

PROPOSAL FOR A RESOLUTION [1.2] OF THE UEF FEDERAL COMMITTEE ON THE EUROPEAN UNION ELECTORAL REFORM

Presented by UEF France

1 The UEF Federal Committee, meeting in Berlin on 22 April 2018,

2 Referring to:

- 3 • the resolution on the European political parties (adopted on 24 November 2004), calling for a
4 more prominent role of parties in the democratic debate and the strengthening of alliances
5 between European and national parties; asking for the MEPs to be elected under the banner of
6 European parties, hence proposing their candidate to the European Commission (EC)
7 presidency;
- 8 • the resolution on « the completion of European political unity » (adopted on 18 June 2017),
9 asking for the reinforcement of the *Spitzenkandidaten* process by the creation of transnational
10 lists;
- 11 • the resolution on “a pan European constituency for the 2019 European elections” (adopted on
12 22 October 2017),

13 Considering:

- 14 • UEF-France resolution on “the reinforcement of the democracy” (adopted on 7th October 2017),
15 proposing to support the reinforcement of European parties, the transformation of national
16 parties into transnational ones and to substitute transnationally elected MEPs to the former
17 British MEP seats;
- 18 • The resolution of the European Parliament (EP) on “the European Union electoral law reform”
19 (adopted on 11 November 2015), proposing to improve European parties’ visibility and to create
20 a common constituency, where lists would be led by *Spitzenkandidaten*;
- 21 • The initiative of the Constitutional Affairs (AFCO) Committee, adopted on 23 January 2018 on
22 the “*EP composition*”, proposing that a share of the British MEP vacant seats is to be “partly or
23 totally allocated to new countries joining the EU and/or transnational lists”;

24 Reasserting the necessity to develop a European democratic space, particularly to have a public
25 debate on European policies during the European elections, where political parties would play a key
26 role;

27 Reasserting that the main concern of the Union of European federalists is to set up a federation;

28 Considering that European elections are a unique momentum to develop the feeling of a common
29 belonging and to gather every European actor to achieve a common goal;

30 Considering in this twofold perspective that the scrutiny mode must encourage the creation of
31 transnational political parties that would shape the public debate and interact with the institutions
32 at the local, national and European levels;

33 Acknowledging that the European institutional and regulatory framework is still distinguishing
34 European and national parties. The evolution toward transnational parties requires to immediately:

- 35 • help the European parties to play their role according to the treaties, i.e. contribute « *to the*
36 *formation of a European political consciousness and the expression to the will of Union’s*
37 *citizens* », giving them a more prominent role for the European elections

38 • Foster the Europeanization of national parties by encouraging them to carry on public
39 debate over European topics;

40 • Foster synergies between national and European parties of the same political family.

41 Supporting proposals made by the European Parliament, stating that:

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 program of the European parties;

45 • European parties nominate their candidates to the EC presidency.

46 Considering nonetheless these proposals to be inadequate to radically changing the nature of these
47 elections, where national political considerations are still paramount;

48 Considering that:

49 • The EP and European Council refused the principle of transnational lists

50 • There is no consensus regarding the *Spitzenkandidaten* process;

51 • No major reform of the electoral law will turn into force before 2024 elections.

52 • Transnational lists, as proposed by the EP, would lead to the institutionalization of the
53 *Spitzenkandidaten* principle and give the right to citizens to cast a ballot for a candidate
54 living in another EU country;

55 It is time to adopt a long-term thinking about concrete ways to Europeanise elections and foster
56 public debate between political parties, respecting the following principles:

57 • Europeanize elections for all the seats to fill, hence applying Lisbon treaty disposals, stating
58 that MEPs represent every citizen of the Union;

59 • Increase the legitimacy of the EP with the elections of all members under European parties'
60 names, registered as such by the competent European authority, instead of multiple
61 national parties;

62 • Gather political national and European parties of the same political family with partnerships
63 over the electoral campaigns to foster the development of transnational parties;

64 • Encourage citizens to express their preference for a global program, embodied by a
65 candidate to the EC presidency.

66 Demands a reform of the European Union electoral law that will encourage European and national
67 parties to create and reinforce partnerships. These partnerships must require the adoption, before
68 the elections, of a common European manifesto, a concertation over the candidate's designation,
69 the elaboration of electoral propaganda material and the implementation of transnational electoral
70 campaigns.

71 Specifically requests that:

72 • Campaign material and ballot papers display the names and logos of European political
73 parties next to those of the national member parties;

74 • Votes must go first to European parties for the allocation of all seats to clarify the stakes of
75 the election. The results in every constituency should therefore first indicate the European

76 parties.

77 Backs Professor Friedrich Pukelsheim's proposal, made to the AFCO Committee during his audition
78 of 4 December 2014, for the attribution of the EP seats according to the "double proportionality"
79 method. This method grants an equal representation for every political family and a representation
80 of every Member State given the results in the national constituencies (limited by the number of
81 pre-attributed seats, defined by the EP rules);

82 Requests a revision of the Regulation No 1141/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council
83 of 22 October 2014 on the statute and funding of European political parties, to authorise parties to
84 nominate candidates for the European elections;

85 Demands the election of the EC president to be done according to the results of the European
86 election. The citizen could then choose between different governmental programs for the EU. Every
87 idea that would contribute to give more visibility and strength to the so called *Spitzenkandidaten*
88 process should be considered.

