be set up (See also explanatory note on Rule 96).*

**Rule 12**

**Nominations and  
general provisions**

1. The President, Vice-Presidents and Quaestors shall be elected by secret ballot. Nominations shall be with consent. They may only be made by a political group or by at least ten Members. However, if the number of nominations does not exceed the number of seats to be filled, the candidates may be elected by acclamation.
2. Four Members chosen by lot shall count the votes cast in a secret ballot. Candidates shall not act as tellers.
3. In the election of the President, Vice-Presidents and Quaestors, account should be taken of the need to ensure an overall fair representation of Member States and political views.

**Rule 13**

**Election of President**

1. The President shall be elected first. Nominations shall be handed before each ballot to the oldest Member, who shall announce them to Parliament. If after three ballots no candidate has obtained an absolute majority of the votes cast, the fourth ballot shall be confined to the two Members who have obtained the highest number of votes in the third ballot. In the event of a tie the elder candidate shall be declared elected.



2. As soon as the President has been elected, the oldest Member shall vacate the Chair.

#### **Rule 14**

##### **Election of Vice-Presidents**

1. The Vice-Presidents shall then be elected on a single ballot paper. Those who on the first ballot, up to the number of twelve, obtain an absolute majority of the votes cast shall be declared elected in the numerical order of their votes. Should the number of candidates elected be less than the number of seats to be filled, a second ballot shall be held under the same conditions to fill the remaining seats. Should a third ballot be necessary, a relative majority shall suffice for election to the remaining seats. In the event of a tie the oldest candidates shall be declared elected.

2. Subject to the provisions of Rule 17(1), the Vice-Presidents shall take precedence in the order in which they were elected, and in the event of a tie, by age.

Where they are not elected by secret ballot, the order in which their names are read out to the House by the President shall determine the order of precedence.

#### **Rule 15**

##### **Election of Quaestors**

After the election of the Vice-Presidents, Parliament shall elect five Quaestors.

The Quaestors shall be elected by the same procedure as Vice-Presidents.

#### **Rule 16**

##### **Term of office**

1. The term of office of the President, Vice-Presidents and Quaestors shall be two and a half years.

*When a Member changes political groups he shall retain, for the remainder of his two and a half year term of office, any seat he holds in the Bureau or the College of Quaestors.*

2. Should a vacancy for one of these positions occur before the expiry of this term, the Member elected shall serve only for the unexpired period of his predecessor's term of office.

#### **Rule 17**

##### **Vacancies**

1. Should it be necessary for the President, a Vice-President or a Quaestor to be replaced, his successor shall be elected in accordance with the above provisions.

A newly elected Vice-President shall take the place of his predecessor in the order of precedence.

2. Should the seat become vacant during an adjournment of the session, the political group to which the Member whose seat has become vacant belonged shall nominate a candidate for temporary membership of the Bureau pending the election referred to in paragraph 1.

The nomination shall be placed before the enlarged Bureau for ratification.

A temporary member of the Bureau shall enjoy the same rights as a Vice-President.

Should the President's seat become vacant, the first Vice-President shall act as President.

### **Rule 18**

#### **Duties of the President**

1. The President shall direct all the activities of Parliament and of its bodies under the conditions laid down in these Rules. He shall enjoy all the powers necessary to preside over the proceedings of Parliament and to ensure that they are properly conducted.

2. The duties of the President shall be to open, suspend and close sittings; to ensure observance of these Rules, maintain order, call upon speakers, close debates, put matters to the vote and announce the results of votes; and to refer to committees any communications that concern them.

3. The President may speak in a debate only to sum up or to call speakers to order. Should he wish to take part in a debate, he shall vacate the Chair and shall not resume it until that debate is over.

4. Parliament shall be represented in international relations, on ceremonial occasions and in administrative, legal or financial matters by the President, who may delegate these powers.

### **Rule 19**

#### **Duties of the Vice-Presidents**

Should the President be absent or unable to discharge his duties, or should he wish to take part in a debate pursuant to Rule 18(3), he shall be replaced by one of the Vice-Presidents pursuant to Rule 14(2).

## **Rule 20**

**Duties of the Quaestors** The Quaestors shall be responsible for administrative and financial matters directly concerning Members, pursuant to guidelines laid down by the Bureau.

*CHAPTER IV*  
*BUREAU OF PARLIAMENT*

**Rule 21**

**Composition of the  
Bureau**

1. The Bureau shall consist of the President and the twelve Vice-Presidents of Parliament.
2. The Quaestors shall be members of the Bureau in an advisory capacity.
3. Should voting in the Bureau result in a tie, the President shall have a casting vote.

**Rule 22**

**Functions of the Bureau**

1. The Bureau shall carry out the duties assigned to it under the Rules of Procedure.
2. The Bureau shall take financial and organizational decisions on matters concerning Members, Parliament and its bodies.
3. The Bureau, after consulting the appropriate committee, shall decide the number of officials and other servants and lay down regulations relating to their administrative and financial situation.
4. The President and/or the Bureau may entrust one or more members of the Bureau with general or specific tasks lying within the competence of the President and/or the Bureau. At the same time the ways and means of carrying them out shall be laid down.
5. When a new Parliament is elected, the outgoing Bureau shall remain in office until the first sitting of the new Parliament.

**Rule 23**

**Composition of the  
enlarged Bureau**

1. The enlarged Bureau shall consist of the Bureau and the chairmen of the political groups.  
The chairman of a political group may arrange to be represented by a member of his group.
2. The non-attached Members shall delegate two of their number to attend meetings of the enlarged Bureau, without having the right to vote.
3. Should voting in the enlarged Bureau result in a tie, the President shall have a casting vote.

### **Rule 24**

#### **Functions of the enlarged Bureau**

1. The enlarged Bureau shall carry out the duties assigned to it under the Rules of Procedure.
2. The enlarged Bureau shall take decisions on questions relating to Parliament's internal organization and on matters affecting relations with non-Community institutions and organizations.
3. The enlarged Bureau shall deliberate on relations with the other institutions and bodies of the Communities.
4. The enlarged Bureau shall adopt Parliament's preliminary draft estimates in accordance with Rule 114(2).

### **Rule 25**

#### **Accountability of the Bureau and enlarged Bureau**

1. A list of the decisions taken at the meetings of the Bureau and the enlarged Bureau shall be translated into the official languages, printed and distributed to all Members of Parliament, unless the Bureau or the enlarged Bureau exceptionally, for reasons of confidentiality, decides otherwise.
2. Any Member may ask questions related to the work of the Bureau, the enlarged Bureau and the Quaestors. Such questions shall be submitted to the President in writing and published in the Bulletin of Parliament within thirty days of tabling, together with the answers given.

*CHAPTER V*  
*POLITICAL GROUPS*

**Rule 26**

**Formation of political groups**

1. Members may form themselves into groups according to their political affinities.
2. A political group shall be considered to have been set up after the President has been handed a statement to that effect containing the name of the group, the signatures of its members and the composition of its Bureau.
3. This statement shall be published in the Official Journal of the European Communities.
4. A Member may not belong to more than one group.
5. A minimum number of twenty-one Members shall be required to form a political group if all the Members come from a single Member State. The corresponding number shall be fifteen if the Members come from two Member States and ten if they come from three or more Member States.

**Rule 27**

**Non-attached Members**

1. Non-attached Members shall be those who do not belong to a political group.
2. The Non-attached Members shall delegate two of their number to attend meetings of the enlarged Bureau, without having the right to vote.
3. The Non-attached Members shall be provided with administrative facilities and a secretariat, the composition and size of which shall be determined by the enlarged Bureau on a proposal from the Secretary-General, having regard to the number of Non-attached Members.
4. The speaking time of Non-attached Members shall be calculated in accordance with Rule 65(2). The time thus obtained shall be doubled so as to take account of the great diversity of political views among the Non-attached Members and enable, as far as possible, each such view to be expressed.

Each Non-attached Member shall be accorded the same speaking time. If he does not wish to use his speaking time he may assign it to another Non-attached Member.

The rules governing the utilization of speaking time shall be determined by the enlarged Bureau.

5. The allocation of seats on the various committees to Non-attached Members shall be made in accordance with the provisions of Rule 92.

### **Rule 28**

#### **Allocation of seats in the Chamber**

The enlarged Bureau shall decide how seats in the Chamber are to be allocated among the political groups, the Non-attached Members and the institutions of the Communities.

## CHAPTER VI

### ACTIVITIES OF PARLIAMENT

#### Section 1

*Relations with the Commission, the Council and the Foreign Ministers meeting in Political Cooperation*

#### Rule 29

##### Annual General Report of the Commission

1. The annual general report of the Commission on the activities of the Communities shall be distributed immediately after publication.
2. The various parts of the report shall be referred to the appropriate committees.
3. Committees consulted under paragraph 2 shall not be obliged to submit a report.

Any committee may, where it feels it necessary for Parliament to make known its views on certain essential problems raised by the general report, bring these problems up in plenary sitting by resorting to one of the existing procedures.

#### Rule 30

##### Motion of censure on the Commission

1. A motion of censure on the Commission may be handed to the President of Parliament by a political group or one-tenth of the current Members of Parliament.
2. The motion shall be presented in writing, labelled 'motion of censure' and supported by reasons. It shall be printed and distributed in the official languages as soon as it is received, and brought to the notice of the Commission.
3. The President shall announce to Members that a motion of censure has been tabled immediately he receives it, and where the motion of censure is received during an adjournment of the session, he shall repeat that announcement at the beginning of the first part-session following receipt of the motion. The debate on the motion shall not be opened until at least twenty-four hours after its receipt is announced. The vote shall not be taken on the motion until at least forty-eight hours after the beginning of the debate. Voting shall be by open vote by way of roll call.



4. The motion of censure shall be adopted only if it secures a two-thirds majority of the votes cast, representing a majority of the current Members of Parliament. The result of the vote shall be notified to the President of the Commission and the President of the Council.

### **Rule 31**

#### **ECSC Treaty amendments**

1. Amendments proposed by the Commission and the Council under Article 95 of the ECSC Treaty shall be printed at the same time as the assenting opinion thereon delivered by the Court of Justice.

These documents shall be distributed and referred to the appropriate committee. In its report the committee shall recommend either adoption or rejection of the proposed amendment as a whole.

2. No amendment thereto shall be admissible, and voting item by item shall not be permitted. For adoption the proposed amendment as a whole shall require a three-quarters majority of the votes cast, representing a two-thirds majority of the current Members of Parliament.

3. Any Member may table a motion for a resolution proposing to the Commission and Council amendments to the ECSC Treaty under Article 95 of that Treaty.

Such motions shall be printed, distributed and referred to the appropriate committee. They shall be adopted only if they secure the votes of a majority of the current Members of Parliament.

### **Rule 32**

#### **Consultation of Parliament**

1. Requests from the Council or Commission for an opinion or for advice shall be printed and distributed. The President shall refer such requests to the appropriate committee for consideration.

2. A list of these requests for an opinion or for advice shall be published in the Bulletin of Parliament, together with decisions on referral.

3. Without prejudice to Rules 33 and 34, Parliament shall discuss the proposal on which its opinion has been sought on the basis of the report drawn up by the committee responsible pursuant to Rule 100. The consultation procedure shall end with a vote on the whole text of the motion for a resolution contained in the report.

4. Parliament shall first vote on the amendments to the proposal with which the report of the committee responsible is concerned, then on the proposal, amended or otherwise, then on the motion for a resolution contained in the report and any amendments tabled to it. Finally, Parliament shall vote on the motion for a resolution as a whole <sup>(1)</sup>.

5. The text of the proposal as approved by Parliament and its accompanying resolution shall be forwarded to the Council and Commission by the President as Parliament's opinion.

### **Rule 33**

#### **Delegation of the power of decision to committees**

1. Where Parliament is consulted on a predominantly technical matter of no general importance, the President may propose to Parliament that the request for an opinion or for advice be referred to the appropriate committee with the power to take a decision. If there are no objections, this proposal shall be deemed to have been adopted. Failing this, Parliament shall, after hearing one speaker in favour and one against, vote on the President's proposal by show of hands.

2. If at least one-tenth of the current Members of Parliament are opposed to the referral for a decision provided for in paragraph 1, this referral shall not take place and the request for an opinion or for advice shall be referred to the appropriate committee pursuant to Rule 32.

3. Where one-third of the members of the committee to which a request for an opinion or for advice has been referred pursuant to paragraph 1 request that the matter be referred back to Parliament, the procedure provided for in Rule 32 shall apply.

4. Where paragraph 1 is applied, all the rules concerning the public conduct of proceedings in Parliament shall apply to the meetings of the committee.

5. Once the opinion of the committee responsible has been adopted pursuant to this Rule, the President shall inform Parliament thereof and forward the committee's opinion to the Council and Commission as Parliament's opinion.

*The rules governing discussions in committee and not those regulating debates in the Chamber shall apply to meetings of the committee.*

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<sup>(1)</sup> See also Chapter IX.

*The public conduct of proceedings referred to in paragraph 4 should take effect in accordance with Rules 89 and 90 of the Rules of Procedure subject to the qualification that only the proceedings of the meeting at which a committee takes a decision shall be required to be published in full. With regard to speeches made in preceding committee meetings it shall be sufficient if a summary record is published in sufficient detail to render comprehensible the positions of the different speakers.*

*The agendas of meetings of committees to which a power of decision has been delegated shall be distributed to all the Members of Parliament. The rules governing the participation in the proceedings of individual committees by Members of Parliament who are not members of that committee shall continue to apply.*

### **Rule 34**

#### **Procedure without debate**

1. Where the committee responsible requests that its report be adopted by Parliament without debate, or where the committee has delivered an opinion on a Commission proposal without report pursuant to Rule 99(1) or in accordance with the simplified procedure pursuant to Rule 99(2), the proposal or report in question shall be placed on the agenda of the part-session following the decision by the committee.

