

Intergovernmental Conference IGC: revision of the Treaties, the financial interests and the European Prosecutor

1999/0825(CNS) - 13/04/2000 - Interim resolution adopted by Parliament

In its first reading, the European Parliament adopted the resolution drafted by Giorgos DIMITRAKOPOULOS (EPP/ED, Greece) and Jo Lienen (PES, Germany) on the practical proposals for the forthcoming Intergovernmental Conference (IGC). The resolution covers proposals for reform to all institutions, as well as decision-making procedures. The main points are as follows: -the co-decision procedure and qualified majority voting (QMV) in Council should become the general rule for legislative procedure. The cooperation procedure still applying within the framework of Title VII of the Treaty (Economic and monetary policy) should be abolished and the codecision procedure should also apply to legislation under Title VI (Provisions on police and judicial cooperation in criminal matters) of the EU Treaty. -Parliament should be required to give its assent to the revision of the Treaties. -With regard to the weighting of votes in Council, Parliament proposed that Council measures requiring QMV should be adopted if they secure the support of at least a simple majority of Member States representing at least the majority of the total population of the Member States. -A verbatim report of Council meetings should be established and the Council should account for its decisions to Parliament. -With regard to the composition of the Commission, the resolution states that the total number of Commissioners should be either a fixed number of 20 or that it should be composed of one Commissioner per Member State provided that the role of President is strengthened and that an inner hierarchy is established which enables the Commission to operate efficiently. -Parliament should elect the President of the Commission, who could then appoint the members of the College in agreement with the Member States. The President should ensure that the Commission includes a citizen of each Member State at least every two terms of office. Each country could therefore propose a Commissioner in 5 Commissions out of 7. -The President may ask the Parliament for a vote of confidence. If this is not given by a majority of the members, the Commission should resign. -The President may require the resignation of any Member of the Commission guilty of serious misconduct. -Any Member of the Commission may be ordered to resign by the Court of Justice, also at the request of the Parliament, under the procedure laid down in article 216 of the EC Treaty. -With regards to the composition of the Parliament, it confirms the upper limit of 700 members and suggests practical arrangements for this during and after enlargement. -The Treaty should be amended to give the Parliament the power to decide on the location of its seat and its meetings. -Parliament and Council should lay down the requirements for recognition, the statute, and funding arrangements (including Community funding) for European political parties. Those which do not respect democratic principles and fundamental rights may have their funding suspended by the European Court of Justice. -On the Court of Justice, Parliament proposes that the jurisdiction of the court be extended to all matters covered by Title IV of the Treaty (Visas and asylum) and Title VI (police and judicial cooperation). -On constitutional matters, the IGC should incorporate the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights into the Treaty in order to give it binding legal force. -Parliament considers that the present pillar structure and intergovernmental cooperation no longer enable efficient and democratic decision making and that they should be progressively abandoned. The resolution also contains proposals for the Union's legal personality and strengthening its external role.