European political parties – report 2021

2021/2018(INI) - 11/11/2021 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 428 votes to 92, with 49 abstentions, a resolution on the application of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1141/2014 on the statute and financing of European political parties and foundations.

Evaluation of the application of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1141/2014

Members acknowledged that the regulation has **improved the status of European political parties** and foundations compared to the previous legal framework, in particular by recognising that these entities have Union legal personality and by setting up the independent Authority.

However, the resolution noted that a number of administrative and political obstacles still prevent European political parties and foundations from fully exploiting their potential as active and visible actors in European democracy, both at European level and in the EU Member States.

Parliament therefore proposed to **further harmonise and strengthen the rules** governing European political parties and European political foundations in order to ensure a comprehensive European legal framework for them, addressing in particular the requirements for registration, structure and operations, visibility and transparency, and sanctions.

The funding of European political parties and European political foundations should be transparent and should not be abused or support political programmes and activities incompatible with the founding principles of the Union. In this respect, the Regulation should be amended to clarify that **respect for the fundamental values of the Union** should apply both to the European political party itself and to its member parties.

Proposals for improvement

Parliament proposed to establish a genuine legal status and legal personality for European political parties and European political foundations at EU level by laying down minimum conditions for the structure and functioning of European political parties and European political foundations, while making them more independent from national law.

In particular, the resolution suggested the following improvements:

- review the Regulation with a view to updating the rules on **registration**, financing, political and electoral campaigning and membership in order to make European political parties the mouthpiece for citizens in EU politics and policymaking and to bring EU citizens closer to EU decision-making;

- provide clear requirements and detailed guidelines on the visibility of the affiliated European political party to ensure the application of the Regulation on displaying **European political party logos** alongside the logos of national or regional parties;

- draft explicit provisions on activities with larger international organisations and partners outside the EU, as well as detailed rules on personnel and meeting costs, including ceilings and tendering procedures;

- lift the ban on financing **referendum campaigns** to allow European political parties to finance referendum campaigns related to the implementation of the EU Treaty or the TFEU;

- create other categories of revenue to cover other sources of income than just contributions and donations, including the creation of a new category on '**other own resources**', which would include contributions from joint activities, sales of publications, fees for participation in conferences or workshops, or other economic activities directly linked to political action;

- lower the own resources requirement for political parties to **5% instead of 10%** in order to align it with the rate applicable to foundations;

- subject the expenditure of European political parties not only to a system of internal auditing and to the judgement of their members, but also to an **external auditor**, public authorities and public oversight;

- **strengthen the transparency of funding** by creating an obligation for the European Parliament to publish in an easily accessible way the annual financial statements it receives;

- strengthen the Authority's control over all declared donations over EUR 3 000;

- make the rules on the funding of European political parties and their foundations compatible with a pan-European constituency campaign in the European elections.