

# EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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## **MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION**

further to the Commission statement

pursuant to Rule 37(2) of the Rules of Procedure

by Bart Staes and Heide Rühle

on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group

on Eurostat

**European Parliament resolution on Eurostat**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the Casaca report, the Bösch report and the Bayona draft report,
  - having regard to Rule 37(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
1. Considers that the Eurostat affair has highlighted the need to amend the Financial Regulation to the effect that the Commission is automatically required to request a full account of the ownership of a firm tendering for a Commission contract, and that the contractor has a corresponding obligation to give a full account of its ownership; further stresses that a contractor which refuses to provide information about its ownership should automatically be excluded from tendering for the contract;
  2. Draws attention to the fact that the examination of the problems at Eurostat shows that there need to be safeguards against concealment of critical information;
  3. Notes that the financial management and control structures now comprise the following key organisational elements:
    - (a) the Directors-General as delegated authorising officers;
    - (b) the Internal Audit Service;
    - (c) the Audit Progress Committee;
    - (d) the Internal Audit Capabilities (DG level);
    - (e) the Accounting Officer; and
    - (f) the Central Financial Service in DG Budget;
  4. Takes the view that the Eurostat case has pointed up the need to review the relations between these different actors and between the individual Commissioners and the College of Commissioners, as well as the functioning of the accountability chain, in order to ensure progress not only in the area of financial management but also in the governance structure of the Commission;
  5. Stresses the political importance that it ascribes to the statements made and conclusions drawn under the heading 'Eurostat' in its resolution of 29 January 2004;
  6. Regrets the fact that, in the wake of the Eurostat affair, the Commission lacked the determination and strength to overcome the resistance within its administration and make the necessary revisions to its policy of decentralising responsibility for financial management; notes that, in the absence of independent and effective balancing checks,

this decentralisation will pose serious risks to the Community's financial interests;

7. Notes that Commissioner Solbes forwarded the Eurostat action plan for 2004 to the chair of the Committee on Budgetary Control on 21 January 2004; takes the view that an independent administrative and management audit of the new Eurostat structure should be carried out once OLAF's investigations are complete;
8. Points out that the President of the Commission announced on 18 November 2003 that legislative proposals would be forthcoming which could be adopted by Parliament and the Council before the European elections, thereby helping to restore public confidence, which was destroyed by the Eurostat affair;
9. Takes note of the actions taken so far to remedy the situation in this Commission department; welcomes in particular
  - the thorough revision of all existing contracts with and subsidies to outside bodies and the cancellation of all automatic contract renewals
  - the complete revision of existing relations between Eurostat and national statistical offices, including grants that were not properly analysed over several years
  - the drastic reduction in the number of publications
  - the internalisation policy, meaning that statistical work will again be executed in-house, as recommended by the IAC-Eurostat reports and demanded in Parliament's above-mentioned 2001 discharge resolution;
10. Notes that the EP will continue to monitor these reforms in order to ensure full transparency and accountability in respect of the finances of the EU;
11. Instructs its President to forward this report to the Commission.