

Newsletter

Issue 27, November 2016



Introductory words by Prof. Dr. Danuta Maria HÜBNER

Dear Readers,

I am very happy to present the 27th issue of the AFCO Newsletter, a tool prepared by the Secretariat which aims at informing you about AFCO activities and at increasing awareness on institutional challenges that the EU is facing.

At our meeting on Tuesday 8 November, AFCO will consider important and topical institutional issues: in the morning we will have an important vote on the revision of the EP's Rules of Procedure, as well as votes on the opinions on the "Situation of fundamental rights in the European Union in 2015" and the "Implementation report on Europe for Citizens".

In the afternoon, for the European Youth Event (EYE) speed-hearing, three young participants will present impactful ideas for Europe's future. We will also hold an exchange of views on the reports "Improving the functioning of the European Union building on the potential of the Lisbon Treaty" and "Possible evolutions of and adjustments to the current institutional set-up of the European Union", as well as on the "Constitutional relationship of the United Kingdom with the European Union: the consequences of the results of the referendum of 23 June 2016".

Prof. Dr. Danuta Maria HÜBNER, Chair

Meeting languages available

FR,DE,IT,NL,EN,EL,ES,PT,CS,PL,RO,HR

Meeting Documents

In light of the European Parliament's paperless project please bear in mind that only a very limited

number of paper dossiers will be available in the meeting room.

Instead, meeting documents will be made available on the following public and internal websites:

<http://www.emeeeting.europarl.europa.eu/committees/archives/201512/AFCO>

and (EP internal only):

<http://www.emeeeting.ep.parl.union.eu/committee/>



MEETING DATE AND VENUE

Tuesday 08.11.2016 in BRUSSELS
09:00-12:30 and 15:00-18:30

Room: Altiero Spinelli (1G-2)

Please find below the link to the latest committee draft agenda:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/a-fco/draft-agendas.html>

Implementation report on Europe for Citizens



Rapporteur: Kazimierz Michał Ujazdowski (ECR)

AFCO will vote the draft opinion by Kazimierz Ujazdowski, to the attention of the CULT committee, on its report on the implementation of the program Europe for Citizens. 28 amendments were presented to the draft opinion, which were discussed at the meeting on 20 October. Two compromise amendments have been presented by the rapporteur.

In his draft opinion, the rapporteur calls for greater awareness of the programme and highlights the important role of the Member States in providing better information through the National Contact points.

He recommends paying special attention to the projects submitted by applicant countries and proposes fostering cooperation between the non-governmental organizations of EU and non-EU countries.

Shadow rapporteurs: Constance Le Grip (EPP); Daciana Octavia Sârbu (S&D); Maite Pagazaurtundúa (ALDE); Josep-Maria Terricabras (Gree/EFA); Kostas Chrysogonos (GUE/NGL).

The situation of fundamental rights in the European Union in 2015



Rapporteur: Cristian Dan Preda (PPE)

The Union recognises the legally binding character of the fundamental rights enshrined in the *Charter of fundamental rights of the European Union*, which entered into force together with the Treaty of Lisbon on 1 December 2009. Moreover, article 6(1) TEU even provides that the Charter has the same legal value as the Treaties.

Furthermore, fundamental rights constitute general principles of Union law because they result from Member States' common constitutional traditions and also due to the fact that they are guaranteed by the European Convention on Human Rights of the Council of Europe.

Under Annex XVII to the Rules of Procedure, the Committee on Civil liberties (LIBE) is responsible for drawing up an annual activity and monitoring report on the situation of fundamental rights in the European Union.

LIBE prepared its annual report concerning year 2015, which constitutes the object of the draft opinion of Dan Preda, presented on 29 September in AFCO. At this meeting, the committee will vote on the draft opinion, to which 50 amendments were presented. The rapporteur suggests 3 compromise amendments.

Shadow rapporteurs: Sylvia-Yvonne Kaufmann (S&D); Morten Masserschmidt (ECR); Maite Pagazaurtundúa (ALDE); Kostas Chrysogonos (GUE), Josep-Maria Terricabras (Greens/EFA).

General Revision of Parliament's Rules of Procedure



Rapporteur: Richard Corbett (S&D)

This report is based on the work of the AFCO Working Group chaired by Vice-President Rainer Wieland, who presented the outcome of the work of the Group at the AFCO meeting on 12 July. In total, around 1400 amendments to the Rules of Procedure were tabled (including the amendments from the draft report, opinions and compromises).

At the AFCO meeting on 8 November, the report will be voted, in order for plenary to be able to vote

on it on 14 December, which would allow the changes to enter into force at the opening of the constitutive part-session in January 2017.

The committee will vote on a few controversial issues (relating i.a. to individual rights of Members or minority groups, thresholds to activate a procedure, composition of committees or transparency issues), as well as on some issues raised by JURI (on the waiver of immunities), CONT (on the discharge procedure), BUDG (on the procedure concerning the Parliament's budget) and ENVI (on the legislative procedure and on delegated acts) committees. Some amendments also deal with a possible limitation of the number of successive mandates for the Parliament's leading positions, a question not raised during the works of the Working Group.

