

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2004



2009

Committee on Regional Development

2004/2129(INI)

26.11.2004

OPINION

of the Committee on Regional Development

for the Committee on Constitutional Affairs

on the Draft Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe
(2004/2129(INI))

Draftsman: Carlos José Iturgaiz Angulo

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Regional Development calls on the Committee on Constitutional Affairs, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

- having regard to the territorial organisation of each Member State provided for in their respective constitutions,
 - A. whereas the Preamble to the Charter of Fundamental Rights, incorporated in Title II of the draft Constitution, recognises the "national identities of the Member States and the organisation of their public authorities at national, regional and local levels",
 - B. whereas the European Union is based on the dual legitimacy of the State and of the citizen as established in Article I-1 of the draft Constitution,
 - C. recalling the role of the regional and local authorities in the European project; whereas Article 1-5 of the draft Constitution explicitly refers to regional and local self-government as an integral part of the identity of the Member States,
 - D. whereas the Committee of the Regions is called upon to play a significant role, together with the European Parliament, in involving local and regional governments in the work of the Union,
 - E. whereas the principle of subsidiarity is one of the cornerstones of the European project, whereas it has been appropriately reinforced under the Draft Constitution,
 - F. reaffirming that the economic, social and territorial cohesion policy constitutes one of the cornerstones of the European project and the clearest expression of the principle of solidarity; whereas it is vital that both the old and the new Member States of the Union continue to benefit from this policy in order to promote thus a sound development of their economies and societies,
1. Is gratified to see that the draft Constitution recognises and guarantees the national identity of the Member States, in accordance with international law;
 2. Welcomes the fact that the draft Constitution establishes the involvement of national parliaments in monitoring the application the principle of subsidiarity;
 3. Is gratified to see that the draft Constitution provides for an early consultation procedure prior to the drafting of European legislative acts, taking account, where applicable, of the regional and local dimension of the proposed action;
 4. Supports the strengthening of the Committee of the Regions by granting it the right to appeal in relation to legal acts requiring its prior consultation for their adoption and in defence of its prerogatives; welcomes, moreover, the new role assigned to the Committee of the Regions as one of the guardians of the principle of subsidiarity;
 5. Is gratified to see that territorial cohesion and not just economic and social cohesion has

been recognised as an objective and as a shared competence of the Union; regrets, however, the fact that the financial dimension of cohesion is not explicitly recognised;

6. Welcomes the fact that the draft Constitution recognises and respects access to services of general economic interest in order to promote the social and territorial cohesion of the Union;
7. Regrets that the draft Constitution does not provide for the application of the ordinary legislative procedure (codecision), or qualified majority voting in the Council, for the adoption of laws establishing general provisions on the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Funds as of 2007 as provided for in the European Convention's text;
8. Is gratified to see that the draft Constitution makes explicit mention of less-favoured regions (islands, mountain regions, border regions and areas with low population density) in relation to the vital objectives of cohesion policy;
9. Welcomes the fact that a specific reference to the Union's outermost regions was added to the provision on the compatibility of regional aid; hopes that the new specific status conceived in the draft Constitution for the outermost regions be applied automatically to all such regions since they face structural, economic and social problems which need to be counteracted.
10. Regrets that section III of chapter III of Title III of the draft Constitutional Treaty relating to economic, social and territorial cohesion does not expressly include cities and urban areas facing major economic and social difficulties among the primary beneficiaries of the social, economic and territorial cohesion policy.

PROCEDURE

Title	Draft Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe
Procedure number	(2004/2129(INI))
Committee responsible	AFCO
Enhanced cooperation	No
Drafts(wo)man Date appointed	Carlos José Iturgaiz Angulo 31/8/2004
Discussed in committee	28/9/04
Date suggestions adopted	25/11/2004
Result of final vote	for: 34 against: 4 abstentions: 8
Members present for the final vote	Alfonso Andria, Stavros Arnautakis, Jean Marie Beaupuy, Adam Jerzy Bielan, Jana Bobošíková, Graham Booth, Bairbre de Brún, Giovanni Claudio Fava, Gerardo Galeote Quecedo, Iratxe García Pérez, Eugenijus Gentvilas, Lidia Joanna Geringer de Oedenberg, Zita Gurmai, Marian Harkin, Konstantinos Hatzidakis, Jim Higgins, Alain Hutchinson, Carlos José Iturgaiz Angulo, Mieczysław Edmund Janowski, Gisela Kallenbach, Tunne Kelam, Miloš Koterec, Constanze Angela Krehl, Jamila Madeira, Sérgio Marques, Ioannis Matsis, Miroslav Mikolášik, Francesco Musotto, James Nicholson, Lambert van Nistelrooij, István Pálfi, Francisca Pleguezuelos Aguilar, Elisabeth Schroedter, Alyn Smith, Grażyna Staniszewska, Catherine Stihler, Margie Sudre, Salvatore Tatarella, Kyriacos Triantaphyllides
Substitutes present for the final vote	Philip Bradbourn, Jan Březina, Ole Christensen, Mojca Drčar Murko, Richard Falbr, Richard Seeber, Thomas Ulmer, Daniel Varela Suanzes-Carpegna
Substitutes under Rule 178(2) present for the final vote	