2. The proposal and, where appropriate, the motion for a resolution contained in the report shall be put to the vote without debate unless a political group or at least ten Members of Parliament lodge a protest in advance. In the latter case the proposal shall be referred back to the committee responsible for reconsideration.

### **Rule 35**

#### **Rejection of a Commission proposal**

1. If a Commission proposal fails to secure a majority of the votes cast, the President shall, before Parliament votes on the motion for a resolution, request the Commission to withdraw the proposal.

2. If the Commission does so, the President shall hold the consultation procedure on the proposal to be superfluous and shall inform the Council accordingly.

3. If the Commission does not withdraw its proposal, Parliament may decide not to vote on the motion for a resolution and to refer the matter back to the committee responsible.

In this case, the committee shall report back to Parliament within one month or, in exceptional cases, any shorter period decided by Parliament.

*If the committee responsible is unable to meet the deadline, it shall request referral back to committee pursuant to Rule 85(1). If necessary, Parliament may fix a new deadline pursuant to Rule 85(4). If the committee's request is not accepted, Parliament shall proceed to the vote on the motion for a resolution.*

### **Rule 36**

#### **Amendment of a Commission proposal**

1. Where the Commission proposal as a whole is approved, but on the basis of amendments which have also been adopted, Parliament may decide, on a proposal from the chairman or rapporteur of the committee responsible, to postpone the vote on the motion for a resolution until the Commission has stated its position on Parliament's amendments.

2. Where the Commission announces that it does not intend to adopt Parliament's amendments, Parliament may decide, on a proposal from the chairman or rapporteur of the committee responsible, to postpone the vote on the motion for a resolution. The matter shall be deemed to be referred back to the committee responsible for reconsideration. In this case, the committee shall report back to Parliament within one month or, in exceptional cases, any shorter period decided by Parliament.

*The referral procedure pursuant to paragraph 2 forms part of the consultation procedure. Rule 36 specifies that the chairman or rapporteur of the committee responsible may propose that the vote on a motion for a resolution be postponed. This provision means that the chairman or rapporteur of the committee in question has not only a right but also a duty to advise Parliament after gauging the Commission's attitude.*

*Application of Rule 36(2) does not preclude a request for referral being tabled by other Members pursuant to Rule 85.*

### **Rule 37**

#### **Renewed consultation**

Where the Commission withdraws its initial proposal after Parliament has delivered its opinion in order to replace it with another text, or substantially amends the proposal on which Parliament originally delivered an opinion, the President shall request that Parliament be consulted once again.

### **Rule 38**

#### **Conciliation procedure**

1. Where, in the case of certain important Community decisions, the Council intends to depart from the opinion of

Parliament, a procedure for conciliation with the Council, with the active participation of the Commission, may be opened by Parliament when delivering its opinion.

2. This procedure shall be initiated by Parliament, either at its own or at the Council's initiative.

3. The delegation which consults with the Council shall consist of a number of Members corresponding to the number of Members of the Council; it shall reflect the political composition of Parliament, care being taken to ensure balanced representation of political tendencies; in principle it shall include the chairmen and the rapporteurs of the committees concerned. The delegation shall be led by the President of Parliament or by one of the Vice-Presidents.

4. The committee responsible shall report on the results of the conciliation. This report shall be debated and voted on by Parliament.

### **Rule 39**

#### **Departure from Parliament's opinion**

1. Parliament shall periodically review the Council decisions on which it has been consulted to ensure that they reflect its opinions. Where the Council feels impelled to depart from Parliament's opinion on matters of particular importance which are not the subject of conciliation pursuant to Rule 38, Parliament shall ask the Council to explain the reasons for its decision.

2. Where the Council informs Parliament that it intends to depart from Parliament's opinion on a matter which does not fall under Rule 38, the President shall inform the committee responsible which shall decide on the action to be taken in such a case and, possibly, submit a proposal to Parliament.

### **Rule 40**

#### **Statements by the Commission, the Council and the Foreign Ministers meeting in Political Cooperation**

1. Members of the Commission and the Council and the Foreign Ministers meeting in Political Cooperation may at any time ask the President for permission to make a statement. The President shall decide when the statement may be made.

2. Unless Parliament decides otherwise, such a statement shall not be followed by a debate. Members may, however, avail themselves of a period of thirty minutes in which to put

brief and concise questions with a view to clarifying specific points in such statements.

#### **Rule 41**

#### **Political Cooperation**

1. The President of the Foreign Ministers meeting in Political Cooperation shall be asked to submit an annual report to Parliament on the progress made in European political cooperation. Parliament shall discuss this report.
2. Four colloquies shall also be held each year at which the Ministers will meet members of the appropriate committee of Parliament.

#### *Section 2*

#### *Questions to the Commission, the Council and the Foreign Ministers meeting in Political Cooperation*

#### **Rule 42**

#### **Questions for oral answer with debate**

1. Questions may be put to the Commission, to the Council or to the Foreign Ministers meeting in Political Cooperation by a committee, a political group or five or more Members in order that they may be placed on the agenda of Parliament and dealt with by the procedure provided for under this Rule.

Such questions, which may also relate to problems of a general nature, shall be submitted in writing to the President, who shall place them before the enlarged Bureau at the next meeting held for the purpose of drawing up the draft agenda.

Subject to the provisions below, during each part-session each political group shall have the right to have not more than one question dealt with by the procedure with debate.

These questions shall not be included in the agenda of a part-session if that agenda already provides for the subject to be discussed with the participation of the institutions concerned; they will, however, be included in the debate. If a question relates to a report tabled by a committee but not yet considered by Parliament, Parliament shall vote on whether it shall be placed on the agenda.

The enlarged Bureau shall, taking account of the above requirements, exercise its discretion in deciding the order on the agenda of these questions.

2. The enlarged Bureau shall decide whether the Commission or the Council is to be consulted. It shall decide whether the question is to be converted into a question for written answer, for oral answer at Question Time, or is to be dealt with by oral procedure without debate under Rule 43 or by the procedure provided for under this Rule.

The decision of the enlarged Bureau shall be notified immediately to the questioner and to the institutions concerned.

The procedure for questions under this Rule may be proposed only where notice of the question can be given within the following time-limits: if the question is addressed to the Commission, at least one week and if to the Council, at least five weeks before the opening of the sitting on whose agenda it is to appear.

In urgent cases, the President may propose directly to Parliament that a question which could not be placed before the enlarged Bureau under the foregoing conditions be placed on the agenda. Such questions, together with any that could not be notified within the time-limit specified above, may be placed on the agenda only with the agreement of the institution to which they are addressed.

3. Questions may be put to the Foreign Ministers meeting in Political Cooperation under the same conditions as laid down in this Rule for questions to the Council.

4. One of the questioners may speak to the question for not more than ten minutes. One member of the institution concerned shall answer. Other Members of Parliament may speak for not more than five minutes, and may do so only once.

One of the questioners may, at his request, comment for not more than five minutes on the answer given.

5. In order to wind up the debate on a question under this Rule, any committee or political group, or five or more Members, may place before the President a motion for a resolution with a request that an early vote be taken on it.

As soon as the motion for a resolution has been distributed, Parliament shall first decide, if necessary after hearing one of the authors, whether an early vote is to be taken.

Should an early vote be decided upon, the motion for a resolution shall be put to the vote at voting time of the next

sitting without referral to committee. Only explanations of vote shall be permitted.

*Paragraph 5 does not apply to oral questions with debate to be dealt with in a debate pursuant to the fourth subparagraph of paragraph 1.*

*The vote on a request for an early vote on a motion for a resolution to wind up a debate on an oral question must take place, pursuant to the second sub-paragraph of paragraph 5, as soon as the motion for a resolution has been distributed, if possible at the end of the debate. The vote on the motion for a resolution itself must take place at the next sitting, at a time set by the President.*

6. The enlarged Bureau may ask the authors of questions to reword them.

7. At the request of the author of a question for oral answer with debate, acting in agreement with any co-authors, the question may be withdrawn by them, but may be immediately taken over by any other Member, under the conditions set out in paragraph 1 above, with the agreement of Parliament deciding by vote without debate.

### **Rule 43**

#### **Questions for oral answer without debate**

1. Any Member may put questions to the Commission, to the Council or to the Foreign Ministers meeting in Political Cooperation and ask that they be placed on the agenda of Parliament and dealt with by the procedure provided for under this Rule.

Such questions shall be submitted in writing to the President, who shall place them before the enlarged Bureau at the next meeting held for the purpose of drawing up the draft agenda.

The enlarged Bureau shall decide whether the question is to be converted into a question for written answer or for oral answer at Question Time, or whether it is to be dealt with by the procedure provided for under this Rule.

The decision of the enlarged Bureau shall be notified immediately to the questioner and to the institutions concerned. If the question is addressed to the Commission such notification shall be made at least one week, and if to the Council, at least five weeks before the opening of the sitting on whose agenda it is to appear.

2. Questions may be put to the Foreign Ministers meeting in Political Cooperation under the same conditions as laid down in this Rule for questions to the Council.



3. Questions shall be clearly worded and relate to specific points, not to problems of a general nature. Parliament shall set aside not more than half a day during each part-session for oral answers to these questions. Questions that remain unanswered during that period shall be carried forward to the next part-session or converted into questions for written answer, as the questioner may choose.

4. The questioner shall read out his question. He may speak to it for not more than ten minutes. A member of the institution concerned shall give a brief answer. Where the question is addressed to the Commission, the questioner may ask one or two supplementary questions, to which the member of this institution shall give a brief answer.

5. The enlarged Bureau may ask the authors of questions to reword them.

6. If the author of an oral question without debate so requests, the question shall be withdrawn.

#### **Rule 44**

##### **Question Time**

1. Question Time shall be held at each part-session at such times as may be decided by Parliament on a proposal from the enlarged Bureau.

2. Questions shall be submitted in writing to the President, who shall decide whether they are admissible; he shall determine the order in which they will be taken, and how they will be grouped.

The questioner shall be notified immediately of the President's decision.

3. During Question Time any Member may put oral questions to the Commission or Council, in accordance with the provisions of this Rule.

4. Questions may be put to the Foreign Ministers meeting in Political Cooperation under the same conditions as laid down in this Rule for questions to the Council.

5. Questions put to the Council and the Foreign Ministers shall be taken first on the second day of Question Time.

6. At each part-session, any Member may put only one question respectively to the Commission, the Council and the Foreign Ministers.

7. The procedure for the conduct of Question Time shall be governed by guidelines <sup>(1)</sup>.

#### **Rule 45**

##### **Debate following Question Time**

1. Before the close of Question Time, any political group or at least five Members may request that a debate be held immediately thereafter on the answer given by the Commission, the Council or the Foreign Ministers meeting in Political Cooperation on a specific matter of general and topical interest.

2. Such a debate may be requested only after the Commission, the Council or the Foreign Ministers has or have replied to all supplementary questions on the specific matter concerned.

3. The decision as to whether to hold a debate on request shall be taken by the President only at the close of Question Time and shall not be subject to debate. If he receives more than one request for such a debate, he shall decide thereon, without debate.

4. The debate shall be limited to one hour, excluding speaking time set aside for the Commission, the Council or the Foreign Ministers. No Member may speak for more than five minutes.

5. The order of speaking shall be governed by Rule 66, the first speaker being a spokesman for the political group or the Members who requested the debate.

#### **Rule 46**

##### **Questions for written answer**

1. Questions for written answer may be put by any Member to the Commission, to the Council or to the Foreign Ministers meeting in Political Cooperation.

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<sup>(1)</sup> See Annex II.

These questions shall be brief and relate to specific points; they shall be submitted in writing to the President, who shall communicate them to the institution concerned.

2. Questions to which answers have been given shall be published, together with the answers, in the Official Journal of the European Communities.

3. Questions to which no answer has been given within one month by the Commission, or within two months by the Council or the Foreign Ministers, shall also be published in the Official Journal of the European Communities.

### *Section 3*

#### *Resolutions*

#### **Rule 47**

##### **Motions for resolutions**

1. Any Member may table a motion for a resolution on a matter falling within the sphere of activities of the Communities. Such motions shall be printed and distributed in the official languages and referred to the appropriate committee, provided no request is made pursuant to Rule 48(1).

2. The committee shall decide by what procedure each motion for a resolution should be considered and inform the President and the author or authors of its decision. The committee may decide to consider jointly similar motions on related subjects and to consider a motion for a resolution in conjunction with a text which has already been referred to it.

3. Where the committee decides to draw up a report it shall include the text of the motion for a resolution in its report.

#### **Rule 48**

##### **Topical and urgent debates**

1. A political group or at least twenty-one Members may ask the President in writing for a debate to be held on a topical and urgent subject, which shall be held as part of one of the topical and urgent debates provided for in the agenda pursuant to Rule 55(3). Such a request must be linked with a motion for a resolution tabled pursuant to Rule 47. The President shall notify Parliament immediately of any request

for topical and urgent debate and the motion for a resolution shall be printed and distributed in the official languages.

2. After a meeting with the political group chairmen and a representative of the Non-attached Members, the President shall draw up a list of subjects to be included on the agenda of the next topical and urgent debate on the basis of the motions referred to in paragraph 1. He shall inform Parliament of this no later than at the beginning of the sitting before such a debate. In drawing up this list, the President shall ensure that during a part-session a balance is maintained both between the requests from the political groups and between these requests and those from individual Members.

Up to the resumption of the sitting on the afternoon of the same day, a political group or at least twenty-one Members may oppose this decision in writing, stating their reasons, and move that Parliament abandon a topic due to be debated and/or include an unscheduled topic in the debate. The vote on their objections shall take place without debate at the resumption of the sitting.

