

Financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union: financing of European political parties

2012/0336(COD) - 05/06/2013 - Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading

The Committee on Budgets adopted the report by Ingeborg GRÄSSLE (EPP, DE) on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966 /2012 as regards the financing of European political parties.

The committee recommends that Parliament's position adopted at first reading, according to the ordinary legislative procedure, should be to amend the Commission's proposal as follows:

Registration: the report stated that if the formation of political parties at European level were to take place independently of their formal registration, they should acquire the legal status of European political parties only by means of formal registration.

Contributions: one of the committee's objectives has been to ensure the highest possible degree of coherence between this proposal and the [proposal for a regulation](#) on the statute and funding of European political parties and European political foundations, by adapting the report to the modifications of the financial rules in the Giannakou report. The amendments take up points made by the [Court of Auditors in its Opinion 1/2013](#).

Members also clarified the following:

- **reimbursable costs** should include administrative expenditure and expenditure linked to, *inter alia*: (i) technical assistance, meetings, events, including cross-border events and joint events with political groups in the European Parliament; (ii) information, publications; (ii) research and studies; (iii) campaigns conducted in the context of elections to the European Parliament; (iv) and referendum campaigns at a European level;
- expenditure linked to **campaigns conducted in the context of elections to the European Parliament** should be reimbursed in accordance with the rules laid down in the Regulation on the statute and funding of European political parties and European political foundations;
- exceptionally, contributions should also be used to **finance national, regional or local referendum campaigns**, provided that the subject of the referendum in question is Union legislation, the functioning of a Union institution or the ratification of changes to Union treaties;
- contributions could be used to **reimburse expenditure relating to contracts concluded by European political parties**, provided that there were no conflicts.

Moreover, contributions should not be used:

- to grant directly or indirectly any personal advantage, in cash or in kind, to any individual member or staff of a European political party;
- to fund directly or indirectly national, regional or local elections, candidates or referendum campaigns, except as provided for referendum campaigns relating to Union legislation, Union institutions or changes to Union treaties.

Lastly, European political parties receiving a contribution should not receive directly or indirectly other funds from the budget. In particular, **donations** from the budgets of political groups in the European Parliament should be prohibited.

Evaluation procedure of contribution requests: if the application is rejected, the authorising officer should inform the applicant of all possible judicial and extrajudicial remedies available.

Rules applicable to contributions: the proposed amendment is aligned to Article 124(2)(c) of the Financial Regulation (scope and form of grants – lump sums, unit costs and flat-rate financing) and adds a requirement to quantify lump sums, flat rates and unit costs in the call for contributions.

Use of contributions: contributions by third parties to joint events should not be considered as part of the own resources of a European political party.

Report on the use of contributions: European political parties should **broadly and publicly report** the use of Union contributions in a citizen-friendly, searchable database. They should publish, at least on their website, the final report and accounts.

Rules on the carry-over of grants to EU political parties: Members suggested giving European political foundations some additional flexibility in their financial planning by preserving Article 125(6) of the Financial Regulation as amended.