89 Invites State and government leaders to renounce on the nomination of a commissioner from their
90 respective Member States at the end of the elections, to force the newly elected EC president to
91 constitute a European government, disregarding the nationality of its members and the number of
92 Member States represented.

AMENDMENTS TO PROPOSAL FOR A RESOLUTION 1.2.

Amendment n.	1	<i>submitted by François MENNERAT</i>	
Line number(s):	74		
Original text		Amended text	
Votes must go first to European parties...		Ultimately, however, votes are formally and explicitly cast for European parties...	
Explanatory statement:			
Traduttore traditore...			

Amendment n.	2	<i>submitted by François MENNERAT</i>	
Line number(s):	79..81		
Original text		Amended text	
This method grants an equal representation for every political family and a representation 80 of every Member State given the results in the national constituencies (limited by the number of 81 pre-attributed seats, defined by the EP rules);		This method safeguards both (1) the representation of every political family according to electoral results achieved at European level, in conformity with the principle “one person-one vote” and (2) a representation of every Member State based on the results of competing political forces in that State, within its pre-ordained seat contingent as specified by provisions in force regarding the composition of the European parliament;	
Explanatory statement:			
Traduttore traditore...			

PROPOSAL FOR A RESOLUTION (1.2) ON THE EUROPEAN UNION ELECTORAL REFORM

Explanatory statement submitted by the presenter

We are at an impasse. Since the last reform in 2002, no progress was made to Europeanize EP elections. Our fight for transnational lists which we have had for near twenty years, re-launched by Andrew Duff in 2011 and reinforced since the 2014 elections by the Spitzenkandidaten argument, is getting bogged down.

Today we are not in the perspective of the 2019 elections, but at best in those of 2024. The time has therefore come to engage into a new in-depth reflection that is inspired by a long-term vision and formulate new proposals accordingly. These proposals should target the **Europeanisation of elections for all seats** and they must be fully **in line with our federalist vision** of the European Union.

Political parties are the main actors in any election and have a key role in facilitating public debate. While as federalists we campaign for a European Union with institutions based on the principles of federalism, logically we should also campaign for the emergence of transnational political parties interacting with institutions at diverse levels of the federation, and therefore organized themselves in a federal way. The level of political decision determines the level of intervention of a political party. Likewise, only transnational parties will be able to animate the public debate by respecting the hierarchy of issues, from local to federal.

The purpose of this resolution is to place European elections in the context of this long-term goal of creating transnational parties. European elections, therefore, must be an instrument of cohesion between all political parties of the same political family, which is far from being the case, on the contrary, with the current proposal for transnational lists. As now proposed, beside creating two categories of MEPs, transnational lists lead to the cohabitation of lists presented, for some by the European parties and, for the others, by the national parties, dividing these parties instead of bringing them together. Preferably, the future reform of the electoral law should provide legal incentives for a genuine partnership between national parties and the European party within the same political family, thus favouring, in the long term, some streamlining of the ideological offer and the emergence of true transnational political parties.

The resolution acknowledges the fact that, for the time being and in the absence of transnational parties, there is a clear distinction between national parties and European parties. Consequently, since we are contemplating European elections, it is proposed that European parties be put in the front line. Considering also that the EP proposals (mere visibility of the European party logo in campaign materials and ballot papers) are insufficient, the resolution proposes that all votes for all seats be formally cast for the European parties.

The benefits are many. Essentially, on the one hand, this will not fail to provoke a decisive psychological impact on voters who will at long last understand what is at stake, and politicians can no longer escape from campaigning on European issues. On the other hand, this will increase the legitimacy of the EP, with MEPs being identified with a recognized European party instead of a myriad of national parties. The resolution thus revives with the UEF old resolution of 21 November 2004 which had already proposed that MEPs be elected under the aegis of the European parties.

However, we do not deny ourselves. The resolution reaffirms our support for transnational lists and the Spitzenkandidaten process. The essential difference is that it is requested to make, in the first place, a reform that applies to **all seats** with **all MEPs** being elected under the aegis of the European parties. As a result, the main criticism of transnational lists, namely the creation of two categories of MEPs, is no longer justified. Transnational lists simply become a way to enlarge voters' choice for non-residents prominent European personalities, while the Europeanisation of the elections is ensured for all seats.

From a political viewpoint, this proposal is likely to be more acceptable than transnational lists advocated in isolation. There is neither supra-national nor any top-down dimension. National/regional constituencies are maintained to the discretion of Member States. European manifestos are adopted within each political family according to procedures that are agreed by national parties. Those parties continue to play a primary role in the selection of candidates and in the conduct of electoral campaigns. Simply, votes are formally cast for the European party to which they are affiliated, which looks quite logical in the case of European elections.

This resolution is a simple and **full** response to all recurrent problems of EP elections. It fits within a long-term vision: a bottom-up approach towards the creation of transnational parties.