3. The total speaking time for the groups and Nonattached Members shall be allocated in accordance with the procedure laid down in Rule 65(2) to (4) within the maximum time for topical and urgent debates of three hours per part-session. Should the Council or Commission wish to take the floor, their speaking time shall not be included in the time set aside for such debates.

4. At the end of the debate there shall be an immediate vote on the motion for a resolution. Rule 80 shall not apply.

5. The authors of a motion for a resolution may withdraw it at any time before the vote. The motion may, however, be retabled by other Members pursuant to paragraph 1.

*The provisions of Rules 84, 85 and 87 shall not apply to motions for resolutions included on the agenda for a topical and urgent debate.*

*Motions for resolutions tabled for topical and urgent debate in accordance with paragraph 1 which are not included in the list of subjects entered on the agenda for this debate and drawn up pursuant to paragraph 2, or which are included but cannot be dealt with in the time allocated to the debate, shall lapse. The same shall apply to motions for resolutions in respect of which it is established, following a request under Rule 71(3), that the quorum is not present. Obviously Members shall have the right to retable such motions either for consideration in*

*committee pursuant to Rule 47 or for topical and urgent debate at the next part-session pursuant to Rule 48.*

*A motion for a resolution cannot be included as an item 'without debate' on the list of subjects for the agenda of topical and urgent debates, but Members may waive their right to speak.*

*A motion for a resolution tabled in accordance with paragraph 1 cannot be included on the agenda for topical and urgent debate if the subject covered by this motion is already on the agenda for that part-session.*

*There are no provisions in the Rules to allow a joint debate on a motion for a resolution tabled in accordance with paragraph 1 and a committee report on the same subject.*

## *Section 4*

### *Written declarations*

#### **Rule 49**

##### **Written declarations**

1. Any Member may submit a written declaration of not more than 200 words on a matter falling within the sphere of activities of the European Communities. Written declarations shall be printed in the official languages, distributed and entered in a register.
2. Any Member may add his signature to a declaration entered in the register.
3. At the end of each part-session, the President shall announce how many signatures have been obtained by the declarations entered in the register.
4. As soon as a declaration entered in the register has been signed by at least one half of the current Members of Parliament, the text of the declaration shall be forwarded to the institutions named by the author together with the names of the signatories. The President shall announce this at the next sitting and the text of the declaration and the names of the signatories shall be included in the minutes of that sitting as an annex. Once this announcement has been made, no more entries may be made in the register.
5. A written declaration that has stood in the register for over two months and has not been signed by at least one half of the current Members of Parliament shall lapse.

## *Section*

### *The budget and questions of budgetary policy*

#### **Rule 50**

##### **General budget**

Implementing procedures for examination of the general budget of the European Communities and supplementary budgets, in accordance with the Budgetary Provisions of the Treaties establishing the European Communities and the Treaty of 22 July 1975, shall be adopted by resolution of Parliament and annexed to these Rules (1).

#### **Rule 51**

##### **Consultation on appointment of Members of the Court of Auditors**

Before the appointment of Members of the Court of Auditors by the Council pursuant to Article 206(4) of the EEC Treaty, Parliament shall adopt an opinion on this matter on the basis of a motion for a resolution tabled by the appropriate committee.

#### **Rule 52**

##### **Discharge to the Commission in respect of implementation of the budget**

The provisions concerning the implementing procedures for the decision on the granting of a discharge to the Commission in respect of the implementation of the budget in accordance with the Treaty of 22 July 1975 and the Financial Regulation are attached to these Rules as an annex (2). This annex shall be adopted pursuant to Rule 112(2).

## *Section 6*

### *Amendments*

#### **Rule 53**

##### **Tabling and moving amendments**

1. Any Member may table amendments. Amendments shall be tabled in writing and signed by at least one of their authors.

2. An amendment may seek to change the whole or part of a text, and may be directed to deleting, adding or substituting words.

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(1) See Annex III.

(2) See Annex IV.

3. On a proposal from the President, Parliament may set a time limit for the tabling of amendments.

4. An amendment may be moved during the debate by its author or by any other Member appointed by the author to replace him.

5. Where an amendment is withdrawn by its author, it shall lapse unless immediately taken over by another Member.

6. Unless Parliament decides otherwise, amendments shall be put to the vote only after they have been printed and distributed in all the official languages. Amendments which have not been printed and distributed in all the official languages shall not be put to the vote if at least ten Members object.

*(For procedure in committee see also interpretation under Rule 103(4))*

#### **Rule 54**

##### **Admissibility of amendments**

1. No amendment shall be admissible if:

- (a) it does not directly relate in any way to the text which it seeks to amend;
- (b) it is tantamount to a motion for rejection of the text to which it relates;

*Paragraph 1 (b) does not apply to amendments calling for the deletion of a unit of a text (for example, an entire article of a Commission proposal or an entire paragraph of a motion for a resolution).*

*An amendment is to be considered inadmissible within the meaning of paragraph 1 (b) if, although seemingly designed to modify a text, it would result in, or would be tantamount to, the total rejection of that text (for example, where it amounts to a motion of inadmissibility or where it fails to give an alternative to the original text).*

- (c) it seeks to amend more than one of the individual articles or paragraphs of the text to which it relates, in the case of a vote under Rule 72 (1) (a), or more than one paragraph in the case of a vote under Rule 72 (1) (c). This provision shall not apply to compromise amendments;

(d) it is established that the wording in at least one of the official languages of the text it is sought to amend does not call for amendment; in this case, the President shall seek out a suitable linguistic remedy together with those concerned.

2. An amendment shall lapse if it is ruled out by decisions previously taken on the text during the same vote.

3. The President shall decide whether amendments are admissible.

*The President's decision, taken on the basis of paragraph 3, concerning the admissibility of amendments is not based exclusively on the provisions of paragraphs 1 and 2 of this Rule but on the provisions of the Rules in general.*

### **Rule 54a**

**Second and third reading, depending on the number of amendments**

1. In cases where the committee responsible tables a report pursuant to Rule 100 and under the procedure provided for in Rule 32, the President shall set a time limit within which Members may table amendments to this report. Members shall be informed of this time limit when the report is distributed.

2. If, when the time limit has expired, more than 20 amendments have been tabled, other than the amendments already tabled in the committee responsible, the President may refer them to the committee responsible which shall examine them and submit a supplementary report on the results of this examination.

The President shall set the time limit within which this must take place. As a general rule, the supplementary report shall be presented orally. It may, however, be submitted in writing with the President's approval.

3. The committee's consideration of the amendments shall take place in public. Authors of amendments who are not members of the committee shall be entitled to attend to move their amendments. Rule 10 (3) shall not apply to such committee meetings.

4. The committee may adopt the amendments tabled or give a favourable opinion on them. It may also adopt compromise amendments and submit them to Parliament.

5. The committee's supplementary report shall give the result of the examination of, and vote on, all the amendments tabled.



6. The committee report referred to in paragraph 1, together with the supplementary report, shall be placed on the agenda of Parliament pursuant to the procedure in Rules 55 and 56.

7. Amendments which according to the supplementary report have obtained fewer than three votes in committee shall only be put to the vote in Parliament if this has been requested in writing before the beginning of the vote by a political group, a committee or at least 21 Members.

8. Except in the cases referred to in Rule 74 (4), no amendment may be put to the vote in Parliament other than those which have been tabled within the time limit referred to in paragraph 1.

## CHAPTER VII

### AGENDA OF SITTINGS

#### Rule 55

##### Draft agenda

1. Before each part-session, the draft agenda shall be drawn up by the enlarged Bureau on the basis of a programme prepared by the President, after consulting the political groups and the committees.

Before the opening of each part-session, the final draft agenda to be submitted to Parliament shall be established at a meeting between the President and the political group chairmen. A representative of the Non-attached Members shall be invited to attend the meeting.

The Commission and the Council may attend the deliberations on the draft agenda at the invitation of the President.

2. The draft agenda may indicate voting times for certain motions for resolutions down for consideration.

3. One or two periods, together totalling a maximum of three hours, shall be set aside in the draft agenda for debates on topical and urgent matters pursuant to Rule 48.

#### Rule 56

##### Adopting and amending the agenda

1. At the beginning of each part-session, Parliament shall decide on the draft agenda submitted to it by the President without amendment other than such as may be proposed by the latter or to him in writing by at least twenty-one Members, on the understanding that a political group or at least ten Members shall have the right to propose, at each part-session, one amendment to the draft agenda. Any such proposals must be received by the President at least one hour before the opening of the part-session. On such a proposal only the mover, one speaker in favour and one speaker against may be heard, in each case for a maximum of three minutes.

2. Once adopted, the agenda shall not be amended, except in application of Rules 57 and 84 to 88 or on a proposal from the President.

If a procedural motion to amend the agenda is rejected, it shall not be tabled again during the same part-session.

3. Before closing the sitting, the President shall announce the date, time and agenda of the next sitting.

### **Rule 57**

#### **Urgency**

1. A request that a debate on a proposal on which Parliament has been consulted pursuant to Rule 32(1) be treated as urgent may be made to Parliament by the President, by at least twenty-one Members, by a committee, by the Commission or by the Council. This request shall be made in writing and supported by reasons.

2. As soon as the President has received a request for urgent debate, he shall inform Parliament thereof; the vote on that request shall be taken at the beginning of the sitting following that during which the text of the request was printed in the official languages and distributed to all Members. Where there are several requests for urgent debate on the same subject, the approval or rejection of the request for urgent debate shall apply to all the requests on the same subject.

3. Before the vote, only the person making the request, one speaker in favour, one speaker against, and the chairman and/or rapporteur of the committee responsible may be heard, in each case for a maximum of three minutes.

4. Questions to be dealt with by urgent procedure shall be given priority over other items on the agenda. The President shall determine the time of the debate and vote.

5. An urgent debate may be held without a report pursuant to Rule 99(1) or, exceptionally, on the basis of an oral report by the committee responsible.

### **Rule 58**

#### **Joint debate**

A decision may be taken at any time to debate similar or factually related items of business jointly.

### **Rule 59**

#### **Time limits**

Except in the cases of urgency referred to in Rules 48 and 57, a debate and vote shall not be opened on a text unless it was tabled not later than twelve days before the beginning of the part-session and distributed at least twenty-four hours previously.

## CHAPTER VIII

### GENERAL RULES FOR THE CONDUCT OF SITTINGS

#### Rule 60

##### Access to the Chamber

1. No person may enter the Chamber except Members of Parliament, Members of the Commission or Council, the Secretary-General of Parliament, members of the staff whose duties require their presence there, and experts or officials of the Communities.
2. Only holders of an admission card duly issued by the President or Secretary-General of Parliament shall be admitted to the galleries.
3. Members of the public admitted to the galleries shall remain seated and keep silent. Any person expressing approval or disapproval shall immediately be ejected by the ushers.

#### Rule 61

##### Languages

1. All documents of Parliament shall be drawn up in the official languages.
2. Speeches delivered in one of the official languages shall be simultaneously interpreted into the other official languages and into any other language the Bureau may consider necessary.

*Where it has been established after the result of a vote has been announced that there are discrepancies between different language versions, the President shall decide whether the result announced is valid pursuant to Rule 81 (5). If he declares the result valid, he shall decide which version is to be regarded as having been adopted. However, the original version cannot be taken as the official text as a general rule, since a situation may arise in which all the other languages differ from the original text.*

#### Rule 62

##### Distribution of documents

Documents forming the basis for Parliament's debates and decisions shall be printed and distributed to Members. A list of these documents shall be published in the Bulletin of Parliament.

#### Rule 63

##### Public conduct of proceedings

Debates in Parliament shall be public unless Parliament decides otherwise by a majority of two-thirds of the votes cast.

## **Rule 64**

### **Calling speakers and content of speeches**

1. No Member may speak unless called upon to do so by the President. Members shall speak from their places and shall address the Chair; the President may invite them to come to the rostrum.
2. If a speaker departs from the subject, the President shall call him to order. If a speaker has already been called to order twice in the same debate, the President may, on the third occasion, forbid him to speak for the remainder of the debate on the same subject.
3. Without prejudice to his other disciplinary powers, the President may cause to be deleted from the reports of debates of sittings the speeches of Members who have not been called upon to speak by him or who continue to speak beyond the time allotted to them.
4. A speaker may not be interrupted. He may, however, by leave of the President, give way during his speech to allow another Member, the Commission or the Council to put to him a question on a particular point in his speech.

## **Rule 65**

### **Allocation of speaking time**

1. The President may, after consulting the chairmen of the political groups, propose to Parliament that speaking time be allocated for a particular debate. Parliament shall decide on this proposal without debate.
2. The President shall allocate speaking time in accordance with the following criteria:
  - (a) a first fraction of speaking time shall be divided equally among all the political groups;
  - (b) a further fraction shall be divided among the political groups in proportion to the total number of their members;
  - (c) the Non-attached Members shall be allocated an overall speaking time based on the fractions allocated to each political group under sub-paragraphs (a) and (b).
3. The speaking time of Non-attached Members, calculated in accordance with paragraph 2, shall be doubled so as to take account of the great diversity of political views among them and enable, as far as possible, each such view to be expressed.

Each Non-attached Member shall be accorded the same speaking time. If he does not wish to use his speaking time he may assign it to another Non-attached Member.

The rules governing the utilization of speaking time shall be determined by the enlarged Bureau.

4. Where a total speaking time is allocated for several items on the agenda, the political groups shall inform the President of the fraction of their speaking time to be used for each individual item. The President shall ensure that these speaking times are respected.

5. No Member may speak for more than three minutes on any of the following: the minutes of proceedings, points of order and procedural motions, amendments to the draft agenda or to the agenda, and, unless Parliament decides otherwise, personal statements.

