

Newsletter

July 2017
Issue 39

Composition of the European Parliament



Exchange of views

Co-Rapporteurs: Danuta Maria Hübner, AFCO Chair (EPP), and Pedro Silva Pereira, AFCO Vice-Chair (S&D)

The task of distributing the seats in Parliament has always been a very politically charged issue ahead of each round of elections to the European Parliament. The issue of Brexit adds a certain amount of uncertainty, as it might not be clear by the time Parliament submits its proposal whether or not the UK would be still a Member State of the Union in 2019 at the date of the elections. The Co-Rapporteurs will present their draft proposal for the distribution of seats at the committee meeting and will give Members the opportunity to share their views on their proposal.

According to Article 14.2 of the Treaty on the European Union, the composition of Parliament is adopted through a special legislative procedure, where the European Council decides, by unanimity, upon an initiative of the European Parliament, after obtaining its consent (by simple majority).

[Procedure File](#)

Revision of Regulation (EU) 211/2011 on the citizens' initiative



Consideration of draft report

Rapporteur: György Schöpflin (EPP)

At this meeting of AFCO the rapporteur, György Schöpflin, will present his draft report on the amendment of the regulation on the citizens'

INTRODUCTORY WORDS BY THE CHAIR



Dear Readers,

I am very happy to present the 39th issue of the AFCO Newsletter, a tool prepared by the Secretariat, which aims to inform you about AFCO activities and increase awareness of institutional challenges that the EU is facing.

At our meeting on 12 July, the Committee has a full agenda. We will start by discussing the composition of Parliament which aims at redistribution of the seats in the Parliament, a task rendered particularly difficult due to the uncertainty concerning the conclusion of the withdrawal process of the United Kingdom. We will also have a discussion on the state of play of the negotiations on Brexit. Still in the morning, we will discuss the outcome of the Maltese Presidency with Ambassador Marlene Bonnici, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Malta to the EU. In the afternoon the Committee will then hear from Matti Maasikas, Deputy Minister for EU Affairs of the Republic of Estonia about the priorities of the Estonian Presidency. The Committee will also hear from invited speakers on a possible revision of the Regulation on statute and funding of European political parties and foundations. A vote will take place on the opinion on the budget of the Union for the financial year 2018.

Prof. Dr. Danuta Maria HÜBNER, Chair

initiative. This text is particularly important, since it is a proposal for a legislative modification addressed to the Commission, drafted under Article 225 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

The effectiveness of the European Citizens' Initiative mechanism has often been subject to criticism, in particular due to unsatisfactory replies from the Commission. Consequently, after recurring requests to modify the regulation on the European Citizens' Initiative, the AFCO Committee has decided to draft a legislative own-initiative report to give input to Commission for a proper revision. Meanwhile, the Commission has announced that it will present a proposal for the revision of the regulation before the end of the year.

[Procedure File](#)

EU Citizenship Report 2017: Strengthening Citizens' Rights in a Union of Democratic Change



Consideration of draft opinion

Rapporteur: Christian Dan Preda (EPP)

Following a first exchange of views held at the last AFCO meeting on 20 June, at this meeting the rapporteur, Christian Dan Preda, will present his draft opinion.

This is an opinion for the Committee on Petitions' INI report 'EU citizenship report 2017'. This report is being drafted following the release of the Commission's report on EU citizenship 2017, which is the third report by the Commission on EU citizenship. It takes stock of the progress reached, sets out the priorities for 2017-2019 in order to guarantee that EU citizens will be able to enjoy fully their rights and the practical benefits that the EU provides.

[Procedure File](#)

Legitimate measures to protect whistle-blowers acting in the public interest when disclosing the confidential information of companies and public bodies



Consideration of draft opinion

Rapporteur: Fabio Castaldo (EFDD)

At this meeting of AFCO, the draft opinion to an own initiative legislative report of the Legal Affairs Committee will be presented. The

MEETING LANGUAGES AVAILABLE

FR, DE, IT, NL, EN, DA, EL, ES, PT, PL, RO
12:00 - 12:30: MT

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 [EP internal](#) websites.

MEETING DATE AND VENUE

12 July 2017, 09.00 – 18.30 (Brussels)
Room: Paul-Henri Spaak (PHS 4B001)

Here is the [link to the latest committee draft agenda](#).

