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

2015/0907(APP) - 13/07/2018 - Final act

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

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Council Decision (EU, Euratom) 2018/994 amending the Act concerning the election of the members of the European Parliament by direct universal suffrage, annexed to Council Decision 76/787/ECSC, EEC, Euratom of 20 September 1976.

CONTENT: the Council adopted a series of amendments to the 1976 electoral act which lays down a number of common rules concerning the elections to the European Parliament.

The main changes concern:

- the introduction of a **mandatory minimum threshold, between 2 and 5%, for constituencies with more than 35 seats** for elections to the European Parliament. This rule will also apply to Member States constituting a single constituency;
- the establishment of a minimum deadline for the establishment of electoral lists (at least three weeks before the date fixed by the relevant Member State for the holding the elections to the European Parliament);
- the possibility for Member States to 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 affiliated;
- the possibility of voting more easily in the European elections, thanks to the introduction of **electronic voting and postal voting**;
- the introduction of measures against double voting;
- the possibility for Member States to take the necessary measures to allow those of their citizens residing in third countries to vote in elections to the European Parliament;
- the designation in each Member State of a contact authority responsible for exchanging data on voters and candidates with its counterparts in other Member States.

This Decision shall be subject to approval by the Member States in accordance with their respective constitutional requirements. Member States shall notify the General Secretariat of the Council of the completion of the procedures necessary for that purpose.

This Decision shall enter into force on the first day after the last notification has been received.