Shadow Rapporteurs: Rainer Wieland (EPP), Kazimierz Michał Ujazdowski (ECR), Charles Goerens (ALDE), Helmut Scholz (GUE), Max Andersson (Greens/EFA), Isabella Adinolfi (EFDD), Gerolf Annemans (ENF).

European youth Event (EYE (speed-hearing)



Exchange of Views

Last May 2016, thousands of young people took part in the second edition of the European Youth Event (EYE2016) at the European Parliament in Strasbourg with the aim of presenting ideas for Europe's future.

The final EYE report "Ideas for tomorrow's Europe", will be presented to relevant parliamentary committees by EYE participants at special EYE follow-up hearings in autumn/winter 2016.

Three young EYE2016 participants will have the opportunity to present some of the most

impactful ideas collected during the EYE and to exchange views with MEPs, aiming at having an impact on the future agenda of the EU thus making a positive change.

The topics that will be discussed at this meeting are the following:

- *The future of Europe after Brexit;
- *Active citizenship;
- *Youth political involvement.

Possible evolutions of and adjustments to the current institutional set-up of the European Union



Rapporteur: Guy Verhofstadt (ALDE)

There will be an exchange of views on the 1039 amendments tabled to this report.

The draft report presented by Guy Verhofstadt focuses on a number of issues for reform of the Treaties, inter alia matters relating to "variable geometry" and a possible type of "associate status", economic governance, possible changes relating to major policy challenges, proposals aiming to strengthen foreign policy and to achieve more democracy, transparency and accountability in the Union, and matters relating to the procedure for Treaty change as such.

Calendar Proposed:

Deadline for amendments: 20 October, noon
Consideration of amendments: 8 November
Vote in extraordinary AFCO meeting: 21 November
Vote in Plenary: December

Shadow rapporteurs: Paulo Rangel (EPP); Jo Leinen (S&D) ; Morten Messerschmidt (ECR); Barbara Spinelli (GUE/NGL); Pascal Durand (Greens/EFA); Fabio Massimo Castaldo (EFDD); Gerolf Annemans (ENF).

Improving the functioning of the European Union building on the potential of the Lisbon Treaty



Rapporteur: Mercedes Bresso (S&D) and Elmar Brok (PPE)

There will be an exchange of views on the 888 amendments tabled to this report and on the progress in finding compromises.

The two co-rapporteurs examine in their draft report the yet unused possibilities offered by the Lisbon Treaty to tackle the challenges that the Union is currently facing, by adapting its institutional structure, enhancing its democratic accountability, deepening the Economic and Monetary Union, completing the Internal Market and furthering joint efforts in the fields of External Action and Justice and Home Affairs.

Calendar Proposed:

Consideration of amendments in AFCO: 8 November

Vote in extraordinary AFCO meeting: 21 November

Vote in Plenary: December

Shadow rapporteurs: Kazimierz Mikołaj Ujastowski (ECR); Charles Goerens (ALDE); Barbara Spinelli (GUE/NGL); Sven Giegold (Greens/EFA); Fabio Massimo Castaldo (EFDD); Gerolf Annemans (ENF).

The constitutional relationship of the United Kingdom with the European Union: the consequences of the results of the referendum of 23 June 2016.

Exchange of views with invited experts: Andrew Duff, Visiting Fellow, European Policy Centre, former MEP

and Michael Emerson, Associate Senior Research Fellow, Centre for European Policy Studies



At the last meeting on 20th October, various developments within EP concerning Brexit were analysed. The sequencing of the whole process in three stages, the concerns of the CCC and the discussion about how the committees will be involved were mentioned.

New events took place concerning Brexit since then, the most prominent one being the recent ruling of the British High Court that the UK government cannot trigger the Article 50 TEU without a parliamentary vote.

A number of questions related to the process that leads to the triggering of Article 50 TEU, and also to the possible content of the withdrawal agreement, how such an agreement should link to the framework of the future relationship and, naturally the process of its negotiation and adoption, should be analysed and debated in AFCO.

Regarding the format of the future relationship between the UK and the EU there are a number of discordant voices in the UK. Some call for a hard-Brexit, while others suggest taking the comprehensive agreement with Canada as an example. A number of negotiating red-lines have meanwhile emerged in the statements of the Prime Minister of the UK. The question at stake is to know what the UK will be aiming for and what the EU partners will be willing to accept.

At the AFCO meeting on 8 November, an exchange of views will take place on these issues with two invited experts:

- Andrew Duff (now Visiting Fellow at the European Policy Centre), who published recently a couple of articles about these problematic issues;
- Michael Emerson (from the Centre for European Policy Studies), who recently explored a number of such models for the future relationship between the EU and the UK in a policy brief.

Next Meeting

- Thursday 10 November 2016, 11.00 - 12.30 (Joint AFCO-AFET meeting)
- Tuesday 29 November, 9.00 - 12.30 and 15.00 - 18.30 (Interparliamentary Committee Meeting)

Further information

For any further information, please visit the AFCO committee website:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/afco/home.html>

Twitter Activities of the AFCO committee may be followed on twitter @EPInstitutional.

Contact the editor

European Parliament, Directorate General for Internal Policies of the Union, Secretariat of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs.

Tel: + 32 2 28 43676 – e-mail: afco-secretariat@ep.europa.eu

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