



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



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Council confirms deal on European political parties

The Permanent Representatives Committee¹ today approved a draft regulation aimed at helping European political parties and their affiliated political foundations to play their role of expressing the political will of EU citizens. It herewith endorsed a compromise reached between the Greek presidency and representatives of the European Parliament on 25 February.

The draft regulation provides EU-level legal status for European political parties and their affiliated political foundations, aiming to increase their visibility and EU-wide recognition. The European legal status will also be a pre-condition to receive public funding from the EU budget.

European political parties and their affiliated political foundations that wish to benefit from the European legal status need to fulfil certain criteria, notably to respect the values on which the European Union is founded (e.g. human dignity, democracy, the rule of law, human rights). The European legal status is granted by an independent authority located within the European Parliament. The authority's task is also to regularly verify that the conditions for obtaining the European legal status are still met. In case of manifest and serious breach of the values on which the European Union is founded, the authority withdraws the European legal status, after having sought the advice of a Committee of independent eminent persons, unless the European Parliament and the Council both object.

The authority may also impose financial sanctions on European political parties and their foundations in case of infringements of the regulation.

¹ The Permanent Representatives Committee is composed of the ambassadors of the 28 EU member states. Its role is to prepare decisions of the Council.

P R E S S

The draft regulation also contains provisions governing the funding sources of European political parties and their foundations:

- The current distribution of the funding from the **EU budget** remains unchanged: 15% of the funds are distributed in equal shares to the European political parties and foundations, and the remaining 85% are distributed among the European political parties in proportion to their share of elected members of the European Parliament. The draft regulation does not impact the amount financed from the EU budget to the political parties and foundations, (in 2013, the support for the European political parties and foundations from the EU budget amounted to around 33.9 million €).
- **Donations** from natural or legal persons to European political parties and their foundations will be limited to a value of 18000 € per year and per donor (rather than 12000 € under the current rules). The names of donors contributing more than 3000 € per year will have to be published.
- **Contributions** from European political parties' or foundations' members may not exceed 40% of the parties' or foundations' budget. In addition, contributions from non-elected individual members of a European political party are limited to a value of 18000 € per year and individual member.

The draft regulation will now have to be formally adopted by the European Parliament and the Council in the coming months. The new regulation will apply as from 1 January 2017, which provides member states sufficient time to ensure an effective application of the regulation at national level.
