


Procedure file

Basic information		
INI - Own-initiative procedure	1996/2186(INI)	Procedure completed
The constitutional status of European political parties		
Subject 8.40.01.02 President, members, mandates, political groups		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	INST Institutional Affairs		29/05/1996
		PSE TSATSOS Dimitris	

Key events			
21/10/1996	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
29/10/1996	Vote in committee		Summary
29/10/1996	Committee report tabled for plenary	A4-0342/1996	
09/12/1996	Debate in Parliament		
10/12/1996	Decision by Parliament	T4-0661/1996	Summary
10/12/1996	End of procedure in Parliament		
20/01/1997	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	1996/2186(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 54
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	INST/4/08265

Documentation gateway					
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A4-0342/1996 OJ C 362 02.12.1996, p. 0005	29/10/1996	EP	

Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T4-0661/1996 OJ C 020 20.01.1997, p. 0020-0029	10/12/1996	EP	Summary
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The constitutional status of European political parties

The report by Mr Dimitris TSATSOS on the Constitutional status of European political parties, which was adopted by the Committee on Institutional Affairs, called on the European Union to introduce a framework regulation on the legal status of European political parties together with a regulation on their financial situation. Those organisations which were entitled to the statutory rights of a European political party were political organisations expressing an opinion on European and international political issues (and represented in the European Parliament, or aspiring to such), which were organised in such a way that they could express the political will of the citizens and be more than an election campaign organisation or an organisation in support or parliamentary activities, which were represented in at least 30% of the Member States and engaged in activities outside the national framework. To be able to fulfil their Constitutional role - contributing to the formation of a European conscience and to the expression of the political will of the citizens of the Union - European political parties should have a set of rules and a basic political programme which was accessible to European citizens. Such parties must, in their programme and in their actions, respect the principles of democracy, human rights and the rule of law, and their rules must be drawn up in such a way that their political will is forged through democratic principles, whereby citizens of the Union wishing to do so are able to express their political will within the framework of the said party. As regards financing, the Tsatsos report called for grants paid out of the Community budget to be subject to express authorisation by a Community act and for these grants to be allocated on the basis of equal opportunities, while at the same time giving newly constituted parties a fair chance - taking into account the number of Member States in which such parties are represented. These sums could only be granted when parties fulfilled their Constitutional role and their allocation would be dependent on the beneficiaries making their financial situation public. Finally, the Committee on Institutional Affairs called on European political parties, without prejudice to the legal processes within the competence of the European Court of Justice, to use conciliation and arbitration for resolving differences of opinion regarding the application of the law on European political parties. ?

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In adopting the report by Mr Dimitris TSATSOS (PSE, EL) Parliament called on the European Union to introduce a framework regulation on the legal status of European political parties, together with a regulation on their financial situation. It also laid down a certain number of guidelines and minimum obligations which should be included in these regulations, namely that any political party wishing to obtain the status of European party must be represented in at least one third of the Member States. Parliament took the view that European political parties should be open to individual membership. Political parties should have a set of rules and a basic political programme and should respect the basic principles of constitutional law enshrined in the Treaty on European Union (democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law). Parliament also thought that it was necessary to clarify certain rights of European political parties, such as the right to set up a political party, freedom of political action, the right to equality of treatment, the right to put forward candidates at elections and the right to enjoy legal status in all Member States. Lastly, Parliament took the view that sums paid to political parties from Community resources should be clearly shown as such in the EU budget. ?