

EP elections and Lisbon Treaty: with more power comes more responsibility

Members Council, The Hague 29th November 2013

BACKGROUND

The 2014 European elections will be the first to be held under the Lisbon Treaty, which enhances the role of the EU citizen as a political actor in the EU and strengthens the powers of the European Parliament, consolidating its role as co-legislator and giving it greater responsibilities.

In addition, for the first time, the main European political parties committed themselves to nominate top- candidates who could also candidate for Commission President.

These steps towards a more democratic Europe are clearly reflected in the three principles of democratic governance confirmed in the Treaty: Democratic equality, Representative democracy, and Participatory democracy.

EMI DEMANDS

To European citizens

With the worrying rise of anti-European parties and alliances, the EMI reminds all European citizens of their responsibility to give legitimacy to the EP, and calls on them to exercise their civil right to vote in the 2014 European elections by strongly expressing their support to parties proposing a future for the EU and not wishing to tear it apart.

To political parties

The EMI welcomes the institutional innovations brought by the Lisbon Treaty and calls on the political parties to communicate widely on their top candidates in order that citizens know they can entrust the new EP with the responsibility of implementing the electoral program they voted for.

The EMI also urges the political parties to lead a real European campaign, focusing on European topics, not exclusively national ones. This should be reflected by the top candidates in their TV debates, planned in the spring 2014, which should be broadly broadcasted in order that their message is transmitted to as many citizens as possible.

To the European Council

The EMI urges the European Council to fully respect the provisions of the Lisbon Treaty regarding the proposal for the President of the Commission, especially article 17 (7) TEU and declaration Nr. 11, and thus to consult the European Parliament in due time before the nomination of a candidate for Commission President. In its nomination the European Council must take into account the result of the elections to the European Parliament, as demanded by article 17 (7) TEU and take into account the top -candidates of the European Political Parties.

To the European Parliament

The European Parliament must insist on its rights granted by the Lisbon Treaty and urge the European Council to nominate only top-candidates of the European Political Parties for the post of Commission President. The European Parliament should not elect any other person than the top-candidates as Commission President, unless it is impossible to find a majority for any of the top-candidates.

The further democratization of the functioning of the EU should be made more visible in the eyes of the citizens through the European Parliament power to decide together with the member states on the budget of the EU.

Furthermore, the EMI is worried by the increasing number of co-decision procedures which exclude civil society and external expertise. 80% of the decisions are reached during the trilogues and, therefore, the EMI calls on the EP, as a parliament of the people, to take more leadership and improve communications with civil society.