#### **Rule 66**

##### **List of speakers**

1. The names of Members who ask leave to speak shall be entered in the list of speakers in the order in which their requests are received.

2. The President shall call upon Members to speak, ensuring as far as possible that speakers of different political views and using different languages are heard in turn.

3. On request, however, priority may be given to the rapporteur of the committee responsible and to the chairmen of political groups who wish to speak on their behalf, or to speakers deputizing for them.

4. No Member may speak more than twice on the same subject, except by leave of the President.

The chairman and the rapporteur of the committees concerned shall, however, be allowed to speak at their request for a period to be decided by the President.

5. Members of the Commission and Council shall be heard at their request.

*If amendments have been tabled after the general debate, and the Commission has therefore not been able to express its view on them, it may do so before the opening of the vote on the proposal to which the amendments have been tabled.*

### **Rule 67**

#### **Personal statements**

1. A Member who asks to make a personal statement shall be heard at the end of the discussion of the item of the agenda being dealt with or when the minutes of the sitting to which the request for leave to speak refers are considered for approval.

The Member concerned may not speak on substantive matters but shall confine his observations to rebutting any remarks that have been made about his person in the course of the debate or opinions that have been attributed to him, or to correcting observations that he himself has made.

2. Unless Parliament decides otherwise, no personal statement shall last for more than three minutes.

### **Rule 68**

#### **Order in the Chamber**

1. The President shall call to order any Member who creates a disturbance during the proceedings.

2. Should the offence be repeated, the President shall again call the Member to order, and the fact shall be recorded in the minutes of proceedings.

3. In the case of a further offence, the President may exclude the offender from the Chamber for the remainder of the sitting.

### **Rule 69**

#### **Exclusion of Members**

1. In serious cases of disorder, the President may move that Parliament pass a vote of censure which shall automatically involve immediate exclusion from the Chamber and suspension for two to five days. Any Member against whom such disciplinary action is requested shall be entitled to be heard.

2. The vote of censure shall be taken without debate by sitting and standing.

### **Rule 70**

#### **Disturbances**

Should disturbances in Parliament threaten to obstruct the business of the House, the President shall close or suspend the sitting for a specific period to restore order. If he cannot make himself heard, he shall leave the Chair; this shall have the effect of suspending the sitting. The President shall reconvene the sitting.

## CHAPTER IX

### QUORUM AND VOTING

#### Rule 71

#### Quorum

1. Parliament may deliberate, settle its agenda and approve the minutes of proceedings, whatever the number of Members present.
2. A quorum shall exist when one third of the current Members of Parliament are present in the Chamber.
3. All votes shall be valid whatever the number of voters unless the President, on a request made before voting has begun by at least ten Members, ascertains at the moment of voting that the quorum is not present. If the vote shows that the quorum is not present, the vote shall be placed on the agenda of the next sitting.

*A request that it be ascertained whether the quorum is present must be made by "at least ten Members". A request on behalf of a political group is not admissible.*

*When establishing the result of the vote, account must be taken, pursuant to paragraph 2, of all the Members present in the Chamber, and pursuant to paragraph 4, of all the Members who requested that it be ascertained whether the quorum was present. The electronic voting system cannot be used for this purpose. The doors of the Chamber may not be closed.*

*If the number of Members required to make up the quorum is not present, the President shall not announce the result of the vote but shall declare that the quorum is not present.*

*Paragraph 3 last sentence shall not apply to votes on procedural motions but only to votes on the subject matter itself.*

4. Members who have requested that it be ascertained whether the quorum is present shall be counted as being present within the meaning of paragraph 2, even if they are no longer in the Chamber.
5. If fewer than ten Members are present, the President may rule that there is no quorum.

#### Rule 72

#### Voting procedure

1. The following voting procedure shall apply to reports:
  - (a) first, voting on any amendments to the text with which the report of the committee responsible is concerned,
  - (b) second, voting on the text as a whole, amended or otherwise,



- (c) third, voting on the individual paragraphs of the motion for a resolution, preceded in each case by voting on any amendments thereto,
- (d) finally, voting on the motion for a resolution as a whole (final vote).

Parliament shall not vote on the explanatory statement contained in the report.

*(See also interpretation under Rule 103(4))*

2. Without prejudice to Rule 80, the only Member permitted to speak during the vote shall be the rapporteur, who shall have the opportunity of expressing briefly his committee's views on the amendments put to the vote.

3. Without prejudice to Rules 10(2), 30, 31, 52 and 112 and the provisions of the Budgetary Procedure, texts put to the vote shall be declared adopted only if they have secured a majority of the votes cast. In the event of a tie, the text shall stand rejected.

### **Rule 73**

#### **Separate votes**

1. Where the text to be put to the vote contains two or more provisions or references to two or more points or lends itself to division into two or more parts each with a distinct logical meaning and normative value, a separate vote on each part may be requested.

2. Before the President declares the vote open, any Member may make such a request for separate votes.

### **Rule 74**

#### **Order of voting on amendments**

1. Amendments shall have priority over the text to which they relate and shall be put to the vote before that text.

2. If two or more mutually exclusive amendments are moved to the same part of a text, the amendment that departs furthest from the original text shall have priority and shall be put to the vote first. If it is adopted the other amendments shall stand rejected. If it is rejected, the amendment next in priority shall be put to the vote and similarly for each of the remaining amendments. In case of doubt as to priority, the President shall decide.

3. Exceptionally, the President may put the original text to the vote first, or give priority in the vote to a proposed amendment that departs less from the original text than the one that departs furthest from it.

If either of these secures a majority, all other proposed amendments to the same text shall lapse. Before adopting this procedure, the President shall ascertain whether it is not opposed by at least twenty-one Members. If such is the case, he shall not apply this exceptional procedure.

4. Exceptionally, on a proposal from the President, amendments tabled after the close of the debate may be put to the vote if they are compromise amendments, or if there are technical problems. The President shall obtain the agreement of Parliament to putting such amendments to the vote.

*1. Pursuant to Rule 54(3), the President shall decide whether amendments are admissible. In the case of compromise amendments tabled after the conclusion of a debate, pursuant to Rule 74(4), the President shall decide on their admissibility case by case, having regard to the compromise nature of the amendments.*

*The following general criteria for admissibility may be applied:*

- as a general rule, compromise amendments may not relate to parts of the text which have not been the subject of amendments prior to the conclusion of the debate;*
- as a general rule, compromise amendments shall be tabled by political groups, the chairmen, rapporteurs or draftsmen of the committees concerned or the authors of other amendments;*
- as a general rule, compromise amendments shall entail the withdrawal of other amendments to the same passage*

*2. Only the President may propose that a compromise amendment be considered. In order for a compromise amendment to be put to the vote, the President must obtain the agreement of Parliament by asking whether there are any objections to such a vote being held. If an objection is raised, Parliament shall decide on the matter by a majority of the Members present.*

## **Rule 75**

### **Right to vote**

The right to vote is a personal right. Voting by proxy is prohibited.

*Any infringement of this Rule shall be considered as a serious case of disorder as referred to in Rule 69(1) and shall have the legal consequences mentioned in that Rule.*

*(Provisional interpretation)*

## **Rule 76**

### **Voting**

1. Normally Parliament shall vote by show of hands.
2. If the President decides that the result of the show of hands is doubtful, a fresh vote shall be taken by sitting and standing.
3. If the President decides that the result of this last vote is doubtful, the vote shall be taken by roll call in accordance with Rules 77(2) or 78.

## **Rule 77**

### **Voting by roll call**

1. The vote shall be taken by roll call if so requested in writing by at least twenty-one Members or a political group before voting has begun and in cases where Rules 30 and 76(3) apply.
2. The roll shall be called in alphabetical order, beginning with the name of a Member drawn by lot. The President shall be the last to be called to vote.

Voting shall be by word of mouth and shall be expressed by 'Yes', 'No', or 'I abstain'. In calculating whether a motion has been adopted or rejected account shall be taken only of votes cast for and against. The President shall establish the result of the vote and announce it.

Voting shall be recorded in the minutes of proceedings of the sitting in the alphabetical order of Members' names.

## **Rule 78**

### **Electronic voting**

1. The President may at any time decide that the voting operations indicated in Rules 76, 77 and 79 shall be carried out by means of an electronic voting system.

Where the electronic voting system cannot be used for technical reasons, voting shall take place pursuant to Rules 76, 77(2) or 79.

The technical instructions for the use of the electronic voting system shall be laid down by the enlarged Bureau.

2. Where an electronic vote is taken, only the numerical result of the vote shall be recorded.

However, if a vote by roll call has been requested in accordance with Rule 77(1), the votes shall be recorded by name and entered in the minutes of proceedings of the sitting in the alphabetical order of Members' names.

3. The vote by roll call shall be taken in accordance with Rule 77(2) if a majority of the Members present so request; the system indicated in paragraph 1 may be used to determine whether a majority exists.

### **Rule 79**

#### **Voting by secret ballot**

1. In the case of appointments, voting shall be by secret ballot without prejudice to Rules 12(1), 92(1) and 98(2) second subparagraph.

Only ballot papers bearing the names of Members who have been nominated shall be taken into account in calculating the number of votes cast.

2. Voting may also be by secret ballot if requested by at least one-fifth of the current Members of Parliament. Such requests must be made before voting begins.

3. A request for a secret ballot shall take priority over a request for a vote by roll call.

4. Four Members chosen by lot shall count the votes cast in a secret ballot.

In the case of votes pursuant to paragraph 1, candidates shall not act as tellers.

*The names of Members who have taken part in a secret ballot shall be recorded in the minutes of the sitting at which the ballot was held.*

### **Rule 80**

#### **Explanations of vote**

1. Once the general debate and consideration of the texts have been concluded, explanations of vote may be given before the final vote, provided that a request to do so has been submitted to the President before the beginning of this vote.

No further requests to give explanations of vote shall be accepted once the first explanation of vote has begun.

2. A Member who does not choose to give an oral explanation of vote may request that a written explanation of vote, not exceeding 200 words, be included in the verbatim report of proceedings.
3. Explanations of vote shall last not more than one and a half minutes, but each political group may give an explanation of vote lasting up to three minutes.
4. Explanations of vote shall not be admissible in cases of votes on procedural matters.
5. Where a final vote has been postponed under Rule 71(3) or (5) or for any other reason, and explanations of vote have already been given, no further explanations of vote shall be admissible before the final vote is eventually taken.

*Once a Commission proposal or a report has been put to the vote without debate pursuant to Rule 34, Members are deemed to have waived the right to an oral explanation of vote. In this case Rule 80(2) applies.*

### **Rule 81**

#### **Disputes on voting**

1. The President shall declare votes open and closed.
2. Once the President has declared a vote open, no-one except the President shall be allowed to speak until the vote is declared closed.
3. Points of order concerning the validity of a vote may be raised after the President has declared it closed.
4. After the result of a vote by show of hands has been announced, a Member may request that this result be cross-checked using the electronic voting system.
5. The President shall decide whether the result announced is valid. His decision shall be final.

## CHAPTER X

### INTERRUPTIVE AND PROCEDURAL MOTIONS

#### Rule 82

#### Points of order and procedural motions

1. A Member who asks to raise a point of order shall have a prior right to do so (Rule 83).
2. A Member who asks to move a procedural motion, namely:
  - (a) the inadmissibility of a matter (Rule 84);
  - (b) referral back to committee (Rule 85);
  - (c) the closure of a debate (Rule 86);
  - (d) the adjournment of a debate (Rule 87);
  - (e) the suspension or closure of the sitting (Rule 88);shall have a prior right to do so.

Only the following shall be heard on motions (a) to (e): the mover of the motion, one speaker in favour and one against, and the chairman or rapporteur of each committee concerned, each for not more than three minutes.

3. The matters referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2 shall take precedence over the main question, the discussion of which shall be suspended while they are being considered.

#### Rule 83

#### Points of order

1. A Member may raise a point of order during the debate but may not speak for more than three minutes. In doing so he may not speak on the subject of the debate. Such a request for leave to speak shall take precedence over requests to speak on the subject of the debate.
2. The President shall take an immediate decision on points of order in accordance with the Rules of Procedure and shall announce his ruling immediately after the point of order has been raised.
3. Exceptionally, he may state that he will announce his ruling later, but not more than twenty-four hours after the point of order was raised. The postponement of the ruling

shall not entail the adjournment of the debate. The President may refer the matter to the appropriate committee.

#### **Rule 84**

##### **Moving the inadmissibility of a matter**

1. At the beginning of the debate on a specific item on the agenda, its inadmissibility may be moved.

*Such a motion shall be put to the vote immediately.*

2. If the motion is carried, Parliament shall immediately proceed to the next item on the agenda.

#### **Rule 85**

##### **Referral back to committee**

1. Referral back to committee may be requested by any Member at any time.

*A request for referral back to committee may be made "at any time" during the debate before final voting begins, subject to Rule 81(2). Application of Rule 36(2) does not preclude a request for referral back to committee pursuant to Rule 85.*

*The vote shall be taken immediately on the request for referral back to committee. (If a check on the quorum has been requested and the quorum is not present, the provisions of Rule 71(3) final sentence and Rule 85(2) shall not apply and Parliament shall proceed with the debate).*

2. The matter shall be referred back to the committee responsible where, pursuant to Rule 71(3), two votes have been taken following a request for a check on the quorum, without the quorum being present.

*Paragraph 2 shall not apply to votes on procedural motions but only to votes on the subject matter itself.*

3. Where so decided by Parliament on a proposal from the President, which shall be voted on without debate, referral back to committee shall entail suspension of the discussion and vote in plenary sitting on the amendments, and the vote on the motion for a resolution, but not the general debate.

4. When referring a matter back to the committee responsible, Parliament may set a time limit within which the committee shall report its conclusions.

