Election of the members of the European Parliament by direct universal suffrage: reform

2015/0907(APP) - 14/06/2018 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to make amendments to the Act concerning the election of the Members of the European Parliament by direct universal suffrage (electoral act).

PROPOSED ACT: Council Decision.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: Council may adopt the act only if Parliament has given its consent to the act.

CONTENT: the Council proposes to amend the 1976 Electoral Act which lays down a number of common rules concerning elections to the European Parliament (EP).

The main change concerns the introduction of an **obligatory minimum threshold of between 2% and 5% for constituencies with more than 35 seats in the EP elections**. This rule would also apply to single-constituency member states.

Member States shall:

- allow for the display, on ballot papers, of the name or logo of the European political party to which the national political party or individual candidate is affiliate;
- provide for the possibilities of advance voting, postal voting, and electronic and internet voting, in elections to the European Parliament while ensuring in particular the reliability of the result, the secrecy of the vote, and the protection of personal data;
- take the measures necessary to allow those of their citizens residing in third countries to vote in elections to the European Parliament.

Member States shall also be required to take measures necessary to ensure that double voting in elections to the European Parliament is subject to effective, proportionate and dissuasive penalties. They shall designate a contact authority responsible for exchanging data on voters and candidates with its counterparts in the other Member States.