

**Codenamed “70-70a”: Explaining institutional change in the European Parliament:
The 2012 reform on trilogue negotiations**

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Lauréate d'une bourse du MAEDI

Abstract

The 2012 intra-institutional reform represents a turning point in the regulation of trilogue practices within the European Parliament. While previous reforms were limited to non-binding orientations, the Parliament, for the first time, introduced detailed and stringent rules in the binding part of its internal Rules of Procedure. For the first time, the Conference of Presidents explicitly mandated the parliamentary committee in charge of constitutional affairs (AFCO) to significantly revise the Rules of Procedure.

The contribution of this thesis is threefold. Firstly, it gives attention to intra-institutional dynamic and institutional change in the European Parliament. More specifically, the last intra-institutional reform on trilogues was never systematically analysed. What is more, this thesis challenges some assumptions to be found in the literature, according to which the involvement of large political groups in reforming intra-institutional rules on trilogues is unlikely. On the contrary, the analysis could show that large political groups played a key role in initiating the reform, as some of their members were facing the same frustration and disempowerment as small group members.

At the heart of the reform is of course the question of transparency. Building upon the findings of this thesis, it is however argued that a distinction should be made between transparency *within* the Parliament and transparency *for the wider public*. The 2012 reform reintroduced some transparency in the trilogue procedure, in particular for members of the Parliament not taking part in the negotiations. It remains however doubtful whether transparency for the wider public was actually increased.