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“The EP’s opinion on the Regulation on the statute and funding of European political parties and European political foundations should precede the Commission’s legislative proposal”

**European political parties – report 2021 first exchange of views
Rapporteurs: Rainer Wieland, Charles Goerens**

Meetings of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs

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I see this report as an important competence of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs and a responsibility toward citizens.

In parliamentary democracies, politicians organise themselves in political parties, which become an important interface between government and the people. This interface is tested in our day to day functioning and, in particular, when risks to democracy intensify.

Since their establishment, European political parties have enhanced their role within the polity of the European Union, and within the context of multiple challenges to democracy worldwide. I also believe that in view of the 2024 European elections, European political parties are increasingly called upon to ensure an effective and transparent connection with people.

Mr Michael Adam, the Director of the Authority for European political parties and European political foundations, presented in January to this committee the Authority's annual activity report for 2019. This presentation allowed us to have good and substantive discussion and provided a momentum to set in motion the committee work on AFCO evaluation report on Regulation 1141/2014 on the statute and funding of European political parties and European political foundations, that Parliament is due to adopt before the end of 2021.

Mr Adam recalled that 2019, being the year of the last European elections, exposed the need for clarifications in terms of what could be financed by the European political parties in the context of the electoral campaign. We should look at the issue in the context of the upcoming revision of the Regulation. In the same vein, we could re-examine the system of contributions and donations and their provenance. Members of the committee highlighted additional shortcomings that were passed on by the European political parties and the European political foundations. We agreed on the need for the current Regulation to be amended in a timely fashion, well before the upcoming elections.

We know that Commissioner Jourova intends to present the revision of Regulation 1114/2014 on the Statute and Financing of European Political Parties and Foundations by the end of the year, after consultations with the stakeholders. AFCO sent a letter to Commissioner Jourova, in which it reminds that the EP evaluation report should be considered before the Commission presents a legislative proposal. This is an important element of inter-institutional cooperation. The assessment of the Parliament regarding the application of the current Regulation as well as its proposals will constitute an important contribution in the process of the revision!

I would find it useful to invite the Commission to some of our discussions on the report which would allow the Commission to better understand the direction of our evaluation and intentions.