

European Movement Position

There is an incongruity between the function of European political parties – to contribute to forming European political awareness and express the will of the citizens of the Union - **and their actual functioning in everyday European politics.** This is, for example, visible in the failure to engage the European public in electoral campaigns and the unsatisfactory turnout at European elections.

To realise a truly transnational European democracy, an innovation of the European political system is needed. A reform of the European electoral system and the rules governing the European parties is necessary to strengthen the link between parties and the European public, including:

- **The creation of a European constituency** in addition to the national party lists and voting procedures to create a truly trans-national European democracy.
- **More autonomy for the European political parties** with respect to their national members, to enrich their role in the European political system.
- **Selection of candidates** for the European constituency by European political parties, to increase the connection between MEPs and their European political parties.
- **Expansion of individual membership** to all European political parties to offer citizens the opportunity of direct political participation in the European political system.
- The possibility to **found European political parties based solely on individual membership** of citizens from several Member States.
- **Consolidation of the democratisation of internal party procedures**, including a vote on the Commission presidency candidates at party congresses or through open primaries.
- **The adoption of clear party programmes** at party congresses as a basis for national election campaigns.
- **A clear focus on European themes in European elections**, to provide a link between the voter's choice and the actual work of European political parties and groups in the European Parliament.
- **Making the affiliation of national parties with a European political party visible** on the ballot paper and campaign materials.
- **Increase the presence of European political parties in media and public debates**, aided by the European selection of candidates and the publication of party programmes Europe-wide.

Background

European electoral reform is back in the spotlight with the own-initiative report, 'The reform of the electoral law of the European Union', prepared by the Committee on Constitutional Affairs. The report will be voted upon in the Plenary on 28 October 2015, after which discussions with the Council will start. For the adoption of changes to the European electoral law, unanimity in the Council is required.