

ORAL QUESTION O-0070/99

pursuant to Rule 42 of the Rules of Procedure

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to the Council

Subject: Public accountability of the European Investment Bank

At the ECOFIN meeting of 8 October 1999, the EIB was directed to open its doors to the Anti-Fraud Office, OLAF. Article 4(1) of Regulation (CE) 1073/1999¹ of the European Parliament and of the Council calls on each institution, body, office and agency to adopt a decision to allow OLAF to conduct internal investigations. However, the minutes of the EIB Management Committee show that OLAF would not have access to the EIB and would only receive a report by the head of the Bank's Internal Audit Unit. The Treaty of Amsterdam does not prohibit the EIB from agreeing to an external audit by the Court of Auditors. Such a report would help OLAF and the COCOBU in assessing the Bank's efficiency and public accountability. Such Parliamentary scrutiny is expected by the people and taxpayers of Europe. Can you give an assurance that the Council will instruct the EIB to allow the COCOBU, the Court of Auditors and OLAF to have direct access to all its operations, including the treasury, in cases of fraud, mismanagement and cover up?

Tabled: 02.12.1999

Forwarded: 03.12.1999

Deadline for reply: 24.12.1999

¹ OJ L 136, 31.5.1999, p.1.