

Hearings on reforming EU legislative processes and strengthening European parties

On Tuesday, the Constitutional Affairs Committee discussed with experts how to reform European legislative processes and the rules governing European political parties and foundations.

During the [first hearing](#) on the “**Legislative Power of the EU**”, experts laid out their concrete proposals. **René Repasi**, Professor of International and EU Law at Erasmus University Rotterdam, suggested the *de facto* assignment of a full right of legislative initiative to the European Parliament, within the existing legal framework of the [Treaties](#) and without creating undue imbalances between the institutions, by using the [ordinary legislative procedure](#) to the maximum degree possible. **Sara Hagemann**, Associate Professor in European Politics at LSE, set out her proposals for enhanced transparency at each stage of the legislative process between the co-legislators of the EU, taking care to avoid the pitfalls of potential adverse effects of transparency, such as pandering to voters, polarisation and gridlock. **Andreas Maurer**, Jean Monnet Chair for EU Integration Studies, University of Innsbruck, gave a detailed presentation on the functioning of the [different types of legislative procedures](#) and the idea of an upper and a lower chamber, focusing on how the ordinary legislative procedure can be utilised to its full potential. In the ensuing debate, among other topics raised, MEPs delved deeper by asking how these reforms can be successfully negotiated between the institutions in the current political climate and institutional context, and by proposing that knowing the positions and final votes of member states in the Council is an indispensable transparency measure.

You can catch up with the first hearing [here](#).

The [second hearing](#), on “**the statute and funding of European political parties and political foundations**”, followed the [discussion of 25 May with academic experts](#). The rapporteurs [Rainer Wieland \(EPP, DE\)](#) and [Charles Goerens \(Renew, LU\)](#) presented their progress in preparing their [draft report](#), and then MEPs heard from representatives of the ten registered European political parties, who spoke about their priorities for reform. The Director of the Authority for European Political Parties and European Political Foundations, and high-level officials from Parliament's administration, also contributed to the exchange of views. The discussion revolved around the following topics:

- removing potentially excessive restrictions with regards to establishing or maintaining relations (political and financial) with extra-EU parties, e.g. in accession or EFTA

countries;

- reducing the administrative of European political parties and foundations, for example by removing redundant layers of accounting standards;
- alleviating co-financing obligations and own resources restrictions that do not reflect the reality of declining party membership numbers and digital campaigning; and
- empowering European political parties to fulfil their role foreseen under the Treaties in establishing a pan-European political space, for example by allowing them to cooperate more closely with national parties, and enabling them to run pan-European online campaigns.

A recording of the second hearing is available [here](#).

Background

European political parties represent transnational political federations of national parties. Their role is set out in the Treaty on European Union ([Article 10\(4\) TEU](#)) and [Article 12\(2\) of the Charter of Fundamental Rights](#), stipulating that they 'contribute to forming European political awareness and to expressing the will of citizens of the Union'. Those parties and foundations that meet the necessary conditions can become European legal entities and have access to funding from the EU budget.

Further information


[Committee on Constitutional Affairs](#)


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