


# Procedure file

Basic information		
COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)	<a href="#">1997/2242(COS)</a>	Procedure completed
Uniform electoral procedure		
Subject 8.40.01.01 Elections, direct universal suffrage		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	<span style="background-color: #e67e22; color: white; padding: 2px;">INST</span> Institutional Affairs		30/09/1997
		PPE <a href="#">ANASTASSOPOULOS Georgios</a>	
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	<span style="background-color: #e67e22; color: white; padding: 2px;">JURI</span> Legal Affairs, Citizens' Rights		04/11/1997
		PSE <a href="#">GEBHARDT Evelyne</a>	
Council of the European Union			

Key events			
02/10/1997	Non-legislative basic document published	AMSTERDAM	
05/11/1997	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
25/05/1998	Vote in committee		Summary
25/05/1998	Committee report tabled for plenary	<a href="#">A4-0212/1998</a>	
14/07/1998	Debate in Parliament		
15/07/1998	Decision by Parliament	T4-0426/1998	Summary
15/07/1998	End of procedure in Parliament		
21/09/1998	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	1997/2242(COS)
Procedure type	COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)
Procedure subtype	Commission strategy paper
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 142

Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	INST/4/09418

Documentation gateway					
Motion for a resolution		<a href="#">B4-0723/1996</a>	18/07/1996	EP	
Non-legislative basic document		AMSTERDAM	02/10/1997	EU	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		<a href="#">A4-0212/1998</a> <a href="#">OJ C 210 06.07.1998, p. 0007</a>	25/05/1998	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T4-0426/1998 <a href="#">OJ C 292 21.09.1998, p. 0053-0066</a>	15/07/1998	EP	Summary

## Uniform electoral procedure

The Committee has adopted by a large majority the draft report by Georgios ANASTASSOPOULOS (EPP, Gr) on an electoral procedure using common EU-wide principles for the election of MEPs. The committee is calling for the introduction in all Member States of an electoral system based on proportional representation, territorial constituencies and the optional use, when distributing seats, of a threshold of no more than 5% of the votes cast nationally. In addition, the committee advocates the use of preferential voting, although each Member State would decide the precise arrangements for itself. The report argues that being an MEP should be incompatible with being a member of a national parliament, that each Member State should be able to set a limit on candidates' expenditure (which must be linked to the conduct of the election campaign) and that special arrangements should be allowed to take account of specific regional characteristics, although these must not violate the principle of proportional representation. The committee also wants 10% of the total number of seats in the European Parliament to be filled by means of a transnational list-based system relating to a single constituency comprising the entire territory of the EU. Some of these principles, such as the introduction of a threshold, the incompatibilities applicable to being an MEP and the proportional voting system could, the committee believes, be introduced in time for the next European elections in June 1999. As to the other points, progress would have to be gradual. For example, the provision on territorial constituencies would apply only from 2004 and the use of transnational lists from 2009. However, the first step will be for the Council to examine the proposals and adopt them as soon as possible once they have been debated and endorsed by Parliament at the next part-session.?

## Uniform electoral procedure

In adopting the report by Mr Georgios ANASTASSOPOULOS (EPP, GR) by 355 votes to 146 with 39 abstentions Parliament adopted a resolution on a draft electoral procedure incorporating common principles for the election of Members of the European Parliament. Parliament proposed the following draft act: Article 1: In each Member State, Members of the European Parliament shall be elected by a list system of proportional representation. Election shall be by direct universal suffrage through an equal, free and secret ballot. Article 2: Constituencies shall be established for this election without generally violating the proportional character of the system, in order to bring the elected representatives closer to the electorate and with due regard for the specific characteristics of each Member State. This provision shall apply with effect from the elections to the European Parliament scheduled for 2004. Member States whose population does not exceed 20 million inhabitants are not required to establish constituencies. Article 3: Where a country decides to establish several electoral constituencies on its territory, the Members of the European Parliament shall remain, in accordance with Articles 137 and 138 of the Treaty (189 and 190 of the consolidated Treaty), the representatives of the peoples of the States brought together in the Community, and not the representatives of their constituencies. Article 4: Special arrangements may be made to take account of specific regional characteristics but they may not violate the principle of proportional representation. Article 5: A minimum threshold for the distribution of seats may be set and at national level may not exceed 5% of the votes cast. Article 6: Member States may permit preferential voting in accordance with procedures that they shall lay down. Article 7: The European Parliament will consider a proposal that a certain percentage (the rapporteur proposed 10%) of the total number of seats within the European Parliament shall be filled by means of list-based proportional representation relating to a single constituency comprising the territory of the European Union Member States with effect from the European elections to be held in 2009. The implementing provisions shall be adopted by 1 January 2008 on a proposal from the European Parliament by the Council acting unanimously, and after obtaining Parliament's assent. Article 8: The office of Member of the European Parliament shall be incompatible with the office of member of a national parliament. Article 9: Each Member State may set a limit for candidates' expenditure linked to the conduct of the election campaign. Article 10: Save where otherwise stipulated, the Act of 20 September 1976 concerning the election of the representatives of the European Parliament by direct universal suffrage shall remain in force. It should be noted that Parliament rejected the call for referral back to committee made by Mr Hervé FABRE-D'AUBRESPY (I-EDN, F) by 106 votes to 418 with 17 abstentions. He considered that the report by Mr ANASTASSOPOULOS was incomplete as several aspects had not been dealt with. The report is also not in line with Parliament's legislative powers. Lastly, the report is contradictory. It wishes to make the elected representatives closer to the electorate but proposes transnational lists. The report also refers to France in relation to a draft which has already been rejected by the authorities of that country. ?