NEXT MEETING

4 September 2017, 15.00–18.30 (Brussels)

Further information



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aim of this report is to call on the Commission to produce a proposal which includes orientations about the legal bases for whistle-blower legislation, the scope of the proposed protection and key principles for this future piece of legislation.

This follows an exchange of views held on this opinion during the 11 April AFCO meeting. The calendar for the amendments deadline and vote in AFCO will also be decided.

[Procedure File](#)

The preparation of the negotiations on the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union (Article 50 TEU)



Exchange of views

AFCO will continue its regular discussion on Brexit. The coordinator for the negotiations on the UK withdrawal from the EU at the level of the Conference of Presidents, Guy Verhofstadt, will update the Committee on the negotiations, which started formally on 19 June 2017.

[Subject file](#)

Council Presidencies



Exchange of views

Following a well-established tradition, at the end of each EU Council presidency, an exchange of views on the outcome of the Presidency takes place, in particular concerning matters related to AFCO competences. The Committee will hear from Ambassador Marlene Bonnici, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Malta to the EU.

At the beginning of the afternoon, an exchange of views with Matti Maasikas, Deputy Minister for EU Affairs of the Republic of Estonia. He will present the priorities of the Estonian Presidency in the AFCO field of competences.

* * *

Contact the editor

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[AFCO mailbox](#)

**** Voting Time ****

General budget of the European Union for the financial year 2018 - all sections



Adoption of draft opinion and budgetary amendments
Rapporteur: Danuta Maria Hübner (EPP)

AFCO is delivering an opinion to the BUDG report on "General Budget of the European Union for the financial year 2018 - all sections". The draft opinion was presented in AFCO on 20 June 2017.

The deadline for amendments was on 22 June 2017. In total five budgetary amendments have been tabled and five amendments were tabled to the draft opinion.

[Procedure File](#)

The vote on the opinion *Rules and general principles concerning mechanisms for control by Member States of the Commission's exercise of implementing powers* will be postponed to a future meeting

**** End of vote ****

Regulation 1141/2014 on the statute and funding of European political parties and foundations



Exchange of views on a possible revision

Earlier this year, an oral question was put to the Commission by AFCO, which summarised earlier requests to review the Regulation on statute and funding of European political parties and foundations. In its reply in March, Commissioner King confirmed that the Commission was open to studying these requests, while stressing that the Regulation was only fully applicable since the beginning of this year and provided for an assessment and possible review in the second half of next year.

The Commission reiterated its willingness to look at a revision during the June part-session of Plenary. However, stressed that it would have to be focused on a limited set of modifications, which the Council could be ready to accept, if it were to be adopted before the next European elections. This debate was wound up with a resolution by Parliament.

In view of this, AFCO has invited five speakers to discuss this possible revision:

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- Rainer WIELAND and Ulrike LUNACEK, EP Vice-Presidents in charge of the European political parties
- Didier KLETHI, Director General DG Finance European Parliament
- Ilze JUHANSONE, Deputy Secretary General of the European Commission
- Michael ADAM, Director of the Authority for the European Political Parties and Foundations

The implementation of the Treaty provisions concerning national Parliaments



Presentation of the final report on the fact-finding missions to Denmark and Greece.

Rapporteur: Paulo Rangel (EPP)

In the framework of the scrutiny tools and input needed by the Rapporteur, Paulo Rangel, on the implementing report entitled 'The Implementation of Treaty provisions regarding national Parliaments', two fact-finding Missions were carried out by the Rapporteur - one to the Danish Parliament (Folketinget) (Copenhagen) on 22 - 23 May 2017, and the other to the Hellenic Parliament (Βουλή των Ελλήνων/Vouli ton Ellinon) (Athens) on 24 May 2017. The rapporteur will present his findings to the Committee.

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The next MFF: Preparing the Parliament's position on the MFF post-2020



Consideration of draft opinion

Rapporteur: Gerolf Annemans (ENF)

The Committee will have an exchange of views following the presentation of the draft opinion by the Rapporteur, Gerolf Annemans. This opinion is for the Committee on Budget's reflection on the current Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) and how it could be adapted and improved for the next financial cycle.

There are certainly some important constitutional elements that need to be considered in preparation for the next MFF, such as its alignment with the length of Parliament's term, switching its adoption procedure from unanimity to QMV and avoiding the interference of the European Council in the legislative aspects.

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