


Procedure file

Basic information		
INI - Own-initiative procedure	2001/2024(INI)	Procedure completed
Distribution of competences between the European Union and the Member States		
Subject		
8.40.11 Relations with Member State governments and national parliaments		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	AFCO Constitutional Affairs		24/01/2001
		PPE-DE LAMASSOURE Alain	
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	AFET Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security, Defense		20/03/2001
		ELDR NEWTON DUNN Bill	
	ECON Economic and Monetary Affairs		15/04/2002
		PSE RANDZIO-PLATH Christa	
	JURI Legal Affairs and Internal Market		21/03/2001
		ELDR WALLIS Diana	
	RETT Regional Policy, Transport and Tourism		25/04/2001
		V/ALE SCHROEDTER Elisabeth	

Key events			
15/03/2001	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
18/04/2002	Vote in committee		Summary
18/04/2002	Committee report tabled for plenary	A5-0133/2002	
15/05/2002	Debate in Parliament		
16/05/2002	Decision by Parliament	T5-0247/2002	Summary
16/05/2002	End of procedure in Parliament		
31/07/2003	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2001/2024(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	AFCO/5/14516

Documentation gateway					
Committee of the Regions: opinion		CDR0466/2001 OJ C 192 12.08.2002, p. 0031	13/03/2002	CofR	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A5-0133/2002	18/04/2002	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T5-0247/2002 OJ C 180 31.07.2003, p. 0405-0493 E	16/05/2002	EP	Summary

Distribution of competences between the European Union and the Member States

The committee adopted the own-initiative report by Alain LAMASSOURE (EPP-ED, F) on the division of powers between the European Union and the Member States. To achieve maximum clarity the committee reduced the categories of powers to be covered by the future Constitution, which it believed should recast the Treaties of the Union. It focused solely on the powers of the Union and powers shared with the Member States, on the presumption that the Member States will have jurisdiction where the European constitutional text does not stipulate otherwise. To help the public to understand the Union better, the report suggested merging the treaties into a single text concerning a single entity, the Union, which would be endowed with full legal personality. This text would consist of two parts: the first of a fundamental, constitutional nature and the second relating to arrangements for the exercise of certain powers. The report also called for the second and third pillars (common foreign and security policy, justice and home affairs) to be brought within the Community sphere. On the powers of the Union, the committee felt that the EU's exclusive powers 'must continue to be very few in number': customs policy, external economic relations, legal basis of the internal market, competition policy, structural and cohesion policies, association treaties and, for the eurozone, monetary policy. To these existing powers, the committee would add the common foreign and defence policy, the legal basis of the area of freedom and security, and the financing of the EU budget. In all these areas, the Member States should intervene only on the conditions and within the limits established by the Union. Turning to the question of shared powers, the report grouped these into three areas: (1) those which complement the 'single area' and where the Union lays down general rules: consumer protection, agriculture, fisheries, regional policy, transport, transeuropean networks, environment, research and technological development, energy, social and employment policy, immigration policy and other policies relating to the free movement of people, the promotion of equality between men and women, the association of overseas countries and territories, development cooperation and single market taxation. This list would also include the transnational dimension of the implementation of foreign policy, including defence and security, both internal and external. In all these areas, Community legislation is justified only where European interests are at stake. In such cases the Union should lay down the principles and objectives while the Member States would be responsible for detailed transposition into their domestic legal systems; (2) where the Union can only intervene to complement action taken by the Member States, who retain the power to enact ordinary law, e.g. education, training, youth, civil protection, culture, sport, health, industry, tourism and civil and commercial contracts; (3) the compulsory coordination of policies which basically remain within the national sphere of competence (e.g. budgetary and fiscal policies under EMU and employment policy). All Community institutions should be involved in these coordination processes. The committee also called for a review clause after 10 years and the preservation of a mechanism enabling powers to be returned to the Member States or transferred to the Union. Any transfers of powers should be transparent in budgetary terms, so as to avoid duplication between national and European civil services. As far as judicial guarantees are concerned, the committee said that the Court of Justice should become a Constitutional Court. An additional referral procedure should be introduced to settle disputes over the division of powers due to non-compliance with the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality. This would be an urgent procedure, to be used before the entry into force of a legislative measure and one which could result in the application of the measure being suspended. It could be initiated by the Commission or a significant minority of the Council or Parliament. Lastly, the committee said that, while the internal territorial organisation and division of powers within each Member State were entirely a matter for each country to decide, the Union should be open to proposals from the Member States to enable regional and local authorities to be better involved in preparations for, and the transposition of, European legislation. Moreover, representatives of regional parliaments with legislative capacity should take part regularly in the work of Parliament's committee responsible for regional affairs. ?

Distribution of competences between the European Union and the Member States

The European Parliament has adopted by 322 votes to 64, with 58 abstentions, the report by Mr Alain Lamassoure (PPE-DE, F) as approved by the lead committee, on whose own initiative the report was drafted (see previous summary). ?