5. If a motion requesting referral back to committee is rejected, it shall not be tabled again during that debate.

### **Rule 86**

#### **Closure of a debate**

1. A debate may be closed before the list of speakers has been exhausted on a proposal from the President or at the request of the chairman of a political group or at least ten Members.

*Such a proposal or motion shall be put to the vote immediately.*

2. If the proposal or motion is carried, only one Member may speak from each political group which has not yet provided a speaker in that debate.

3. After the speeches referred to in paragraph 2, the debate shall be closed and Parliament shall vote on the matter under debate, except in cases where the time for the vote has been set in advance.

4. If the proposal or motion is rejected, it shall not be tabled again during that debate.

### **Rule 87**

#### **Adjournment of a debate**

1. Before or during a debate on an item on the agenda, any Member may move that the debate be adjourned to a specific date and time.

*Such a motion may only be made immediately before or during the debate.*

*Such a motion shall be put to the vote immediately.*

2. If the motion is carried, Parliament shall proceed to the next item on the agenda. The adjourned debate shall be resumed at the specified date and time.

3. If the motion is rejected, it shall not be tabled again during that part-session.

*Any decision by Parliament to adjourn a debate to a subsequent part-session shall specify the part-session on the agenda of which the debate is to be included, it being understood that the agenda for that part-session shall be drawn up pursuant to Rules 55 and 56.*

### **Rule 88**

#### **Suspension or closure of the sitting**

The sitting may be suspended or closed during a debate or a vote if Parliament so decides on a proposal from the President, at the request of the chairman of a political group or at least ten Members.

*Such a proposal or motion shall be put to the vote immediately.*



## CHAPTER XI

### PUBLIC RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

#### Rule 89

##### Minutes

1. The minutes of proceedings of each sitting, containing the decisions of Parliament and the names of speakers, shall be distributed at least half an hour before the opening of the next sitting.
2. At the beginning of each sitting the President shall place before Parliament, for its approval, the minutes of proceedings of the previous sitting.
3. If any objections are raised to the minutes of proceedings Parliament shall, if necessary, decide whether the changes requested should be considered. No Member may speak on the minutes for more than three minutes.
4. The minutes of proceedings shall be signed by the President and the Secretary-General and preserved in the records of Parliament. They shall be published within one month in the Official Journal of the European Communities.

#### Rule 90

##### Verbatim reports

1. A verbatim report of the proceedings of each sitting shall be drawn up in the official languages.
2. Speakers shall be required to return typescripts of their speeches to the Secretariat not later than the day following that on which they received them.
3. The verbatim report shall be published as an annex to the Official Journal of the European Communities.

## CHAPTER XII

### COMMITTEES

#### Rule 91

**Setting up of committees** Parliament shall set up standing or temporary, general or special committees, and shall define their powers <sup>(1)</sup>.

#### Rule 92

**Composition of committees**

1. Committee members shall be elected during the first part-session following the re-election of Parliament and again two and a half years thereafter. Nominations shall be addressed to the Bureau of Parliament, which shall submit to Parliament proposals designed to ensure fair representation of Member States and of political views.

*When a Member changes political groups he shall retain, for the remainder of his two and a half year term of office, the seats he holds in parliamentary committees. However, if a Member's change of political group has the effect of disturbing the fair representation of political views in a committee, new proposals for the composition of that committee shall be made by the Bureau in accordance with the procedure laid down in paragraph 1, second sentence, whereby the individual rights of the Member concerned shall be guaranteed.*

2. Amendments to the proposals of the Bureau shall be admissible only if they are tabled by at least ten Members. Parliament shall vote on such amendments by secret ballot.

3. The Bureau of Parliament may provisionally decide to fill any vacancy on a committee with the agreement of the persons to be appointed and having regard to paragraph 1.

4. Any such changes shall be placed before Parliament for ratification at the next sitting.

#### Rule 93

**Substitutes**

1. The political groups may appoint a number of permanent substitutes for each committee equal to the number of full members representing them on the committee. The President of Parliament shall be informed accordingly. These permanent substitutes shall be entitled to attend and speak at committee meetings and, in the event of the absence of the full member, to take part in the vote.

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<sup>(1)</sup> See Annex V.

2. In addition, in the absence of the full member and where no permanent substitutes have been appointed or in their absence, the full member of the committee may arrange to be represented at meetings by another member of his political group, who shall be entitled to vote. The name of the substitute shall be notified in advance to the chairman of the committee.

1. *Paragraph 2 shall apply, by analogy, to the Non-attached Members.*

2. *The advance notification provided for in the last sentence of paragraph 2 must be given before the end of the debate or before the opening of the vote on the item or items for which the full member is to be replaced.*

#### **Rule 94**

##### **Duties of committees**

1. Committees shall examine questions referred to them by Parliament or, during an adjournment of the session, by the President on behalf of the Bureau.

2. Should a committee declare itself incompetent to consider a question, or should a conflict arise over the competence of two or more committees, the question of competence shall be placed on Parliament's agenda on a proposal from the Bureau or at the request of one of the committees concerned.

3. Should two or more committees be competent to deal with a question, one committee shall be named as the committee responsible and the others as committees asked for opinions.

A question shall not, however, be referred simultaneously to more than three committees, unless it is decided for sound reasons to depart from this rule under the conditions laid down in paragraph 1.

4. Any two or more committees or subcommittees may jointly consider matters coming within their competence but shall not take a decision.

5. Any committee may, with the agreement of the Bureau of Parliament, instruct one or more of its members to undertake a study or fact-finding mission.

#### **Rule 95**

##### **Committees of inquiry**

1. Parliament shall, at the request of one quarter of its current Members and without previously referring the request to committee, set up a committee of inquiry to investigate specific matters. The request shall indicate the matter to be investigated, which must fall within the sphere of activities of the Communities.

*At the request of one quarter of its current Members, Parliament shall automatically set up a committee of inquiry; such a request need not be put to the vote in the House.*

*The President shall decide whether a request to set up a committee of inquiry meets the conditions set out in paragraph 1. The request shall contain a time-limit before which the committee must deliver to Parliament its Final Report. This time-limit shall not exceed 12 months. The committee may ask for the time-limit to be extended by submitting an Interim Report. A committee of inquiry shall not be entitled to submit a report to Parliament other than an Interim or Final Report on the outcome of the inquiry. Nor shall it be entitled to submit any motion for a resolution to Parliament or to deliver any opinion to another committee.*

2. Parliament shall determine the composition of the committee of inquiry on a proposal from the Bureau, subject to the provisions of Rule 92(1), second sentence.

3. The provisions of these Rules of Procedure relating to the committees shall apply to the proceedings of the committee of inquiry and to the powers of its chairman.

#### **Rule 96**

##### **Committee on the Verification of Credentials**

1. Parliament shall set up a Committee on the Verification of Credentials for the purpose of preparing decisions on any objections concerning the validity of elections.

2. This committee shall consist of nine Members who shall be elected pursuant to Rule 92.

*The Committee on the Verification of Credentials is set up after the election of the President and the Bureau of Parliament pursuant to Rule 92. Until such time as their credentials have been verified, Members take part in the work of Parliament and enjoy full rights pursuant to Rule 6(3) (See also explanatory note on Rule 11(2))*

#### **Rule 97**

##### **Subcommittees**

1. Subject to prior authorization by the enlarged Bureau a committee may, in the interest of its work, appoint one or more subcommittees, of which it shall at the same time determine the composition and competence, pursuant to Rule 92. Subcommittees shall report to the committee that set them up.

2. The procedure for subcommittees shall be the same as for committees.

3. Substitutes shall be allowed to sit on subcommittees under the same conditions as on committees.

## **Rule 98**

### **Committee Bureaus**

1. At the first committee meeting after the election of committee members pursuant to Rule 92, the committee shall elect a Bureau consisting of a chairman and one, two or three vice-chairmen.

2. Without prejudice to the second subparagraph of this paragraph, the Bureau shall be elected by secret ballot without discussion. Its election shall require an absolute majority of the votes cast; where, however, a second ballot proves to be necessary, a relative majority shall suffice.

If the number of nominations corresponds to the number of seats to be filled, the candidate or candidates may be declared elected without holding the ballot referred to in the first subparagraph.

## **Rule 99**

### **Procedure without report – Simplified procedure**

1. At each committee meeting the chairman shall submit to the committee a list of the proposals which in his opinion and/or at the President's recommendation should be approved without report.

The chairman shall put each proposal on the list to the committee for decision. Unless at least three members object, the chairman of the committee shall inform the President of the approval of such a proposal.

2. At the recommendation of the President or following a proposal from its chairman, the committee may deliver an opinion on a proposal in accordance with the simplified procedure.

Unless at least three members object to this procedure, the committee chairman shall be deemed to have been appointed rapporteur. The draft report, consisting of a procedural section, a brief motion for a resolution on an identical model and a brief explanatory statement, shall be sent to the members of the committee. Unless at least three members of the committee object within a set time limit, which may not be less than fourteen days from the date of dispatch, the report shall be considered as having been adopted by the committee. In this case the motion for a resolution contained in the report shall be put to the vote in Parliament without debate pursuant to Rule 34.

3. If at least three members object to the procedure referred to in paragraphs 1 or 2, the procedure provided for in Rule 100 (procedure with report) shall be followed.

## Rule 100

### Committee reports

1. Where Rule 99 does not apply, committees may appoint for each subject a rapporteur from among their members or permanent substitutes who shall be responsible for preparing the committee's report and for presenting it to Parliament.

*The chairman of the committee responsible shall be required, when a topic is referred to his committee, to propose the procedure to be followed (normal, without report or simplified) and to mention it on the draft agenda.*

*The committee may only appoint a rapporteur after it has decided on the procedure to be followed.*

2. The committee's report shall include a motion for a resolution and an explanatory statement. If the report relates to a proposal on which Parliament has been asked for its opinion, the report shall state the committee's view on the proposal together with any amendments it proposes.

*The explanatory statement shall be drawn up on the responsibility of the rapporteur and shall not be put to the vote. It must, however, accord with the text of the motion for a resolution as adopted and any amendments proposed by the committee and shall, where necessary, give a clear indication of the minority opinion.*

3. The report shall state the result of the vote taken on the report as a whole. In addition, if when the vote is taken at least one-third of the members present so request, the report shall indicate how each member voted.

4. Where the committee's opinion is not unanimous the report shall also give a summary of the minority opinion.

5. On a proposal from its Bureau, a committee may set a time limit within which the rapporteur shall submit his draft report. This time limit may be extended.

6. Once the time limit has elapsed, the committee may instruct its chairman to ask for the matter referred to it to be placed on the agenda of one of the next sittings of Parliament. The debates may then be conducted on the basis of an oral report by the committee concerned.

## Rule 101

### Opinions of committees

1. Should the committee to which a question was first referred wish to hear the views of another committee, or should another committee wish to make known its views on the report of the committee to which a question was first referred, such committees may request the President that, in accordance with Rule 94(3), one committee be named as the committee responsible and the other as the committee asked for an opinion.
2. The committee asked for an opinion shall communicate the opinion to the committee responsible either orally, through its chairman or draftsman, or in writing. Its opinion shall relate to the text referred to it.
3. In its report the committee responsible shall set out the views of the committee asked for an opinion, insofar as these differ from its own.
4. The committee asked for an opinion shall deliver it within the time limit set by the committee responsible. The committee responsible shall not reach its final conclusions before that time limit has expired.
5. If the committee asked for an opinion is unable to deliver the opinion before the report of the committee responsible is finally adopted, it may instruct its chairman or draftsman to place the opinion before Parliament during the debate on the report, provided that it notifies the President of this intention before the debate is opened.
6. The opinion may include amendments to the text referred to the committee and suggestions for parts of the motion for a resolution submitted by the committee responsible, but shall not include any motion for a resolution as such.

*(For voting procedure on opinions, see interpretation under Rule 103(4))*

7. The chairman and draftsman of the committee asked for an opinion may take part in an advisory capacity in meetings of the committee responsible, insofar as these relate to the matter of common concern. In special cases, the committee asked for an opinion may appoint up to five other members who, with the agreement of the chairman of the committee responsible, may take part in an advisory capacity in the meetings of that committee, insofar as these deal with the matter of common concern.

## Rule 102

### Own-initiative reports

A committee intending to draw up a report and to submit a motion for a resolution to Parliament on a subject within its competence on which neither a request for an opinion nor a motion for a resolution has been referred to it may do so only with the authorization of the enlarged Bureau. Where such authorization is withheld the reason must always be stated.

## Rule 103

### Procedure in committee

1. A committee may validly vote when one-quarter of its members are actually present. However, if so requested by one-sixth of its members before voting begins, the vote shall be valid only if the majority of the current members of the committee have taken part in it.
2. Voting in committee shall be by show of hands, unless any member requests a vote by roll call.
3. The chairman may take part in discussions and may vote, but without having a casting vote.
4. Rules 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 53, 54, 61, 62, 64, 66(1), 68, 70, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 79, 81, 82, 83, 84, 87 and 88 shall apply *mutatis mutandis* to committee meetings.

*(Rule 53(6))*

*Oral amendments tabled in committee shall be put to the vote unless a member objects.*

*(Rules 72 and 101)*

*The voting procedure for opinions is as follows:*

1. *The committee asked for an opinion shall vote on the whole of the conclusions of the opinion, if necessary after voting on each conclusion individually. The result of the vote on the conclusions as a whole shall be recorded in the opinion.*
2. *The text preceding the conclusions of the opinion (which can be regarded as an explanatory statement) may have to be amended as a result of this voting. However, no vote shall be taken on this.*
3. *The committee asked for an opinion shall not vote on the Commission's proposal as a whole.*



## **Rule 104**

### **Committee meetings**

1. A committee shall meet when convened by its chairman or at the request of the President.
2. Committee meetings shall not be held in public unless the committee decides otherwise.
3. The Commission and Council may take part in committee meetings if invited to do so on behalf of a committee by its chairman.

