



## Info

# Improving the public perception and efficiency of the work of the European Parliament - mandate for a working group on reform of the Parliament

**The European Parliament's Conference of Presidents (leaders of each of the political groups) unanimously agreed on Thursday a mandate for a special working group on parliamentary reform. At the meeting, Parliament's President Hans-Gert Poettering presented to the group leaders his own reform proposals which formed the basis of the decision.**

President Poettering said:

"The Conference of Presidents has laid out an ambitious programme for reform of the Parliament with the aim of improving the public image of our work and making it more efficient.

Parliament is the institution which represents the European citizen and which has a decisive influence when handling large complex dossiers. The example of the Services Directive showed that Parliament is in fact in a better position than the other institutions to influence the shaping of consensus, and thereby allow the Union to act. For this reason it is critical that we reflect on how to improve our own working practices."

On proposal of Mr Poettering, Dagmar Roth-Behrendt MEP will chair the Working Group. It will concentrate principally on the work of the committees and the plenary sessions. In particular, there is a need to improve their efficiency and the public perception. Connected to this is the question of how to guarantee multilingualism as well as the responsibility of the Commission and Council towards Parliament.

The working group will deal with the following matters:

Parliamentary Committees:

- Examination of the working practices of committees, with focus on the codecision procedure, "Better Regulation", comitology, impact assessment, transposition into national law and implementation, simplification, programming, conciliation;
- Examination of the structure and mandate (duration, responsibilities) and composition;
- Improving coordination between committees and delegations.

Plenary Sessions:

- Making sessions more lively and interesting;
- More efficient handling of amendments in plenary;
- Annual debate on Parliament's priorities after preparation by the Conference of Presidents and accompanied by a communications strategy;
- Introduction of a "State of the Union" debate;
- Measures to increase the obligation of the Commission and Council to be accountable before Parliament;
- Measures to increase the presence of members during important sessions;
- Strengthening of public and media interest in parliamentary debates and decisions.

#### Calendar, working methods, multilingualism:

- A more satisfactory carrying out of the work of committees, groups and the plenary;
- More optimal planning of meetings with a view to a better use of the available resources, in particular interpretation;
- Review of the current practice of renewing the senior positions in Parliament halfway through the legislature.

#### Interinstitutional Relations:

- Review of the effectiveness of the framework agreement with the Commission, of Parliament's role as co-legislator and joint budgetary authority as well as the structure and organisation of relations with the Council.

The Working Group will also make proposals before the summer on the upgrading of the Subcommittees on Human Rights and Security & Defence into full committees. The working group can also deal with subjects that are not laid down in its mandate.

The working group will be composed of one personal representative of each group leader. A first interim report with budgetary proposals for the 2008 Budget will be presented by September 2007, the final report by June 2008 at the latest. This will be followed by consultations with the relevant EP bodies for their views and a putting into practice before the 2009 European elections. The group will report regularly to the Conference of Presidents and the Bureau in relation to questions which fall within their remit. The group constitutes a consultative body and its creation does not affect the Rules of Procedure.

#### Contact :

##### **Katrin Ruhrmann**

Spokesperson for the President of Parliament

Tel.: +32 475 49 33 57