

Proposals of the European Parliament for the amendment of the Treaties

2022/2051(INL) - 22/11/2023 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 291 votes to 274, with 44 abstentions, a resolution on proposals of the European Parliament for the amendment of the Treaties.

Members believe that the revision of the Treaties is necessary in the interests of all EU citizens, as it aims to reshape the Union so as to increase its capacity to act, as well as its democratic legitimacy and accountability. It should enable the Union to respond more effectively to geopolitical challenges.

The Union's institutional framework and, in particular, its decision-making process, notably within the Council, is barely adequate for a Union of 27 Member States. The prospect of future enlargements makes a reform of the Treaties inevitable.

The Conference on the Future of Europe has completed its work and presented its conclusions. The conclusions contain 49 proposals and 326 measures, many of which can only be implemented once the Treaties have been revised.

Parliament reiterated its call for the **amendment of the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union**. It called on the Council to submit to the European Council, immediately and without deliberation, the proposals set out in its resolution.

It asked the European Council to **convene a Convention as soon as possible** in accordance with the ordinary revision procedure laid down in Article 48(2) to (5) of the Treaty on European Union.

The proposed amendments to the Treaties concern the following issues:

Institutional Reforms

- **reform decision-making** in the Union to more accurately reflect a bicameral system by further empowering the European Parliament;
- strengthen the Union's capacity to act by considerably increasing the number of areas where actions are decided by **qualified majority voting** (QMV) and through the ordinary legislative procedure (OLP);
- enable Parliament to gain the **right of initiative** for legislation, in particular the right to introduce, amend, or repeal Union law, and to become a co-legislator for the adoption of the multiannual financial framework;
- enable the Commission President (renamed the European Executive) to choose its members based on political preferences, whilst ensuring geographic and demographic balance;
- fix the size of the Executive to no more than 15 members whereby members are chosen from among the nationals of the Member States on the basis of a system of strictly equal rotation as already provided for in the current Treaties while undersecretaries are appointed among nationals of those Member States that have no national represented in the College;

- increase the transparency of the Council of the European Union by requiring it to publish those of its positions which form part of the normal legislative process, and to organise a public debate on the Council's positions;
- ensure the composition of the European Parliament become Parliament's competence subject to the Council's consent;
- strengthen instruments for citizens' participation in the EU decision-making process within the framework of representative democracy.

Competences

- establish **exclusive Union competence** for the environment and biodiversity as well as negotiations on climate change;
- establish **shared competences** on public health matters and the protection and improvement of human health, especially cross-border health threats, civil protection, industry, and education especially when transnational issues such as mutual recognition of degrees, grades, competences and qualifications are concerned;
- further develop Union shared competences in the areas of energy, foreign affairs, external security and defence, external border policy in the area of freedom, security and justice, and cross-border infrastructure.

Subsidiarity

- extend the deadline for "yellow card" procedures to 12 weeks;
- a "green card mechanism" for legislative proposals by national or regional parliaments with legislative powers be introduced in order to make Union law more responsive to local needs.

Rule of Law

- strengthen and reform the procedure in Article 7 TEU with regard to the protection of the rule of law by ending unanimity, introducing a clear timeframe, and by making the Court of Justice the arbiter of violations;
- empower Parliament to bring cases of non-compliance with the Treaties before the Court of Justice of the European Union.

Foreign, Security and Defence Policy

- decisions on sanctions, interim steps in the enlargement process and other foreign policy decisions to be taken by QMV;
- establish a defence union including military units, a permanent rapid deployment capacity, under the operational command of the Union;
- joint procurement and the development of armaments should be financed by the Union through a dedicated budget under parliamentary co-decision and scrutiny.

Parliament also recommended:

- the development of common objectives and standards for education that promotes democratic values and the rule of law, as well as digital and economic literacy;
- the promotion of democratic values, good governance, human rights and sustainability, as well as foreign investment, investment protection and economic security should be included in the scope of the common commercial policy;
- expanding non-discrimination protections to gender, social origin, language, political opinion and membership of a national minority;
- adding climate protection and biodiversity to the EU's sustainable development objectives;
- the creation of an integrated European Energy Union;
- common standards for long-term visas and residence permits, to prevent the sale and abuse of citizenship and residence, and the strengthening of the Union's common immigration policy;
- the establishment by the EU of common indicators for health systems.