EP Rules of Procedure, Rule 29: formation of political groups

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The Committee on Constitutional Affairs adopted a report drafted by Richard **CORBETT** (PES, UK) on the amendment of Rule 29 of the Parliament’s Rules of Procedure (formation of political groups).

At present, a group can be formed by a minimum of 20 Members (or 2.5% of EP's membership), who also represent at least one-fifth of the Member States (i.e. at least 6 countries). The rapporteur proposed an amendment to Parliament's rules of procedure to raise the threshold to 30 MEPs (4% of total membership), representing at least one quarter of the Member States (i.e. 7). However, this amendment was rejected by a majority of one vote, with 15 against and 14 in favour.

On the other hand, an amendment was approved to introduce new rules on the possibility for a political group to continue to exist if it falls below the required threshold, under certain conditions. This amendment stipulates that where a group falls below the required threshold, the President, with the agreement of the Conference of Presidents, may allow it to continue to exist until Parliament's next constitutive sitting, provided the following conditions are met: a) the members continue to represent at least one-fifth of the Member States; b) the group has been in existence for a period longer than one year.

The President shall not apply this derogation where there is sufficient evidence to suspect that it is being abused.