

**Answer given by Mr Santer on behalf of the Commission***(22 April 1998)*

The Commission would inform the Honourable Member that points 4 to 6 of the judgment of the Court of First Instance of 6 February 1998 (Case T-124/96) are a very clear explanation of the system of access to documents introduced by the Commission in 1994.

The Commission adopted Decision 94/90/ECSC, EC, Euratom on public access to Commission documents on 8 February 1994 <sup>(1)</sup>. This decision, which establishes a code of conduct agreed jointly with the Council on 6 December 1993, lays down the principle that the public should have the widest possible access to the institutions' internal documents. Access will be refused only where disclosure of a document might endanger public or private interests or threaten the confidentiality of the institution's proceedings.

The Commission would point out to the Honourable Member that its commitment to transparency is borne out by the statistics: in 1997 only 10% of requests were refused on the grounds of one of the exceptions provided for in the code of conduct.

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<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 46, 18.2.1994.

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(98/C 310/199)

**WRITTEN QUESTION E-0898/98****by Daniela Raschhofer (NI) to the Commission***(26 March 1998)*

*Subject:* Permanent Representations of the European Union

In filling the posts for the Task Force on enlargement to the east, the question of appointing the heads of the Permanent Representations in the applicant countries has also been under discussion.

1. Have these positions already been filled?
2. What criteria were applied in making the appointments?
3. Has the Austrian Federal Government displayed any particular ambitions for any of these posts?
4. Will the Permanent Representations remain if one or other of these countries is not admitted to the EU?
5. Are there Permanent Representations in Norway, Switzerland and Turkey?

**Answer given by Mr Van den Broek on behalf of the Commission***(22 April 1998)*

1. The posts of head of delegation in the candidate countries are, with one exception, filled.
  2. The posts are filled by the Commission in the same way as all middle management posts. Attention is given to the particular nature of the role of the Commission's external service.
  3. The post of head of delegation in Slovakia is reserved for an Austrian national.
  4. Yes.
  5. The Commission is represented in Norway and Turkey but not in Switzerland, as the Commission's delegation in Geneva is accredited not to the Swiss government but to the international organisations there.
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