

Statute and funding of European political parties and European political foundations

European political parties and European political foundations are currently regulated by a 2014 EU regulation, which establishes European political parties as legal entities, allowing them access to funding from the EU budget. In September 2017, the European Commission adopted a proposal to amend the existing regulation and address certain shortcomings ahead of the 2019 European elections. The European Parliament is due to vote on the proposal during its April plenary session.

Background

European political parties are transnational political federations of national political parties from several Member States that share a political affiliation. Established before the first direct European elections, they have gradually developed their infrastructure and influence. The first [regulation](#) on political parties at European level entered into force in 2004, enabling them to receive money from the European Union (EU) budget. However, their truly European dimension could not be fully realised, as their statutes and organisation remained governed by legal provisions in the Member State where their seats were located. The European Parliament called for revision of the regulation in [2006](#) and [2011](#), leading to the adoption of [Regulation \(EU, Euratom\) 1141/2014](#), currently in force. According to these rules, political parties and foundations can become European legal entities, gaining greater access to EU budget funding as a result.

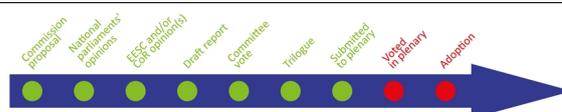
Revision of Regulation 1141/2014

Despite the progress made on revising Regulation 1141/2014, the European Parliament, as well as a number of European political parties, has called for improvements to the existing rules. In January 2017, its Committee on Constitutional Affairs addressed a [parliamentary question](#) to the Commission, and in March the Parliament held a [plenary debate](#) on the matter, inviting the Commission to tackle a number of issues. The Parliament adopted a [resolution](#) in June 2017, regretting the regulation's shortcomings, particularly in respect of the level of co-financing and the possibility for MEPs' multi-party membership. In September, the Commission adopted a [proposal](#) to amend the current regulation, focusing on a limited number of amendments aimed at improving major shortcomings ahead of the 2019 European elections. The changes proposed are a direct response to the Parliament's resolution and concern: conditions for registration (individuals can no longer sponsor the registration of a European political party); allocation of funds (lowering the co-financing requirement); distribution of funds from the EU budget (lowering the share of funding distributed equally); enforcing transparency and the protection of EU financial interests.

European Parliament position

In November 2017, Parliament's Committee on Constitutional Affairs (AFCO) adopted its first reading [report](#) on the Commission proposal to amend the regulation. It generally welcomed the proposed changes, but put forward some amendments inter alia regarding distribution of funds from the EU budget, setting the share distributed equally between parties to 10 % instead of the 5 % proposed. In trilogue negotiations, Parliament and Council negotiators reached an agreement swiftly, on 27 February 2018 after only one meeting, and the Parliament is now due to vote on the agreed text at its April plenary session.

First-reading report: [2017/0219 \(COD\)](#); Committee responsible: AFCO; Rapporteur: Rainer Wieland (EPP, Germany) and Mercedes Bresso (S&D, Italy). For further information see our 'EU Legislation in progress' [briefing](#).



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PE 620.209 – April 2018

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