

Final contribution of the Working Group IX : Simplification

At the moment Europe is in a fundamental reform process. It's the first time that European citizens get the opportunity to participate at the creation of the future Europe.

We are proud that we have the possibility to influence European issues by joining this European students' convention. We hope that the spirit of this Convention will spread all over Europe. We are looking forward to see this convention be continued in the future.

We have to remark that the final report can't take into account a probable forthcoming reform of the European institutions. These circumstances make it difficult to talk about the simplification of the Union's instruments and procedures.

In our opinion:

- Reform of the European Union is absolute necessity especially with the forthcoming enlargement in mind.
- The current structure of the EU is too complicated.
- There is a democratic deficit and a deficiency of transparency.

We believe:

1. Decision making in the EU must become more transparent, efficient and democratic.
2. The executive power must be clearly separated from the legislative power.
3. The EU should legitimise itself fully on all levels.
4. The relationship between EU-institutions and the 'citizens' must be clearly defined and understood by all, furthermore, EU-citizens should be better informed about EU-legislation.
5. The European party system must be strengthened.

According to our presented considerations, we basically agree on the fundamental ideas and most issues of the final report of the working group "simplification". E.g. the simplification and change of legislative instruments. Thus we have to propose the following amendments:

Concerning: Part 1, II Hierarchy of Union legislation

Add new passage after first paragraph:

"The European parliament should become an equal partner of the Council and represent a first legislative chamber of the citizens. The Council should represent the interests of the member states as a second legislative chamber. His power should be restricted only to legislative tasks. Therefore the Commission should be the only executive power in the European Union."

Explanation:

The European parliament is the only institution that is directly elected by the people. To overcome the democratic deficit within the Union, it needs an enlargement of its competence. Regarding to a clear and democratic separation of powers the Council has to give away his executive power to the Commission.

Concerning: Part 2, II.B.(d) Generalizing codecision

Delete the following passage:

"Exceptions to this rule would remain in areas where the special nature of the Union requires autonomous decision-making procedures (for example, in relation to own resources or the

uniform electoral procedure), or in areas of great political sensitivity (for example, the right to vote and stand as a candidate in local elections and elections to the European Parliament, or the extension of rights linked to European citizenship)."

Explanation:

We are in favour of the proposal to "generalising qualified-majority voting in the Council to all cases where the codecision procedure applies", but we are against any "exceptions". This would strengthen the principles of the democracy and simplification in the decision-making procedure of the Union. So-called „areas of political sensitivity“ should be examined carefully and depending on the resolution either treated under the „codecision procedure“ or not at all on European level.

Concerning: Part 2, II.B. Codecision procedure

Add a new article II.B.(e)

"An earlier cooperation of European Parliament and Council should take place in the codecision-procedure and not just at the moment of the present mediation procedure."

Explanation:

The codecision procedure takes a lot of time and is unnecessarily complicated. The codecision procedure would be accelerated by an earlier cooperation of the European Parliament and the Council.

Concerning: Part 2, II.F. Proposals common to all procedures

Add following passage:

"The right of legislation initiative should also be given the European Parliament."

Explanation:

This measure would contribute to simplify European decision making. Beside that, the right of legislation initiative is one of the classic function of an parliament.

Add a new article:

„For the improvement of the implementation of the European Union decisions the European Commission has to be strengthened.“

Explanation:

The European Union is at present not sufficient able to guarantee and control the correct implementation of its decisions in the member states. The primary reason for this is the dependence of the European Union on the national governments and administrations. Solution of this problem could be a strengthening of the Commission in the process of the implementation of European right. An enlarged kind of disciplinary instruments could be given to the commission.