

European political parties and foundations: MEPs assess draft new rules

- Commission's legislative proposal broadly in line with Parliament's previous suggestions
- MEPs set to seek improvements to new rules to better safeguard EU values and European democracy
- A swift turnaround to ensure new rules are in place for the next European elections in 2024

The Constitutional Affairs Committee has taken stock of the Commission's proposal for new rules on the statute and funding of European political parties and foundations.

Parliament's competent committee has endorsed (with 18 votes for, 4 against, and 2 abstentions) the draft report by Rainer Wieland (EPP, DE) and Charles Goerens (Renew, LU).

According to the text, the scope of the new rules on registration and financing should expand to like-minded parties in Europe but outside the EU27, keeping in mind recent developments in the broader European political neighbourhood (e.g. Brexit and the Russian war against Ukraine). The proposed changes refer to "associations of citizens [...] of a country that belongs to the Council of Europe and has full rights of representation therein". Seeking to safeguard European values in this context, MEPs also want to make registration as a European political party (and the subsequent funding) subject to ensuring that member parties from outside the EU "observe equivalent values" to those of [Article 2 TEU](#). Another area where MEPs propose a more ambitious approach is the area of EU funding for campaigns in national referenda. Whereas the Commission's proposal focuses on campaigns concerning "the implementation of the Treaties", the draft rules put forward by MEPs broaden the scope to "issues directly related to the EU".

Quotes

Co-rapporteur [Charles Goerens \(Renew, LU\)](#) said: "High time for a more democratic and Europeanised political sphere. The suggested measures in this report provide the chance to strengthen citizens' representation at EU-level, also for people outside of it. By defining a clearer set of rules and conditions for European Political Parties and Foundations, we provide greater flexibility so they can focus on their core mission: representing and informing the citizens of the EU."

Co-rapporteur [Rainer Wieland \(EPP, DE\)](#) said: "We have introduced some important changes, especially regarding the new category of 'association fees', to mark a clear distinction between contributions from member parties from within and outside the EU. We are looking forward to start negotiations with the Council. However, I want to add that the EPP group is rather reluctant regarding the 0% co-financing requirement for European political parties in an election year, as proposed by the Commission. Furthermore, it is regrettable that the Commission has tabled their proposal in the form of a 'recast', which limits Parliament in its role as legislator only on those parts which the Commission has decided to modify."

Next steps

Parliament is expected to formally adopt its negotiating position in the upcoming plenary session of September, with a view to finalise the process in the first half of 2023, so that the new rules can be in place before the next European Elections in 2024.

Background

The Commission [published its proposal](#) in the context of the [European Democracy Action Plan](#) shortly after [Parliament's assessment of November 2021](#). The Commission's draft new rules are broadly in line with the concrete suggestions Parliament put forward, in which MEPs sought to allow European political parties and foundations to reach their full potential through transparency (in particular in relation to political advertisement and donations), pluralism, efficiency, and a truly European discourse. MEPs had also argued in favour of strengthening the [Authority for European Political Parties and European Political Foundations](#) to ensure compliance with EU values.

Further information

[Procedure file](#)

[Committee on Constitutional Affairs](#)

[Charles Goerens \(Renew, LU\)](#)

[Rainer Wieland \(EPP, DE\)](#)

[European political parties: first debate on the Commission's proposal for new rules \(16.03.2022\)](#)

[EP Research Service briefing - Amending the rules governing the statute and funding of European political parties \(recast\), March 2022](#)

[EP Study - Towards a revision of the Regulation on the statute and funding of European political parties and foundations, March 2022](#)

[EP Research Service, "At a glance" - European political parties: Statute and funding, November 2021](#)

[EP Research Service - Statute and funding of European political parties under Regulation 1141/2014: ex-post evaluation, June 2021](#)

[Legislative train](#)

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