By special decision of a committee, any other person may be invited to attend and to speak at a meeting.

*By analogy, the decision on whether to allow Members' personal assistants to be present at committee meetings shall be left to the discretion of each committee.*

*The committee responsible may, subject to approval by the enlarged Bureau, organize a hearing of experts if it considers such a hearing essential to the effective conduct of its work on a particular subject.*

*Committees asked for opinions may attend the hearing if they so wish.*

4. Without prejudice to Rule 101(7) and unless a committee decides otherwise, Members may attend meetings of committees to which they do not belong but may not take part in their deliberations.

Such Members may, however, be allowed by the committee to take part in its proceedings in an advisory capacity.

## **Rule 105**

### **Minutes of committee meetings**

1. The minutes of each meeting of a committee shall be distributed to all its members and submitted to the committee for its approval at its next meeting.
2. Unless the committee decides otherwise, only adopted reports and statements prepared on the responsibility of the chairman shall be made public.

## *CHAPTER XIII*

### *INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS*

#### **Rule 106**

##### **Setting up and duties of interparliamentary delegations**

1. Parliament may decide to set up interparliamentary delegations.
2. When a delegation is set up, a decision shall be taken both on its composition, which shall reflect the numerical strength of the various political groups, and on the number of its members.
3. The political groups shall appoint the members of the delegations.
4. Parliament shall determine the general powers of the individual delegations. It may at any time decide to increase or restrict these powers.

#### **Rule 107**

##### **Report for the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe**

1. At the beginning of the session which opens on the second Tuesday in March each year, the Bureau shall appoint a rapporteur to prepare a report to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on the activities of Parliament.
2. After this report has been approved by the Bureau and by Parliament, it shall be forwarded direct by the President of Parliament to the President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.

## CHAPTER XIV

### PETITIONS

#### Rule 108

##### Submission and referral of petitions

1. Every citizen of the European Community shall have the right, individually or jointly with others, to address written requests or complaints (petitions) to the European Parliament.
2. Petitions to Parliament shall show the name, occupation, nationality and permanent address of each signatory.
3. Petitions shall be entered in a register in the order in which they are received if they comply with the conditions laid down in paragraph 2; those that do not shall be filed without further action, and the petitioner shall be informed of the reasons therefor.
4. Petitions entered in the register shall be forwarded by the President to the committee responsible, which shall first ascertain if the petitions registered fall within the sphere of activities of the Communities.
5. Petitions declared inadmissible by the committee shall be filed without further action; the petitioner shall be informed of the decision and the reasons therefor.

#### Rule 109

##### Examination of petitions

1. The committee responsible may decide to draw up a report or otherwise express its opinion on petitions it has declared admissible.

The committee may, particularly in the case of petitions which seek changes in existing law, request opinions from other committees pursuant to Rule 101.

2. When considering petitions, the committee may organize hearings or dispatch members to ascertain the facts of the situation in situ.
3. With a view to preparing its opinions, the committee may request the Commission to submit documents, to supply information and to grant it access to its facilities.
4. The committee shall, where necessary, submit motions for resolutions to Parliament on petitions which it has considered.

The committee may also request that its opinions be forwarded by the President to the Commission or the Council.

5. The committee shall inform Parliament every six months of the outcome of its deliberations.

The committee shall, in particular, inform Parliament of the measures taken by the Council or the Commission on petitions referred to them by Parliament.

6. The President shall inform petitioners of the decisions taken and the reasons therefor.

#### **Rule 110**

##### **Notice of petitions**

1. Notice shall be given in Parliament of the petitions entered in the register referred to in Rule 108(3) and the main decisions on the procedure to be followed in relation to specific petitions. Such announcements shall be entered in the minutes of proceedings.

2. The texts of petitions entered in the register, together with the texts of the committee's opinions forwarded with them, shall be preserved in the records of Parliament, where they shall be available for inspection by Members.

## CHAPTER XV

### APPLICATION AND AMENDMENT OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE

#### Rule 111

##### Application of the Rules

1. Should doubt arise over the application or interpretation of these Rules of Procedure, the President may, without prejudice to any previous decisions in this field, refer the matter to the committee responsible for examination.

Where a point of order is raised under Rule 83, the President may also refer the matter to the committee responsible.

2. The committee shall decide whether it is necessary to propose an amendment to the Rules of Procedure. In this case it shall proceed in accordance with Rule 112.

3. Should the committee decide that an interpretation of the existing Rules is sufficient, it shall forward its interpretation to the President who shall inform Parliament.

4. Should a political group or at least ten Members contest the committee's interpretation, the matter shall be put to the vote in Parliament. Adoption of the text shall be by simple majority. In the event of rejection, the matter shall be referred back to the committee.

5. Uncontested interpretations and interpretations adopted by Parliament shall be appended in italic print as explanatory notes to the appropriate Rule or Rules, together with decisions on the application of the Rules of Procedure.

6. These explanatory notes shall constitute precedents for the future application and interpretation of the Rules concerned.

7. The provisions on the application of the Rules of Procedure shall be reviewed regularly.

#### Rule 112

##### Amendment of the Rules of Procedure

1. Any Member may table amendments to these Rules.

Such amendments shall be translated, printed, distributed and referred to the committee responsible, which shall ex-

mine them and decide whether to submit them to Parliament.

2. Amendments to these Rules shall be adopted only if they secure the votes of a majority of the current Members of Parliament.

3. Amendments to these Rules shall enter into force on the first day of the part-session following their adoption.

## CHAPTER XVI

### SECRETARIAT OF PARLIAMENT — ACCOUNTING

#### Rule 113

##### Secretariat

1. Parliament shall be assisted by a Secretary-General appointed by the Bureau.

The Secretary-General shall give a solemn undertaking before the Bureau to perform his duties conscientiously and with absolute impartiality.

2. The Secretary-General shall head a Secretariat the composition and organization of which shall be determined by the Bureau.

3. The Bureau, after consulting the appropriate committee, shall decide the number of officials and other servants and lay down regulations relating to their administrative and financial situation.

The Bureau shall also decide to what categories of officials and servants Articles 12 to 14 of the Protocol on the privileges and immunities of the European Communities shall apply in whole or in part.

The President of Parliament shall inform the appropriate institutions of the European Communities accordingly.

#### Rule 114

##### Estimates of Parliament

1. The Bureau shall draw up a first preliminary draft of the estimates of Parliament on the basis of a report prepared by the Secretary-General, and shall consult the committee responsible on the subject.

2. After receiving the opinion of that committee, the enlarged Bureau shall adopt the preliminary draft estimates.

3. The President shall forward the preliminary draft estimates to the committee responsible, which shall draw up the draft estimates and report to Parliament.

4. The President shall set a time limit for the tabling of amendments to the draft estimates.

The committee responsible shall give its opinion on these amendments.

5. Parliament shall adopt the estimates.
6. The President shall forward the estimates to the Commission and Council.
7. The foregoing provisions shall also apply to supplementary estimates.

#### **Rule 115**

##### **Power to incur and settle expenditure**

1. The President shall incur and settle, or cause to be incurred and settled, the expenditure covered by the internal financial regulations issued by the Bureau after consulting the appropriate committee.
2. The President shall forward the draft annual accounts to the committee responsible.
3. On the basis of a report by the committee, Parliament shall pass its accounts and decide on the granting of a discharge.



## CHAPTER XVII

### MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

#### Rule 116

##### Unfinished business

At the end of the last part-session before elections, all requests for advice or opinions, motions for resolutions and questions shall be deemed to have lapsed.

This shall not apply to petitions and communications that do not require a decision.

*Requests for opinions or for advice (Rule 32), motions for resolutions and written declarations (Rules 47 and 49), own-initiative reports (Rule 102) and questions (Rules 25, 42, 43, 44 and 46) shall lapse if they have not been dealt with conclusively by 'the end of the last part-session before elections'.*

*However, in the specific case of requests for opinions or for advice (Rule 32), the procedure for consultation of Parliament provided for in the Treaties is not concluded in these circumstances, and the other institutions must re-submit them to the new Parliament.*



## **ANNEX I**

### *Provisions implementing Rule 8 of the Rules of Procedure*

#### **Declaration of Members' financial interests**

##### **Article 1**

Before speaking in Parliament or in one of its bodies, any Member who has a direct financial interest in the subject under debate shall disclose this interest to the meeting orally unless it is obvious from the written declaration made by him pursuant to Articles 2 and 3.

##### **Article 2**

1. Each Member shall be required to make a detailed declaration of his professional activities.
2. Members shall also list any other paid functions or activities in so far as these are relevant.

##### **Article 3**

The declaration referred to in Article 2 shall be made in writing and entered by the Secretary-General in a register, the form of which shall be determined by the Bureau. This register shall be open to the public for inspection.

## ANNEX II

### *Guidelines for the conduct of Question Time under Rule 44*

1. Questions shall be admissible only where they
  - are concise and are drafted so as to permit a brief answer to be given;
  - fall within the competence and sphere of responsibility of the Commission, the Council, or the Foreign Ministers meeting in Political Cooperation, and are of general interest;
  - do not require extensive prior study or research by the institution concerned;
  - are clearly worded and relate to specific matters;
  - do not contain assertions or opinions;
  - do not relate to strictly personal matters;
  - are not aimed at procuring documents or statistical information;
  - are interrogatory in form.
2. Questions shall not be accepted for Question Time at any part-session if the agenda already provides for the subject to be discussed with the participation of the institution concerned.
3. Should the President decide that the question is inadmissible, the questioner may challenge the decision, in which case it shall be for the enlarged Bureau to rule on the matter. This ruling shall be notified immediately to the questioner.

#### **Supplementary questions**

4. Each Member may put only one supplementary question to each question at Question Time.
5. Supplementary questions shall be subject to the rules of admissibility laid down in these Guidelines.
6. (1) The President shall rule on the admissibility of supplementary questions and shall limit their number so that each Member who has put down a question may receive an answer to it and so as to afford an opportunity for a debate to be requested on the answer given to any question or supplementary question.  
  
(2) The President shall not be obliged to declare a supplementary question admissible, even where it satisfies the foregoing conditions of admissibility —

- (a) if it is likely to upset the normal conduct of Question Time, or
- (b) if the main question to which it relates has already been adequately covered by other supplementary questions, or
- (c) if it has no direct bearing on the main question.

**Answers to questions**

7. The institution concerned shall ensure that answers are concise and are relevant to the subject of the question.

8. If the content of the questions concerned permits it, the President may decide, after consulting the questioners, that the institution concerned should answer them together.

9. A question may be answered only if the questioner is present or has notified the President in writing, before Question Time begins, of the name of his substitute.

10. If neither the questioner nor his substitute is present, the question shall be answered in writing by the institution concerned, and published together with the answer in the Report of Proceedings.

11. The same procedure shall be applied to questions that remain unanswered for lack of time unless, before Question Time is over, the author withdraws his question or asks that it be carried over to the next Question Time.

12. The procedure for answers in writing shall be governed by Rule 46(2) and (3).

**Time limits**

13. (1) Questions shall be tabled at least one week before Question Time begins.

Questions not tabled within this time limit may be taken during Question Time with the consent of the institution concerned.

(2) Questions declared admissible shall be distributed to Members and forwarded to the institutions concerned.

### *ANNEX III*

#### *Implementing procedures for examination of the general budget of the European Communities and supplementary budgets*

##### **Article 1**

###### **Working documents**

1. The following documents shall be printed and distributed:

- (a) the communication from the Commission on the maximum rate laid down in paragraph 9 of Article 78 of the ECSC Treaty, Article 203 of the EEC Treaty, and Article 177 of the EAEC Treaty;
- (b) the proposal from the Commission or the Council fixing a new rate;
- (c) a summary by the Council of its deliberations on the amendments and proposed modifications adopted by Parliament to the draft budget;
- (d) the modifications made by the Council to the amendments adopted by Parliament to the draft budget;
- (e) the Council's position on the fixing of a new maximum rate;
- (f) the new draft budget drawn up in pursuance of paragraph 8 of Article 78 of the ECSC Treaty, Article 203 of the EEC Treaty and Article 177 of the EAEC Treaty;
- (g) the draft decisions on the provisional twelfths laid down in Article 78b of the ECSC Treaty, Article 204 of the EEC Treaty and Article 178 of the EAEC Treaty.

2. These documents shall be referred to the committee responsible. Any committee concerned may deliver an opinion.

3. Where other committees wish to deliver opinions, the President shall set the time limit within which these shall be communicated to the committee responsible.

##### **Article 2**

###### **Rate**

1. Subject to the conditions set out below, any Member may table and speak in support of proposals for decisions fixing a new maximum rate.

2. Such proposals shall be admissible only if they are presented in writing, bear the signatures of at least five Members or are tabled on behalf of a political group or committee.

3. The President shall set the time limit for the tabling of such proposals.

4. The committee responsible shall report on these proposals before they are discussed in Parliament.

5. Parliament shall then vote on the proposals.

Parliament shall act by a majority of its current Members and three-fifths of the votes cast.

Where the Council has informed Parliament of its agreement to the fixing of a new rate, the President shall declare in Parliament that the amended rate has been adopted.

If this is not the case, the Council's position shall be referred to the committee responsible.

### Article 3

#### Consideration of the draft budget — first stage

1. Subject to the conditions set out below, any Member may table and speak in support of:

- draft amendments to the draft budget;
- proposed modifications to the draft budget.

2. Draft amendments shall be admissible only if they are presented in writing, bear the signatures of at least five Members or are tabled on behalf of a political group or committee, specify the budget heading to which they refer and ensure the maintenance of a balance between revenue and expenditure. Draft amendments shall include all relevant information on the remarks to be entered against the budget heading in question.

