

Danuta Hübner
Chair of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs, European Parliament

"Plenary debate on the European Council informal meeting of 23 February 2018"

European Parliament - plenary session

28th of February 2018, European Parliament, Brussels, Belgium

At the beginning of this month we voted, by a large majority, on the new composition of the European Parliament for the European elections of 2019. We reduced the size of the House from 751 to 705 seats and proposed a composition that is fair, based on objective principles, respects the EU's Treaty and adheres to the principle of digressive proportionality. I appreciate that during the informal European Council meeting, our proposal was broadly supported. Let me however underline the fact that, after a formal decision is taken by the European Council, it will have to come back to the European Parliament so that we can have a final vote as part of the consent procedure. This should happen by summer this year.

On the issue of the *Spitzenkandidaten*, I wish to reiterate that this process, endorsed again by a large majority of this Chamber three weeks ago, is a matter of principle and of interinstitutional balance and cooperation for us. We see this process as a reinforcement of the democratic accountability of the European institutions and as an enhancement of the role of the European political parties. So I trust that the European Council will pursue this democratic advance with a view to helping citizens develop the feeling of ownership of Europe.