Basic information

2005/2224(INI) INI - Own-initiative procedure	Procedure completed
Report on European political parties **Subject** 8.40.01.02 President, members, mandates, political groups	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
AFCO Constitutional Affairs	LEINEN Jo (PSE)	24/11/2005

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
BUDG Budgets	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
CONT Budgetary Control	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
JURI Legal Affairs	LÓPEZ-ISTÚRIZ WHITE Antonio (PPE-DE)	12/12/2005

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
15/12/2005	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
22/02/2006	Vote in committee		Summary
27/02/2006	Committee report tabled for plenary	A6-0042/2006	
22/03/2006	Debate in Parliament		
23/03/2006	Decision by Parliament	T6-0114/2006	Summary
23/03/2006	Results of vote in Parliament		
23/03/2006	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2005/2224(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 55
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	AFCO/6/31818

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee opinion	JURI	PE367.874	01/02/2006	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE368.071	02/02/2006	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE369.944	13/02/2006	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A6-0042/2006	27/02/2006	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T6-0114/2006	23/03/2006	Summary

Report on European political parties

2005/2224(INI) - 23/03/2006 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution based on the own-initiative report drawn up by Jo **LEINEN** (PES, DE). (Please see the summary of 22 /02/2006.)The report was adopted by 498 votes in favour and 95 against, with 7 abstentions.

The political background: Parliament noted that there is a gulf between many members of the public and the European institutions. One of the reasons for this is that to date there has been inadequate political communication about European policy. It stated its conviction that political parties at European level must take on a further role than solely that of umbrella organisations. They must become active proponents of European policy options, firmly rooted in all levels of society and working for genuine citizen involvement not only through European elections, but also in all other aspects of European political life.

Parliament stressed the need for a genuine European party statute that goes further than Regulation 2004/2003/EC, establishing their rights and obligations and enabling them to attain a legal personality. The statute should include provisions on individual membership of parties at European level, on their management, on the nomination of candidates and elections and on arrangements and support for party congresses and assemblies.

Experiences and proposals for improvement: Parliament asked the Commission to examine the possibility of introducing, rules on the financing of political parties at European level from the Community budget, which are not based on the concept of grants within the meaning of Title VI of Part I of the Financial Regulation, bearing in mind that this concept does not accommodate the specific features of political parties.

Parliament pointed out that the budget for 2005 included EUR 8 400 000 for party funding, which the Bureau has distributed to the eight parties that submitted applications. On the basis of practical experience to date, it felt that certain changes should be made to the system of funding, inter alia:

- to avoid an unnecessary burden on the applicants, the application procedure should be a two-stage procedure, firstly to decide whether a party in principle satisfies the conditions for support and secondly to determine the amount of funding;

- the timing of the payment of funds should be changed so that 80% of the funding is paid out on signature of the financial agreement and the remainder at the end of the budget year on the basis of an account submitted by the recipient;

- there should be a funding plan over several years, both with regard to the basic amount per party (15% of the total budget) and as to the additional amount per MEP from the party (85% of the total budget), and thus with sufficient flexibility to allow for any new parties;

- the European political parties must be able to use any of their own funds, particularly those derived from donations and membership subscriptions, in excess of the prescribed 25% of their expenditure to be financed from their own funds, to build up reserves;

- to achieve the aim of reinforcing European political parties as factors in European democracy, and against the background of increasing demands on their political work as a result of enlargements, an appropriate increase in the financial support for political parties seems desirable.

During the present phase of reflection on the future of the EU certain matters should also be discussed: support for European political foundations in order to assist in European political parties' work of political information and education; establishment of European lists of European parties for the European elections, to further the formation of a European political public sphere; the role of European political parties in referendums on European topics, in European Parliament elections and in the election of the Commission President; and the promotion of the role of European political youth organisations and movements, which are a vital means of nurturing European awareness.