Proposal to amend the Treaty provisions concerning the composition of the European Parliament

2007/2169(INL) - 02/10/2007

The Constitutional Affairs Committee adopted by 17 votes to 5, with 3 abstentions, a report drawn up by Alain LAMASSOURE (EPP-ED, FR) and Adrian SEVERIN (PES, RO) on the composition of the European Parliament.

The report proposes to divide the seats of the next Parliament on the basis of 750 members. The number of representatives in the European Parliament elected in each Member State will be allocated as follows, with effect from the 2009-2014 legislature :

- Germany: 96
- France : 74
- United Kingdom : 73
- Italy : 72
- Spain: 54
- Poland : 51
- Romania : 33
- Netherlands : 26
- Greece : 22
- Portugal : 22
- Belgium : 22
- Czech Republic : 22
- Hungary : 22
- Sweden : 20
- Austria : 19
- Bulgaria : 18
- Denmark : 13
- Slovakia : 13
- Finland : 13
- Ireland : 12
- Lithuania : 12
- Latvia : 9
- Slovenia : 8
- Estonia : 6
- Cyprus : 6
- Luxembourg : 6
- Malta : 6

This division conforms to the rules established by the European Council of June 2007 which had invited the European Parliament to submit a draft initiative by October 2007. The Council had specified that there would be an overall limit of 750 seats, with a maximum of 96 and a minimum of 6 per Member State, and the composition must be based on the principle of 'degressive proportionality',

The Committee considered that the principle of degressive proportionality meant that "the ratio between the population and the number of seats of each Member State must vary in relation to their respective

populations in such a way that each Member from a more populous Member State represents more citizens than each Member from a less populous Member State and conversely, but also that no less populous Member State has more seats than a more populous Member State".

Members drew attention to the political link between the new composition of Parliament on the basis of the principle of degressive proportionality', and the global reforms affecting the European institutions, particularly the principle of double majority in the Council and the composition of the European Commission and underlined the importance of ensuring that the reforms were coherent.

The Committee asked that the division of seats be revised sufficiently before the legislature of 2014-2019 so as to allow the re-allocation of seats between Member States in good time and in an objective manner, based on the principle of degressive proportionality, and taking account of the future increase of its number as well as demographic changes.

Parliament considered it best at this point, not to consider the impact of any future accessions which could lead to an increase in the 750 limit, as took place at the time of the accession of Bulgaria and Romania to the EU.