Question for oral answer O-000099/2017

to the Council

Rule 128

Danuta Maria Hübner

on behalf of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs

Subject: Reform of the electoral law of the EU

On 11 November 2015, Parliament adopted in plenary its proposal for provisions amending the Act concerning the election of the members of the European Parliament by direct universal suffrage, which was transmitted to the Council for deliberations and decision under Article 223(1) TFEU. Parliament proposed a number of measures, with the aim of strengthening the European dimension of the elections and providing for greater electoral equality for the citizens of the Union.

Since the adoption of Parliament's resolution, five Council Presidencies (Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Slovakia, Malta and now Estonia) have worked on Parliament's proposal but none of them has provided Parliament with any formal or informal outcome of the Council's deliberations.

According to Article 223(1) TFEU, Parliament has to give its consent to the Council decision and the Member States need to ratify it before it enters into force. In order to ensure that this reform is applicable for the European elections in 2019, the file has to be finalised by the spring of 2018 (as in some of the Member States modifications to the electoral law have to enter into force 12 months before the elections). Without the reform of the Electoral Act, the next European elections will be conducted under the rules of 1976 with all their shortcomings and deficiencies, and the opportunity to improve voter turnout and participation in the 2019 elections will be wasted. This is also a question of sincere interinstitutional cooperation with Parliament as the direct representative of European citizens, which has made use of its right of legislative initiative for the European electoral law under Article 223(1) TFEU.

Can the Council please inform Parliament, as co-legislator, of the timescale it intends to adhere to in order to finalise Parliament's proposal, and explain the reasons for the delays in improving the rules for election of members of the European Parliament along the lines proposed by Parliament in 2015?

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