Uniform electoral procedure

1997/2242(COS) - 15/07/1998 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

In adopting the report by Mr Giorgios ANASTASSOPOULOS (EPP, GR) by 355 votes to 146 with 39 abstentions Parliament adopted a resolution on a draft electoral procedure incorporating common principles for the election of Members of the European Parliament. Parliament proposed the following draft act: Article 1: In each Member State, Members of the European Parliament shall be elected by a list system of proportional representation. Election shall be by direct universal suffrage through an equal, free and secret ballot. Article 2: Constituencies shall be established for this election without generally violating the proportional character of the system, in order to bring the elected representatives closer to the electorate and with due regard for the specific characteristics of each Member State. This provision shall apply with effect from the elections to the European Parliament scheduled for 2004. Member States whose population does not exceed 20 million inhabitants are not required to establish constituencies. Article 3: Where a country decides to establish several electoral constituencies on its territory, the Members of the European Parliament shall remain, in accordance with Articles 137 and 138 of the Treaty (189 and 190 of the consolidated Treaty), the representatives of the peoples of the States brought together in the Community, and not the representatives of their constituencies. Article 4: Special arrangements may be made to take account of specific regional characteristics but they may not violate the principle of proportional representation. Article 5: A minimum threshold for the distribution of seats may be set and at national level may not exceed 5% of the votes cast. Article 6: Member States may permit preferential voting in accordance with procedures that they shall lay down. Article 7: The European Parliament will consider a proposal that a certain percentage (the rapporteur proposed 10%) of the total number of seats within the European Parliament shall be filled by means of list-based proportional representation relating to a single constituency comprising the territory of the European Union Member States with effect from the European elections to be held in 2009. The implementing provisions shall be adopted by 1 January 2008 on a proposal from the European Parliament by the Council acting unanimously, and after obtaining Parliament's assent. Article 8: The office of Member of the European Parliament shall be incompatible with the office of member of a national parliament. Article 9: Each Member State may set a limit for candidates' expenditure linked to the conduct of the election campaign. Article 10: Save where otherwise stipulated, the Act of 20 September 1976 concerning the election of the representatives of the European Parliament by direct universal suffrage shall remain in force. It should be noted that Parliament rejected the call for referral back to committee made by Mr Hervé FABRE-D'AUBRESPY (I-EDN, F) by 106 votes to 418 with 17 abstentions. He considered that the report by Mr ANASTASSOPOULOS was incomplete as several aspects had not been dealt with. The report is also not in line with Parliament's legislative powers. Lastly, the report is contradictory. It wishes to make the elected representatives closer to the electorate but proposes transnational lists. The report also refers to France in relation to a draft which has already been rejected by the authorities of that country.