

PROPOSAL FOR RESOLUTION ON THE ELECTIONS TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE SPITZENKANDIDAT PROCESS

Regarding Proposals for resolutions 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3
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1 **The UEF Federal Committee, meeting in Berlin on 22 April 2018,**

2 **Having regard to:**

- 3 - The UEF FC Resolution on the European political parties (adopted on 24 November
4 2004), calling for a more prominent role of parties in the democratic debate and the
5 strengthening of alliances between European and national parties and asking for the
6 MEPs to be elected under the banner of European parties, hence proposing their
7 candidate to the European Commission (EC) presidency;
- 8 - The UEF FC Resolution on « the completion of European political unity » (adopted on 18
9 June 2017), asking for the reinforcement of the Spitzenkandidaten process by the
10 creation of transnational lists;
- 11 - The UEF FC Resolution adopted on 22 October 2017;
- 12 - The resolution of the European Parliament on “the European Union electoral law
13 reform” (adopted on 11 November 2015), proposing to improve European parties’
14 visibility and to create a common constituency, where lists would be led by
15 Spitzenkandidaten;
- 16 - Art. 17.7 of the Treaty on the European Union, which states that “Taking into account
17 the elections to the European Parliament and after having held the appropriate
18 consultations, the European Council, acting by a qualified majority, shall propose to the
19 European Parliament a candidate for President of the Commission. This candidate shall
20 be elected by the European Parliament by a majority of its component member”;

21 **Considering that:**

- 22 - The necessity to further develop a European democratic space, particularly to have a
23 public debate on European policies during the European elections, where political
24 parties would play a key role;
- 25 - The European elections are a unique momentum to further develop the feeling of a
26 common belonging and to gather every European actor to achieve a common goal;
- 27 - The scrutiny mode must encourage the creation of transnational political parties that
28 would shape the public debate and interact with the institutions at the local, national
29 and European levels;
- 30 - The European institutional and regulatory framework is still distinguishing European and
31 national parties;
- 32 - The evolution toward transnational parties requires to help the European parties to play
33 their role according to the treaties, i.e. to contribute « to the formation of a European

- 34 political consciousness and the expression to the will of Union's citizens », giving them a
35 more prominent role for the European elections;
- 36 - There is a need to still increase the European Parliament's role within the EU
37 institutional order, to assert its democratic authority, and provide the European citizens
38 a greater democratic control over the decision-making process;
- 39 - Foster the Europeanization of national parties by encouraging them to carry on public
40 debate over European topics, and foster synergies between national and European
41 parties of the same political family.
- 42 - Ballots shall grant the same visibility to national and European parties' names and logos;
- 43 - Member States are to encourage these affiliations during the electoral campaign, the
44 communication having to refer to the common program of the European parties;
- 45 - European parties nominate shall nominate their candidates to the presidency of the
46 European Commission;
- 47 - Citizens should be allowed to express their preference for a global program, embodied
48 by a candidate to the presidency of the European Commission;
- 49 - The first breakthrough during the European elections of 2014 of a long expected
50 process by which, before the parliamentary electoral campaign, each political party
51 chooses a candidate to lead the campaign (lead candidate, or Spitzenkandidat, a
52 German term now widely used as the term of art), so that, after the election, the
53 European Council shall nominate the lead candidate of the first past the post party, or
54 alternatively of the party that commands the largest coalition in the Parliament, as the
55 President of the new European Commission;
- 56 - The Spitzenkandidat process, experienced in 2014 European elections, paves the way to
57 upgrade the quality of European democracy, since it can put in the hands of citizens not
58 only the choice of the MEPs but also of the President of the European Commission and
59 his legislature programme;
- 60 - On the basis of a contradictory interpretation of Art. 17(7) TEU this breakthrough is now
61 more bitterly than before challenged by the European Council members in order to
62 keep the balance of powers in favour of the member States and their governments
63 instead of the European Parliament;
- 64 - In accordance to the Treaty of Lisbon, MEPs represent the overall citizenry of the Union
65 and not just the citizens of the Member State in which they are elected;
- 66 - Transnational lists would lead to the institutionalization of the Spitzenkandidaten
67 principle and give the right to citizens to cast a ballot for a candidate living in another
68 EU country;
- 69 - That therefore the move initiated in 2014 would be even more consistent if those lead
70 candidates were actually candidates in the European Parliament's election as list
71 leaders of all the lists presented in Member States by political parties affiliated to the
72 same European political party, before being possibly candidates to the Commission's
73 presidency;