The same provisions shall apply to proposed modifications.

*All draft amendments or proposed modifications to the draft budget must be justified in writing.*

3. The President shall set the time limit for the tabling of draft amendments and proposed modifications.

*The President shall set two deadlines for tabling draft amendments and proposed modifications: the first shall be before, and the second after, the adoption of the report by the committee responsible.*

4. The committee responsible shall deliver its opinion on the texts submitted before they are discussed in Parliament.

Draft amendments and proposed modifications which have obtained fewer than three votes in the committee responsible

shall be put to the vote in Parliament only if this has been requested in writing before the start of the vote by a political group, a committee or at least twenty-one Members.

5. Draft amendments to the estimates of Parliament which are similar to those already rejected by Parliament at the time the estimates were drawn up shall be discussed only where the committee responsible has delivered a favourable opinion.

6. Notwithstanding Rule 32(4) of the Rules of Procedure, Parliament shall take separate and successive votes on:

- each draft amendment and each proposed modification,
- each section of the draft budget,
- a motion for a resolution concerning the draft budget.

7. Articles, chapters, titles and sections of the draft budget in respect of which no draft amendments or proposed modifications have been tabled shall be deemed adopted.

8. Draft amendments shall require for adoption the votes of a majority of the current Members of Parliament.

Proposed modifications shall require for adoption an absolute majority of the votes cast.

9. If Parliament has adopted draft amendments that would raise the expenditure shown in the draft budget above the maximum rate laid down, the committee responsible shall submit to Parliament a proposal laying down a new maximum rate as provided for in the last subparagraph of paragraph 9 of Article 78 of the ECSC Treaty, Article 203 of the EEC Treaty and Article 177 of the EAEC Treaty. The proposal shall be put to the vote after the various sections of the draft budget have been voted on. Parliament shall act by a majority of its current Members and three-fifths of the votes cast. Where the proposal is rejected, the draft budget as a whole shall be referred back to the committee responsible.

10. If Parliament has not amended the draft budget, adopted proposed modifications or adopted a proposal rejecting the draft budget, the President shall declare in Parliament that the budget has been finally adopted.

If Parliament has amended the draft budget or adopted proposed modifications, the draft budget thus amended or



accompanied by proposed modifications shall be forwarded to the Council.

11. The minutes of proceedings of the sitting at which Parliament delivered its opinion on the draft budget shall be forwarded to the Council and the Commission.

#### **Article 4**

**Final adoption of the budget after the first reading**

Where the Council has informed Parliament that it has not modified its amendments and that it has accepted or not rejected its proposed modifications, the President shall declare in Parliament that the budget has been finally adopted. He shall arrange for its publication in the Official Journal of the European Communities.

#### **Article 5**

**Consideration of the Council's deliberations — second stage**

1. If the Council has modified one or more of the amendments adopted by Parliament, the text thus modified by the Council shall be referred to the committee responsible.

2. Subject to the conditions set out below, any Member may table and speak in support of draft amendments to the texts modified by the Council.

3. Such draft amendments shall be admissible only if they are presented in writing, bear the signature of at least five Members or are tabled on behalf of a political group or committee and ensure the maintenance of a balance between revenue and expenditure.

Draft amendments shall be admissible only if they refer to the texts modified by the Council.

4. The President shall set the time limit for the tabling of draft amendments.

5. The committee responsible shall pronounce on the texts modified by the Council and deliver its opinion on the draft amendments to the modified texts.

6. Draft amendments to the texts modified by the Council shall be put to the vote in Parliament without prejudice to the provisions of Article 3 (4) second sub-paragraph. Parliament shall act by a majority of its current Members and three-fifths of the votes cast. If the draft amendments are adopted, the texts modified by the Council shall be deemed rejected. If they are rejected, the texts modified by the Council shall be deemed adopted.

7. The Council's summary of the results of its deliberations on the proposed modifications adopted by Parliament shall be debated and a motion for a resolution may then be put to the vote.

8. Upon completion of the procedure provided for in this Article, and subject to the provisions of Article 6, the President shall declare in Parliament that the budget has been finally adopted. He shall arrange for its publication in the Official Journal of the European Communities.

#### **Article 6**

##### **Total rejection**

1. Five Members, a political group or a committee may, for important reasons, table a proposal to reject the draft budget as a whole. Such a proposal shall be admissible only if it is accompanied by a written justification and tabled within the time limit set by the President. The reason for rejection may not be contradictory.

2. The committee responsible shall deliver its opinion on such a proposal before it is put to the vote in Parliament.

Parliament shall act by a majority of its current Members and two-thirds of the votes cast. If the proposal is adopted, the draft budget as a whole shall be referred back to the Council.

#### **Article 7**

##### **Provisional twelfths system**

1. Subject to the conditions set out below, any Member may submit a proposal for a decision different from that taken by the Council authorizing expenditure in excess of the provisional one-twelfth for expenditure other than that necessarily resulting from the Treaty or from acts adopted in accordance therewith.

2. Proposals for decisions shall be admissible only if they are presented in writing, bear the signature of at least five Members or are tabled by a political group or committee and state the grounds on which they are based.

3. The committee responsible shall deliver its opinion on the texts submitted before they are discussed in Parliament.

4. Parliament shall act by a majority of its current Members and three-fifths of the votes cast.

## **Article 8**

**Community VAT rate**

On the occasion of the adoption of the budget Parliament shall also decide the VAT rate.

## *ANNEX IV*

### *Procedure for the consideration and adoption of decisions on the granting of a discharge*

#### **Article 1**

##### **Documents**

1. The following documents shall be printed and distributed:
  - (a) the revenue and expenditure account, the financial analysis and the balance sheet forward by the Commission;
  - (b) the report of the Court of Auditors, accompanied by the Institutions' answers; and
  - (c) the Council recommendation.
2. These documents shall be referred to the committee responsible. Any committee concerned may deliver an opinion.
3. Where other committees wish to deliver opinions, the President shall set the time limit within which these shall be communicated to the committee responsible.

#### **Article 2**

##### **Consideration of Report**

1. Within the time limits laid down by the Financial Regulation, Parliament shall consider a report from the committee responsible proposing the grant, postponement or refusal of discharge.
2. Parliament's Rules relating to amendments and voting shall apply unless otherwise provided in this annex.

#### **Article 3**

##### **Granting discharge**

1. Where the committee responsible considers it appropriate to propose a favourable decision, it shall draw up a report comprising:
  - (a) a proposal for a decision containing the figures forming the subject of the discharge, thus establishing the final outcome of the budgetary management for the financial year concerned;
  - (b) a motion for a resolution containing the comments accompanying the discharge decision; and
  - (c) an explanatory statement.

Where necessary, the explanatory statement may be delivered orally.

2. The committee responsible shall deliver its opinion on any amendments before they are put to the vote.

3. The proposed decision shall be voted upon before the motion for a resolution. The procedure for granting a discharge shall end with a vote on the motion for a resolution as a whole.

#### **Article 4**

##### **Postponement of discharge**

1. The committee responsible may table a motion for a resolution for postponement of the discharge decision. This motion shall set out the reasons for postponement.

2. Such a motion shall be included on the agenda of the next part-session following its tabling.

#### **Article 5**

##### **Refusal of discharge**

1. The Committee responsible may table a motion for a resolution for a refusal to grant a discharge. This motion shall set out the reasons for the refusal.

2. Such a motion shall be included on the agenda of the next part-session following its tabling and shall be approved only if it obtains the votes of a majority of the current Members of Parliament.

#### **Article 6**

##### **Referral back to committee**

1. If a proposal for a decision pursuant to Article 3 (1) (a) or a motion for a resolution pursuant to Articles 3 (1) (b), 4 (1) or 5 (1) fails to obtain the required majority or if any amendment to the figures contained in the proposal for a decision pursuant to Article 3 (1) (a) is adopted, the matter shall be deemed to have been referred back to the committee responsible, which shall report back to Parliament at the subsequent part-session, taking into account Parliament's vote.

2. Where this would result in Parliament's being unable to grant a discharge within the time limits laid down by the Financial Regulation, the President shall inform the Commission accordingly.

## **Article 7**

### **Implementation of discharge decisions**

1. The President shall forward any decision or resolution of Parliament pursuant to Articles 3, 4 or 5 to the Commission and to each of the other institutions. He shall arrange for their publication in the Official Journal of the European Communities in the series appropriate to acts of a legislative character.

2. The committee responsible shall report to Parliament at least annually on the action taken by the institutions in response to the comments accompanying the discharge decisions.

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**ANNEX V**

**to the**

**Rules of Procedure**

**of the European Parliament**

**(3rd edition — JUNE 1984)**

*Powers and responsibilities of standing committees*



## *ANNEX V (1)*

### *Powers and responsibilities of standing committees*

#### **I. Political Affairs Committee**

This committee is responsible for matters relating to:

- the institutional structures of the Communities and the development of European integration within the framework of the existing Treaties (the Legal Affairs Committee will give an opinion on these matters insofar as they involve the interpretation, application or extension of the provisions of the Treaties governing the internal operation of each institution and relations between the institutions);
- general relations with the other Community institutions or bodies (the Legal Affairs Committee will give an opinion on these matters insofar as they involve the interpretation, application or extension of the provisions of the Treaties governing the internal operation of each institution and relations between the institutions);
- the preparation of a draft uniform electoral procedure (the Legal Affairs Committee will give an opinion on the draft report by the Political Affairs Committee on the draft uniform electoral procedure);
- problems of political union and questions pertaining to cooperation in the sphere of foreign policy;
- political aspects of the seat of the Community institutions;
- political and institutional aspects of accession or association agreements with third countries at the application and negotiation stage; in this context, the delegations for relations with third countries which have applied for accession will cooperate closely with this committee in preparing for and discussing the outcome of their meetings;
- political and institutional aspects of relations with other international organizations and with third countries;
- political aspects of international problems;
- problems concerning human rights in third countries.

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(1) Adopted by resolution of Parliament on 19 May 1983 in accordance with Rule 91.



## **II. Committee on Agriculture**

This committee is generally responsible for all matters relating to Title II, Articles 38 to 47, of the EEC Treaty:

- operation and development of the common agricultural policy;
- establishment, operation and development of a common fisheries policy; and
- veterinary legislation relating to the control and elimination of diseases in domestic animals.

The committee will be required to give its opinion on all matters which, although arising in a different specific field (public health, economic policy, external economic relations, relations with European or other associated countries), may have some bearing on the organization of the Community's agricultural market or on the organization of the market in fisheries products, and on matters pertaining to commercial policy with regard to agricultural and fisheries products.

## **III. Committee on Budgets**

This committee is responsible for matters relating to:

- the definition and exercise of the European Parliament's budgetary powers;
- the budgets of the Communities;
- multiannual estimates of the European Communities' revenue and expenditure;
- financial resources of the Communities (including levies, own resources, Member States' contributions);
- financial implications of Community acts;
- coordination of the conciliation procedure between the Parliament and the Council, with the involvement of the Commission, on Community acts having financial implications;
- matters pertaining to the remuneration of staff of the Communities insofar as they do not have substantial implications for the legal status of officials;
- problems relating to the administrative and accounting management of the Communities which involve budgetary authorization and the Staff Regulations;
- financial and accounting techniques;
- transfers of appropriations which constitute authorization of expenditure;
- Parliament's budget, administration and accounts (Rule 114 of the Rules of Procedure).

*As regards problems relating to the budget of the European Parliament:*

The Bureau and the Committee on Budgets shall take decisions in successive stages on:

- the establishment plan,
- the preliminary draft and the draft estimates.

The decisions concerning the establishment plan shall be taken according to the following procedure:

- the Bureau shall draw up the establishment plan for each financial year,
- it shall ask the Committee on Budgets for its opinion,
- a conciliation procedure between the Bureau and the Committee on Budgets shall be opened in cases where the opinion of the latter diverges from the initial decisions taken by the Bureau,
- at the end of the procedure, the Bureau shall take the final decision, in accordance with Rule 113(3) of the Rules of Procedure.

As regards the estimates proper, the procedure for drawing up the estimates shall begin as soon as the Bureau has taken a final decision on the establishment plan. The stages of this procedure shall be those laid down in Rule 114 of the Rules of Procedure, viz.:

- the Bureau shall draw up a first preliminary draft of the estimates of revenue and expenditure (Rule 114(1));
- the Committee on Budgets shall deliver its opinion on the first preliminary draft estimates (Rule 114(2));
- the enlarged Bureau shall adopt the preliminary draft estimates (Rule 114(2));
- before or after these estimates are adopted, a conciliation procedure shall be opened in cases where the positions of the Committee on Budgets and the Bureau are widely divergent;
- in accordance with Rule 114(3) of the Rules of Procedure, the Committee on Budgets shall draw up the draft estimates and report to Parliament. In accordance with the provisions of the Staff Regulations of Officials and the Financial Regulation, these draft estimates shall set out the establishment plan as finally adopted by the Bureau. Where appropriate, the Committee on Budgets shall set out in its report the observations it made to the Bureau when consulted by the latter. In that case, it shall also set out the answers given by the Bureau to its observations.

As regards the release of posts, the Bureau shall take a final decision, not subject to appeal, after hearing the opinion of the Committee on Budgets and in the light of requirements, both on the release of posts and on the appropriations relating thereto.

In order to express its opinion on any amendments tabled in plenary sitting, either at the stage of the adoption of the estimates by Parliament or at the stage of the consideration of the draft annual budget of the Communities, of which Parliament's estimates form a part, the Committee on Budgets shall establish the appropriate contacts with the Bureau or the member of the Bureau designated by it. This Vice-President may be called upon to explain the position of the Bureau to the House meeting in plenary sitting, either as regards the establishment plan and the appropriations relating thereto, or any other appropriations.

