



*Committee on Legal Affairs
The Chair*

11.10.2018

Ms Danuta Hübner
Chair, Committee on Constitutional Affairs
ASP 12E157
Brussels

Subject: Opinion by the Committee on Legal Affairs on the state of the debate on the Future of Europe – 2018/2094(INI)

Dear Chair,

Before the Summer break the rapporteur of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs, Mr Ramon Jáuregui Atondo, called upon the committees to give their opinions to the AFCO non-legislative own initiative report on the State of debate on the Future of Europe. The coordinators of the Committee on Legal Affairs therefore decided, at their meeting on 9 July 2018, to give an opinion in letter form, in accordance with Rule 53 of the Rules of Procedure, with a focus strictly on the competences of our committee. I was appointed as draftsman for the opinion.

In my capacity as draftsman, I would like to express my agreement with the approach taken in the AFCO draft report to summarise the issues for debate on the future of Europe and to provide guidance and clarification on the various directions that European integration can take in the run-up to the elections in 2019. The aim of this exercise is therefore indeed not to decide upon the various alternatives, but to define the problems, describe the challenges and set out the options that European politics and the new MEPs elected during the forthcoming elections will have to address.

An exchange of views on the dossier was held at the JURI meeting on 3 September 2018 and following exchanges between the coordinators via written procedure the opinion below was adopted in the Committee at the meeting on 10 October 2018, by 20 votes in favour, 2 against and no abstentions¹.

JURI calls on AFCO, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

1. Underlines that questions relating to subsidiarity and proportionality must be clearly set out to citizens in order to show that the European Union works in the interest of everybody and that decisions are taken at the lowest possible level with participation of citizens; moreover, underlines that questions relating to subsidiarity and proportionality are a common responsibility of the Union, its Member States and all the institutions at all levels involved in the preparation and implementation of Union legislation and policies; encourages the Commission to present, as announced in its 2018 Work Programme, the Communication on further enhancing subsidiarity, proportionality and better regulation in the daily operation of the European Union;
2. Stresses that proper implementation and application of EU law is essential for delivering on Union policies and for fostering mutual trust between the Union, Member States and citizens;
3. Underlines the need to give particular focus to EU administrative law, as shown by its resolution of 9 June 2016 calling for an open, efficient and independent European Union administration², which was followed-up by an EPRS impact assessment and a public consultation;
4. Stresses the importance of cooperation on the interinstitutional level, while respecting each institution's prerogatives as enshrined in the Treaties, which has been given a new framework with the interinstitutional agreement on better law-making of 13 April 2016 and underlines that simplification is an on-going exercise which aims at making the processes and procedures at EU level easier to understand, to ensure that views from all relevant stakeholders are taken into account and ultimately to facilitate the participation of citizens in the work of the European Union;
5. Underlines that the major global challenges of today, such as digitisation, automation, migration, terrorism and climate change, will continue to put pressure on the judicial systems in the European Union and the Member States; is convinced that these challenges can only be borne within a strong European Union, with innovative solutions which need to be found to further approximate national laws, to strengthen judicial cooperation, further Union reform within the limits of the existing Treaties, and to continue monitoring the application of EU law;

¹ The following were present for the final vote: Pavel Svoboda (Chair and rapporteur), Jean-Marie Cavada, Mady Delvaux, Lidia Joanna Geringer de Oedenberg (Vice-Chairs), Max Andersson, Joëlle Bergeron, Kostas Chrysogonos, Geoffroy Didier, Pascal Durand, Angel Dzhabazki, Rosa Estaràs Ferragut, Enrico Gasbarra, Sajjad Karim, Sylvia-Yvonne Kaufmann, Gilles Lebreton, António Marinho e Pinto, Angelika Niebler, Virginie Rozière, József Szájer, Axel Voss, Tiemo Wölken, Francis Zammit Dimech, Tadeusz Zwiefka.

² P8_TA(2016)0279

6. Believes that any future policy on new technologies need to follow ethical principles which keep the focus on people and people's lives.

I trust that the above will make a useful contribution into the report drafted by the Committee on Constitutional Affairs.

Yours sincerely,

Pavel Svoboda