74 - Additionally that, in order to provide a more clear-cut political image of the
75 Commission, thereby triggering and encouraging a strong public political debate both
76 during the elections, and during the legislature, on the basis of Art. 17(7) TEU “The
77 Council, by common accord with the President-elect, shall adopt the list of the other
78 persons whom it proposes for appointment as members of the Commission...”, and in
79 an attempt to overcome the current political fuzziness resulting from the current
80 process of choice of the other members of the Commission (“They shall be selected, on
81 the basis of the suggestions made by Member States, in accordance with the criteria set
82 out in paragraph 3, second subparagraph –The members of the Commission shall be
83 chosen on the ground of their general competence and European commitment from
84 persons whose independence is beyond doubt. –, and paragraph 5, second
85 subparagraph –reflecting the demographic and geographical range of all the Member
86 States –”), they should be proposed to the European Council by the Commission’s
87 President-elect according to his and their political persuasion

88 **Taking into account:**

- 89 - that, to elect the head of the European Commission, a majority of MEPs is required;
- 90 - that for a single European political party to win the largest number of votes in European
91 elections could not be enough to achieve a majority in the European Parliament;
- 92 - that a coalition of political parties could be necessary to elect the President of the
93 European Commission;

94 **Calls for**

- 95 - The European Parliament to confirm and extend the above described “Spitzenkandidat”
96 process in the coming European elections, to oppose any manoeuvre by the Member
97 States to keep it under guardianship, so refusing the expression of the European citizens
98 in the pace of business;
- 99 - The European political parties to restart that process, and more specifically to summon
100 their conventions before the end of this year to approve the lead candidates proposed
101 for the Presidency of the European Commission, and the common electoral
102 programmes, in order to prevent the choice of the President of the European
103 Commission from being taken secretly and behind closed doors by the European
104 Council;
- 105 - The European political parties to make their top candidate for the Presidency of the
106 European Commission an actual candidate to the European Parliament as list leader in
107 all 27 Member States electoral constituencies, including in their regional subdivisions, if
108 any;
- 109 - The European political parties to form, prior to the electoral campaign, coalitions that
110 have the potential to achieve a majority of MEPs, and/or to indicate their preferred
111 coalition partners after the election;
- 112 - The National and European political parties of the same political family to form
113 partnerships during the electoral campaigns in order to foster the development of
114 transnational parties;

- 115 - The National political parties in Member States to include their respective European
116 political party logo in the European campaign materials and ballots, as well as to
117 advertise in their electoral propaganda and merchandising (leaflets, billboards, online
118 media, etc.) their respective top candidate (Spitzenkandidat);
- 119 - The European Parliament to reform the European electoral law in a way that ballots
120 should show the logo of the European political parties to which the national parties
121 belong and the name of the lead candidates, in order for European citizens be aware
122 that they vote not only to choose the MEPs, but also candidates to the Presidency of the
123 European Commission, and in general that encourage European and national parties to
124 create and reinforce partnerships;
- 125 - The European Parliament to reform Regulation No 1141/2014 of the European
126 Parliament and of the Council of 22 October 2014 on the statute and funding of
127 European political parties, to authorise parties to nominate candidates for the European
128 elections;
- 129 - The Commission's President-elect to play an active role in the choice of the members of
130 the Commission, so as to give it a political consistency, and facilitate the public political
131 debate with regard to European policies;
- 132 - Member States and government leaders to renounce on the nomination of a
133 commissioner from their respective Member States at the end of the elections, to force
134 the newly elected EC president to constitute a European government, disregarding the
135 nationality of its members and the number of Member States represented.
- 136 - Backs the "double proportionality" proposal for the attribution of EP seats, since this
137 method safeguards both (1) the representation of every political family according to
138 electoral results achieved at European level, in conformity with the principle "one
139 person-one vote" and (2) a representation of every Member State based on the results
140 of competing political forces in that State, within its pre-ordained seat contingent as
141 specified by provisions in force regarding the composition of the European parliament