Ten years of the Lisbon Treaty and the Charter of Fundamental Rights

MEPs celebrated the reforms that enhanced democracy and expanded people’s rights in the EU with Presidents Sassoli, Michel and von der Leyen.

At the beginning of the formal sitting, EP President David Sassoli highlighted the role that the Lisbon Treaty and the Charter of Fundamental Rights play in maintaining peace and prosperity in Europe. He added that the upcoming Conference on the Future of Europe presents an opportunity to address persisting and new challenges through a stronger Europe, based on solidarity and freedom.
During the round of interventions by political group speakers, MEPs representing a broad majority in parliament stressed that the EU needs to be reformed and strengthened in order to address citizens’ concerns, ranging from the environment and climate change to social issues, and from European defence, security and foreign policy, to the rule of law, democracy and citizens’ rights.

Wrapping up the debate, Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and European Council President Charles Michel welcomed the increased democratic accountability that the Lisbon Treaty introduced and acknowledged that citizens need to be at the very centre of the European Union. Speaking about the upcoming Conference on the Future of Europe, both of them called for it to be used to listen to citizens and to change the EU by reforming it where needed.

You can catch up with the debate through the links below.

Opening statement by David SASSOLI, EP President

Round of political group speakers - to view video replays of statements by specific speakers, click on a name.

Closing statement by Ursula VON DER LEYEN, President of the European Commission

Closing statement by Charles MICHEL, President of the European Council

Background

The Lisbon Treaty introduced a higher level of parliamentary scrutiny and democratic accountability and increased Parliament’s legislative and budgetary powers. The Treaty also recognised that the EP is “composed of representatives of the European Union’s citizens” and gave it the power to elect the President of the Commission.

Having recognised democratic equality, representative democracy and participatory democracy as fundamental principles of the EU, the Treaty made the Charter of Fundamental Rights a legally binding document. The Charter brings together all personal, civic, political, economic and social rights enjoyed by people in the European Union.
Further information
EP Research Service “The European Council under the Lisbon Treaty: How has the institution evolved since 2009?”
Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (26.10.2012)
EP Multimedia Centre: free photos, video and audio material

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