

European Parliament Resolution on the 'Prodi Commission' (15 September 1999)


Caption: European Parliament Resolution of 15 September 1999 on the 'Prodi Commission'.

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European Parliament Resolution on the “Prodi Commission” (15 September 1999)

B5-0065, 0066, 0068 and 0075/1999

The European Parliament,

— having regard to its resolution of 5 May 1999 ¹ stating its approval of the nomination of Mr Prodi as President of the Commission for the remainder of the Santer-term,

— having regard to the statements made to Parliament by the nominee for President of the Commission in May and July 1999,

— having regard to the written and oral statements made by each of the nominee Commissioners in the context of their hearings by Parliament’s committees, and the assessments of these candidates as presented by the committees’ chairpersons following the hearings,

— having regard to the statement made by the nominee for President of the Commission before the Conference of Presidents on 7 September 1999, confirming that the Prodi Commission:

(a) will ensure, as a general rule, that the Commissioner responsible is present whenever requested by Parliament either at plenary sittings or committee meetings for agenda items falling under his or her responsibility and is ready to respond substantively on important Commission proposals,

(b) will take the utmost account of any requests made pursuant to Article 192 of the EC Treaty by Parliament to the Commission to submit legislative proposals, and undertakes to provide a prompt and sufficiently detailed response to any such request within the relevant parliamentary committee and, if necessary, at a plenary sitting of Parliament,

(c) accepts that, where Parliament expresses lack of confidence in a Member of the Commission (subject to the substantive and representative nature of the political support for such a view), the President of the Commission will examine seriously whether he should request that Member to resign,

(d) attaches particular importance to constructive dialogue with Parliament in the process of administrative reform of the Commission, and will ensure that appropriate mechanisms are established to consult and inform Parliament on a regular basis on progress in this field,

(e) is committed to a substantial agenda of institutional reform, over and above the three issues already identified, in the next Intergovernmental Conference, which is seen as an essential pre-requisite to enlargement, and also intends, within the Commission’s possibilities, to ensure that Parliament is kept informed and is fully associated with the preparation and the conduct of the IGC,

— *having regard to Article 214 of the EC Treaty,*

— **having regard to Rules 32 and 33 of its Rules of Procedure,**

1. Calls on the Commission to undertake, in cooperation with Parliament, to operate more citizen-friendly policies, given that interinstitutional relations are merely one of the elements in a global approach to European integration;

2. Calls on the Commission to submit, as soon as possible, its political programme containing all its

proposed guidelines for the period up to the end of 2004, and to establish a dialogue with Parliament;

3. Urges the nominee for President to commit the Commission to exploring jointly with Parliament the question of individual responsibility of Commissioners in the IGC;
4. Asks the Commission to begin consultations with Parliament, before the Helsinki European Council, on the content of the Treaty revision, and considers that it needs to ensure that Parliament is directly involved in preparing and deciding on revision of the Treaty;
5. Welcomes the substantive dialogue which has been started between the nominee Commission and Parliament and wishes to see this dialogue continued during the full term of this Parliament and Commission;
6. Calls for the early establishment of an Interinstitutional Agreement between the Commission and Parliament as a framework for a new Code of Conduct, starting from the commitments entered into for the Prodi Commission by the nominee for President on 7 September 1999;
7. Requests that in addition the following be included in such an agreement:
 - (a) where a serious criminal charge, especially one involving corruption, is brought against a Member of the Commission, involving the Member concerned in a court case, the Member will be suspended from office immediately and consideration will be given to his/her resignation;
 - (b) the Commission, when giving its opinion on Parliament's legislative amendments to the Council under Article 251 of the EC Treaty, shall as a general rule support those amendments which have secured a broad consensus in Parliament; exceptions shall be duly justified;
 - (c) the presence of Commissioners at plenary sittings or committee meetings shall also allow for early and full briefing and consultation of Parliament, within the Commission's possibilities, on the preparation, conduct and conclusion of international negotiations, and in particular the Millennium Round ; the Commission shall make full use of its power of initiative and improve consultation of Parliament in the fields of the CFSP and the third pillar;
 - (d) Parliament has access, without undue delay, to all documents from the Commission, in particular all documents relating to the legislative process and all documents relating to the discharge procedure (Article 276 of the EC Treaty). A clear definition is necessary for those documents which Parliament would not have an automatic right to see; internal documents on fraud will be at the disposal of the chairman of the Budgetary Control Committee on request;
 - (e) the Commission shall adopt regulations to protect officials who pass on information which was wrongfully concealed from those entitled to it by the direct or indirect hierarchical authority;
 - (f) the President of the Commission shall notify Parliament of any decision concerning the allocation of responsibilities to any of the Members of the Commission on a request from Parliament or on the Commission's own initiative;
 - (g) the codes of conduct for Commissioners and in particular for high-level officials must be sent to the Parliament for its views to be taken into account before being implemented;
 - (h) Commission decisions are announced in Parliament or at a meeting of the Conference of Presidents

immediately after the Commission's meeting; specific provision will be made for confidential information;

8. Will establish, through its appropriate committee, the urgently needed procedure for Parliament to express its lack of confidence in a particular Commissioner and to request the President of the Commission to call on that Commissioner to resign;

9. Demands that, on the basis of Article 255 of the EC Treaty, the Commission present swiftly a proposal for a Decision on public access to documents;

10. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission and the Council.

1. Minutes of that sitting, Part II, Item 1.