European Union regulatory fitness and subsidiarity and proportionality – report on Better Law-Making covering 2023 and 2024

2025/2015(INI) - 10/03/2026 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 493 votes to 92, with 44 abstentions, a resolution on the European Union regulatory fitness and subsidiarity and proportionality - report on Better Law-Making covering 2023 and 2024.

Subsidiarity and proportionality

Parliament reiterated that improving legislation depends on **the interinstitutional balance** between co-legislators and a shared commitment to **sincere and transparent cooperation** throughout the legislative cycle, and that any intention by the Commission to withdraw pending legislative acts must be duly reasoned and justified. Furthermore, it cautioned against using the legislative processes specifically provided for **emergency situations** under Article 122 of the TFEU beyond specific situations requiring swift responses to unfolding crises.

Members considered that evaluations, impact assessments and stakeholder consultations are key pillars of an efficient, responsible and democratic regulatory process.

Parliament welcomed the fact that in 2024, the Commission had significantly improved the way in which the **opinions of national parliaments**, as well as its responses to those opinions, are made public. It called for national parliaments to be involved in an early, structured, and constructive manner in the EU policymaking cycle and for them to have timely access to draft initiatives, background analyses, and impact assessments. It called for enhanced cooperation with national parliaments through structured digital dialogue platforms and suggested the establishment of a **structured "green card" mechanism** that would allow for collective suggestions regarding Commission initiatives.

Situations still vary considerably regarding the timely transposition of directives and the implementation of EU law. Members advocated for greater support for Member States in strengthening their **administrative and technical capacities** in this regard and called on the Commission to ensure resolute enforcement where cooperation fails. They encouraged initiatives that promote the constructive participation of civil society and businesses in policymaking.

Better legislation

The resolution underlined that, despite progress made under the Better Regulation Agenda, EU legislation still generates a significant administrative burden. **Improvements** can therefore be made to make the EU legislative process more transparent, more responsive to the input of relevant stakeholders, and easier to monitor and implement. Furthermore, legal certainty, accessibility, and predictability of legislation are fundamental requirements of the rule of law.

Regretting that the Commission is carrying out fewer **impact assessments**, Members suggested significantly improving the quality of impact assessments and increasing their use. They advocated subjecting all legislative proposals to appropriate, independent, and transparent impact assessments and conducting adequate ex-post evaluations of EU initiatives. All major legislative and strategic initiatives should be accompanied by a cost-benefit analysis, particularly regarding their social, economic, and

environmental impacts. Furthermore, **children's rights** should be integrated into EU legislation by introducing a verification of compliance with children's rights within the impact assessment toolbox.

Parliament acknowledged that current mechanisms for controlling the legislative burden, such as **the "one in, one out" approach**, are struggling to function effectively. It stressed that the implementation of this approach must not compromise political imperatives or the objectives of better regulation, and that it must not lead to mathematical decisions to repeal legislation.

Members believe that **delegated and implementing acts** should be used judiciously and limited to the technical aspects necessary for the application of the basic acts, while avoiding duplication and unnecessary complexity.

Both types of acts must be subject to transparent procedures with clear deadlines, allowing sufficient time for meaningful and effective scrutiny by the co-legislators.

The Commission is invited to take further steps to **reduce the regulatory burden on citizens and businesses** and to improve the quality and effectiveness of EU legislation by ensuring that regulatory measures are proportionate and evidence-based and provide clear added value to EU citizens and businesses.

Following up on the Draghi report, Members believe the Commission should develop a single, clear methodology to **quantify the cost of new legislation**. They also noted that reporting requirements often generate considerable administrative costs for businesses, particularly SMEs, and advocate streamlining these requirements.

Regulatory fitness and better lawmaking for competitiveness

Parliament called for the more frequent use of processes such as evaluations and the regulatory fitness and performance programme (REFIT), which aim to simplify legislation. Simplification requires a focus on **smart implementation strategies**, adopting a pragmatic, legally sound, and efficient approach to **reduce the administrative burden** on businesses, particularly SMEs. In this context, Members reiterated the importance of the ‘Think Small First’ principle as a cornerstone of better regulation. They also encouraged the broader use of **regulatory sandboxes** in future-oriented sectors to support innovation, reduce compliance costs, and provide legal certainty for SMEs.

Parliament welcomed the Commission's pledge to reduce **reporting obligations** by 25%, but stressed that this target must not undermine transparency and oversight in the pursuit of the Union's strategic objectives. It called for a **more ambitious and better-quality approach** to further reduce all regulatory costs and urged the Commission and Member States to systematically integrate competitiveness considerations into simplification initiatives.

Lastly, Parliament encouraged the use of **digital tools** and artificial intelligence to simplify the application of Union law and asked Member States to avoid regulatory burden when transposing EU legislation.