

European Union and Maastricht Treaty

RESOLUTION B3-1320, 1323, 1325 and 1326/92

Resolution on the state of European Union and ratification of the Maastricht TreatyThe European Parliament,

- A. whereas the major debate on Europe triggered in the Member States during the ratification procedures for the Treaty on European Union highlighted the lack of transparency in the intergovernmental negotiations and Community structures and the need to improve information,
- B. whereas genuine democratization of the Community's decision-making process will not be carried out by curtailing the role of the Commission, which has made a vital contribution to the progress achieved so far, nor by reverting to intergovernmental decision-making procedures which have paralysing consequences,
- C. having regard to the extraordinary meeting of the European Council in Birmingham on 16 October 1992, where the main topic should be the improvement of transparency and democracy in the European Community,
- D. whereas certain improvements could be made immediately without amending the text of the Maastricht Treaty or undermining respect for the powers conferred by the Treaties,

hereby adopts the following request which it instructs its President to forward to the Council, the Commission and the parliaments and governments of the Member States, and to present to the extraordinary European Council on 16 October 1992:

REQUEST

by the European Parliament to the European Council for the improvement of transparency and democracy in the European Community

The European Parliament,

In the conviction that the Treaty on European Union will enable the Community to deal more effectively with the current threats to peace, monetary stability and employment, and to demonstrate more effectively that solidarity which the countries of Eastern Europe deserve,

1. Reaffirms the need to ratify the Treaty on European Union as it stands, so that it can enter into force as soon as possible, and expects the members of the European Council to confirm their commitment;
2. Affirms the need for a solemn declaration by the Council, the Commission and Parliament on transparency and democracy, dealing in particular with the following aspects which should be implemented immediately:

- public deliberations by the Council acting in its legislative capacity: this would enhance national parliaments' monitoring of their governments' representatives in the Council,
 - a political undertaking by the Council not to adopt legislative texts previously rejected by Parliament,
 - adoption by the three political institutions of an annual legislative programme which will be published,
 - simplification of the comitology system in order to monitor more effectively the decisions of both national and European officials,
 - a sustained effort by the Commission to codify Community law so that citizens can actually acquaint themselves with Community legislation in force,
 - establishment of a uniform electoral procedure and a more representative European Parliament,
 - speedy implementation of those provisions of the Maastricht Treaty covering citizens' rights and their full involvement in European integration,
 - a request to the social partners to set collective negotiations in motion;
 - improvement of Parliament's control over the Commission;
3. Calls on the governments of the Member States to convene a new intergovernmental conference before the next scheduled date in 1996, with a mandate to make good the democratic deficit, increase the transparency of the decision-making process by simplifying it and increase substantially Parliament's powers of control and the scope for co-decision;
4. Believes it essential that an interinstitutional conference (Council, Commission and Parliament) should be convened with a mandate to:
- prepare the means needed to ensure swift and effective implementation of the principle of subsidiarity,
 - draw up an interinstitutional agreement on this principle, committing all three institutions and covering both the substance of the idea and the procedures for implementing it,
 - make it obligatory for the Commission to forward to the Council and Parliament an annual report on the application of this principle, which would in turn give rise to a debate in Parliament each year;
- therefore decides to set up its delegation for this interinstitutional conference;
5. Calls on the European Council to reaffirm the necessary European solidarity by:
- adopting the Delors II package as soon as possible and establishing the Cohesion Fund in order to lay the foundation for an effective cohesion policy, concluding the interinstitutional agreement on the financial perspectives which will provide the budgetary framework for Community activity, investigating new prospects for rural life and agriculture,
 - adopting a Community initiative to stimulate the economy, through the promotion of employment and sustained growth which respects the environment, so as to ensure that the convergence criteria are met without recessionary or inflationary effects,
 - confirming the completion of EMU according to the timetable and under the conditions laid down by the Treaty, in order to curb currency speculation and safeguard the internal market,
 - rejecting any attempt to create a two-speed Europe;

6. Considers that the national parliaments play an essential role in the implementation of transparency and democracy in Europe, in particular by:
 - improving their information through the implementation of the undertaking given by governments to forward without delay all legislative proposals and prelegislative communications,
 - taking note of the Community's annual legislative programme,
 - participating in the formation of political will on European matters at national level;
7. Insists on the need to provide the European edifice with a democratic and effective constitution which citizens can readily understand and which will enable the Union to be enlarged;
8. Proposes the convening of an Assizes of the Parliaments of the Union in order to allow the national and European representatives elected by universal suffrage to give a fresh impetus to European integration, along the lines of the Final Declaration of the Conference of Parliaments of the Community in Rome of 30 November 1990, and to demonstrate their willingness to be closely associated with the improvement of transparency and democracy in the European Community;
9. Points out to governments, in relation to the debate on centralization and bureaucracy, that they are responsible for taking decisions within the Council.