In exercising Parliament's powers of control, which range from budgetary authorization to supervising the implementation of the budget, the Committee on Budgets is required to cooperate closely with the Committee on Budgetary Control.

#### **IV. Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs**

This committee is responsible for matters relating to:

- operation of the common market, more specifically for the application of Articles 9 to 37 of the EEC Treaty relating to the movement of goods, customs duties and quotas and problems arising in this area as a consequence of the Community's enlargement;
- questions of competition, i.e. the application of Articles 85 to 90 of the EEC Treaty (rules on competition, agreements and monopolies), insofar as these are not specific questions falling within the terms of reference of other committees (transport, public health, etc.);
- dumping practices (Article 91 of the EEC Treaty);
- subsidies (Articles 92 to 94 of the EEC Treaty);
- questions of monetary policy, balance of payments, capital movements and borrowing and lending policy (control of movements of capital originating in third countries, measures to encourage the export of Community capital; application of Articles 67 to 73 and 104 to 109 of the EEC Treaty);
- application of Articles 95 to 99 of the EEC Treaty on tax provisions;
- all measures and actions to be taken for the progressive establishment of economic and monetary union (machinery for cooperation and conciliation in short-term economic policy, harmonization of medium-

term planning, industrial policy, short- or medium-term financial support, arrangements for protection and monetary cooperation, etc.);

- problems specific to the common market in coal and steel, particularly questions relating to the stabilization of markets and to prices, agreements and concentrations (Articles 4 and 57 to 67 of the ECSC Treaty);
- forward programmes for coal and steel and the general objectives for coal and steel (Article 46 of the ECSC Treaty);
- medium-term economic policy and, more specifically, the planning and coordination of investments;
- 'tariffs' insofar as they affect the free movement of goods or the short-term economic policy or competition policy;
- the application of new technologies forming an integral part of the industrial policy.

#### **V. Committee on Energy, Research and Technology**

This committee is responsible for matters relating to:

- all questions pertaining to energy supplies and energy policy in general;
- all questions pertaining to fundamental scientific and technological research, and to the development and application of such research insofar as this application does not form an integral part of a separate industrial policy (cf. Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs — final indent);
- the Joint Research Centres and the Central Office for Nuclear Measurements;
- dissemination of information;
- patents (in agreement with the Legal Affairs Committee as the committee responsible);
- industrial property (in agreement with the Legal Affairs Committee as the committee responsible);

#### **VI. Committee on External Economic Relations**

This committee is responsible for matters relating to:

- economic and commercial aspects of relations with third countries and with international organizations such as the OECD and GATT (the

Committee on Agriculture will be required to give its opinion on all matters pertaining to commercial policy with regard to agricultural and fisheries products);

- the common external tariff;
- coordination of Member States' commercial policies and problems associated with the common commercial policy;
- problems of external trade with third countries and agreements or conventions concluded in that sphere;

The delegations will cooperate closely with this committee in preparing for and discussing the outcome of their meetings.

## VII. Legal Affairs Committee

This committee is responsible for matters relating to:

- privileges and immunities;
- legal aspects of the creation, interpretation and application of Community law;
- the law of the sea;
- human rights problems in the Community (the Political Affairs Committee could give an opinion on these matters if it so requests);
- all matters relating to the definition <sup>(1)</sup> of the rights of Community citizens as such and the consolidation of legislation covering these rights (the Political Affairs Committee could give an opinion on these matters if it so requests);
- coordination at Community level of national legislation:
  - (a) in regulations on freedom of establishment and freedom to provide services (Articles 52 to 66 of the EEC Treaty) including problems of company law (in exercising this particular responsibility — and unless the problems are purely legal — the committee will generally consult the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs except in cases where the regulations apply to an area for which a different committee has more specific responsibility);

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(<sup>1</sup>) Pursuant to Parliament's resolution of 16 November 1977 on special rights (OJ No C 299 of 12.12.1977, page 26 et seq), the Political Affairs Committee remains the committee responsible as regards the acquisition of new rights not contained in that resolution.

- (b) in the application of Article 220 of the EEC Treaty (protection of natural and legal persons) and all measures with wider application;
- the Staff Regulations of the Communities (Article 212 EEC Treaty, 186 EAEC Treaty and 78 ECSC Treaty), with the exception of matters pertaining to remuneration, unless they have substantial implications for the legal status of staff;
- submission of actions by Parliament in the Court of Justice;
- action by Parliament on behalf of the plaintiff or defendant in actions before the Court of Justice;
- preparing the opinion of the plenary assembly of Parliament which may be needed on an action brought against Parliament.

Questions concerning the approximation of national legislation (Articles 100 and 101 of the EEC Treaty) will be dealt with in each case by the committee responsible for the subject area of the proposals. However, the Legal Affairs Committee may give its opinion pursuant to Rule 44 of the Rules of Procedure, on proposals within the meaning of Articles 100 and 101 of the EEC Treaty, wherever it considers this necessary.

The committee will also be required to give its opinion on the discussions leading to the finalization of a uniform electoral procedure (the legal aspects thereof).

### **VIII. Committee on Social Affairs and Employment**

This committee is responsible for matters relating to:

- improving living and working conditions;
- employment policy, particularly where it affects young people;
- vocational training, particularly as regards access to the labour market and to retraining in connection with reconversion and occupational mobility;
- activities of the European Social Fund (retraining, readaptation, etc.);
- free movement of workers;
- social security of migrant workers;
- housing policy and low-cost housing schemes;
- promoting cooperation between the Member States in the field of social policy, with particular emphasis on labour law and the approximation of social legislation;

- promotion of a 'European social budget';
- wages, pensions and incomes policy and capital formation;
- equal pay and equal job and vocational training opportunities for men and women;
- paid holidays schemes.

The committee will also be required to give its opinion on matters relating to the rights of migrant workers.

### **IX. Committee on Regional Policy and Regional Planning**

This committee is responsible for matters relating to:

- Community regional policy understood as a structural policy aimed at alignment of the economies, the harmonious development of the EEC and the removal of disparities;
- the special problems of the regions which are disadvantaged either because their economies are predominantly agricultural or because their industrial sectors are in a state of crisis;
- the impact of the other Community policies on the regions involved in regional policy;
- the impact of the enlargement of the European Community on the regional policies of the Member States and of the applicant countries;
- problems related to the management, effectiveness and control of the European Regional Development Fund (in particular its non-quota section) and the other instruments of Community regional policy;
- coordination of Community financial instruments in the field of regional policy;
- the review of regional development programmes in the framework of Member States' regional policy and Community regional policy;
- questions relating to Member States' ability to absorb and their criteria for using regional aid received from the Community;
- problems related to the relationship between national town and country planning forecasts and decisions and Community regional policy;
- relations with local and regional authorities in the spirit of the Treaties.

## **X. Committee on Transport**

This committee is responsible for matters relating to:

- the development of a common transport policy;
- the creation of a European transport network;
- the liberalization of international transport;
- discrimination, harmonization and coordination in the sphere of transport;
- problems involved in transport by air, sea and pipeline;
- the Community's policy on ports;
- possible areas of interference between a common transport policy and its tariffs and the rules on competition or the requirements of social, agricultural, energy or regional policy (see Articles 3(e) and 74 of the EEC Treaty and Article 70 et seq. of the ECSC Treaty);
- postal communications, the installation and operation of telecommunications equipment and the rates charged for its use.

The committee will be required to give its opinion on matters pertaining to the fields of competition, the removal of barriers, the right of establishment and freedom to provide services, where transport policy is directly involved.

## **XI. Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection**

This committee is responsible for matters relating to:

- environment policy and environmental protection measures:
  - pollution of air, earth and water,
  - classification, packing, labelling, transport and use of dangerous substances,
  - fixing new permissible noise levels,
  - treatment and storage of waste (including recycling),
  - international and regional measures and agreements aimed at protecting the environment (for example, the Rhine, the Mediterranean),
  - protecting fauna and its habitat,
  - giving opinions on energy and research programmes affecting the environment;
- environmental aspects of the Law of the Sea;



- public health and safety at work:
  - checks on foodstuffs,
  - programmes in the field of health education (with the emphasis on preventive action in respect of tobacco, the use of drugs, cardiovascular illnesses, dietary products),
  - veterinary legislation concerning protection against dangers to human health arising from bacteria and residues in animal products, health controls for products (meat, milk, etc.) and production systems (slaughterhouses, dairies, etc.),
  - pharmaceutical products, including veterinary products,
  - cosmetic products,
  - medical research programmes,
  - protection of employees at work;
  
- consumer protection:
 

problems concerning the implementation of the legislation proposed in the two action programmes, viz:

  - protection of consumers against risks to health and safety,
  - protection of consumers' economic interests,
  - improvement of legal protection for consumers (assistance, advice and legal redress),
  - improvement of consumer information and education,
  - appropriate consultation and representation of consumers during the preparatory phase of decisions affecting their interests.

## **XII. Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport**

This committee is responsible for matters relating to:

- the activities of the European Youth Forum;
- youth exchanges, including the exchange of young workers, and other measures designed to promote the involvement of young people in the development of the European Community;
- proposals relating to the establishment of a cultural Community;
- the policy designed to preserve and restore the cultural heritage and safeguard natural areas in cooperation with the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection;
- the cultural education policy;
- the European Foundation;

- education programmes, harmonization of syllabuses and mutual recognition of diplomas;
- the development of the European University and cooperation between institutions of higher education;
- promoting the system of European Schools;
- continuing education for adults and home-study courses;
- questions pertaining to the information of the general public on the activities of the European Communities <sup>(1)</sup>;
- questions relating to information and the media;
- questions pertaining to the development of policy on sports;
- tourism;
- leisure.

The committee will be required to give its opinion on problems associated with the youth employment policy and vocational training.

### **XIII. Committee on Development and Cooperation**

This committee is responsible for examining and monitoring the policy of the Community on development with particular reference to:

- the North-South dialogue;
- emergency aid and food aid;
- technical, financial and educational cooperation;
- the generalized system of preferences;
- industrial, agricultural and rural development.

This committee is also responsible for matters pertaining to:

- the application of the ACP-EEC Convention;
- the application of the cooperation agreements with the Maghreb and Mashreq countries;

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<sup>(1)</sup> It goes without saying, however, that with regard to regular information on the activities of the European Parliament and its bodies and the directives issued to this end to the information services of the Secretariat, powers and responsibilities shall be laid down by the Bureau as part of the organization it determines in accordance with Rule 113(2) of the Rules of Procedure.

- relations with certain developing countries or groups of developing countries with which the Community has concluded cooperation or association agreements <sup>(1)</sup>;
- financial and technical cooperation with the developing countries;
- relations with international organizations which specialize in development and cooperation.

#### **XIV. Committee on Budgetary Control**

This committee is responsible for matters relating to:

- the control of financial and budgetary measures aimed at implementing Community policies, monitoring the use of appropriations entered in the budget of the Community institutions (including the EAGGF, the Social Fund, the ERDF, the EDF), where necessary in cooperation with the committees concerned;
- discharge in respect of the implementation of the Community budgets pursuant to the provisions of the Treaty; the Financial Regulations and current practice; relations, via the President of the European Parliament, with the Court of Auditors, which is responsible for assisting Parliament in exercising its powers of control over the accounts and the financial management of institutions. As regards the European Parliament, the President shall submit to the Bureau and to the Committee on Budgetary Control the statement of accounts and the answers given to the observations of the Court of Auditors;
- measures adopted by the institutions following Parliament's decisions to give a discharge;
- monitoring the implementation of the budget, particularly on the basis of the institutions' quarterly reports, and examining and monitoring commitments, transfers and the use of appropriations during the year;
- transfers of appropriations in implementation of the budget (pursuant to the agreement with the Committee on Budgets);
- the Communities' financial balance sheets;
- control of the ECSC's financial and administrative operations;

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<sup>(1)</sup> Jointly with the Committee on External Economic Relations

- monitoring the measures taken by the EIB on the basis of a mandate or a transfer of powers from the Commission for the purpose of implementing Community policies;
- financial control of the bodies of the European Parliament, closure of accounts, discharge for the implementation of its budget and the decisions taken in this connection (legality and regularity of expenditure, effectiveness and appropriateness of budgetary management). In this context the committee would prepare the discharge decision for Parliament (Rule 114 of the Rules of Procedure);
- relations, via the President, with the Court of Auditors and the national audit bodies;
- the application of Rule 51 of the Rules of Procedure concerning the appointment of Members of the Court of Auditors.

In exercising Parliament's powers of control, which range from budgetary authorization to supervising the implementation of the budget, the Committee on Budgetary Control is required to cooperate closely with the Committee on Budgets and with the President and the Bureau of the European Parliament when exercising the functions conferred on them by the Rules of Procedure, especially Rule 113(3), Rule 115, Rule 4 and Rule 18(4).

#### **XV. Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions**

This committee is responsible for matters relating to:

- the European Parliament's Rules of Procedure
  - the formulation of the Rules of Procedure, including Annexes thereto,
  - the examination of and reporting on proposed amendments to the Rules tabled under Rule 112
  - the interpretation of the Rules of Procedure pursuant to Rules 86 and 111
- the examination of petitions and action thereon.

#### **XVI. Committee on the Verification of Credentials**

This committee is responsible for applying the provisions of Rule 6 and Rule 7(7) of the Rules of Procedure:

- verifying the credentials of newly elected Members;
- ruling on any disputes that may arise.

## **XVII. Committee on Institutional Affairs**

The task of this committee shall be to draft proposals — and in particular to prepare a preliminary draft Treaty — with a view to the creation of the European Union.

*(See para. 2(a) of the decision of 9 July 1981 — OJ C 234, 14.9.1981, p. 52 — and para. 12 of the resolution of 6 July 1982 — OJ C 238, 13.9.1982, p. 28).*