

The President

D 306794 08.04.2016

Senator Paddy Burke
Cathaoirleach
Seanad Éireann
Leinster House
DUBLIN 2

Dear Cathaoirleach,

I would like to thank the Houses of the Oireachtas for their submission concerning the draft Council decision adopting the provisions amending the Act concerning the election of the members of the European Parliament by direct universal suffrage (2015/0907/APP), adopted by the European Parliament under Article 223 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) and transmitted to you at the end of last year. I have referred your submission to the competent committee and I am convinced that, together with the other submissions received, it will provide important input for the further consideration of this matter.

As you know, Article 223 TFEU sets out a special legislative procedure for the adoption of EU law in this field. The European Parliament shall draw up a proposal to lay down the provisions necessary for the election of its Members in accordance with a uniform procedure or in accordance with principles common to all Member States.

In this framework, the European Parliament has chosen to make a proposal based on principles common to all Member States, therefore not proposing a uniform procedure. Indeed, the Parliament's recent proposal focuses on a limited number of pragmatic and necessary solutions in order to update the current European electoral system dating back to 1976.

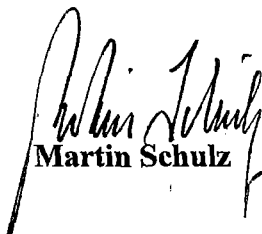
It is now for the Council to lay down the necessary provisions, acting unanimously and after obtaining the consent of the European Parliament, which shall act by a majority of its component Members. These provisions shall enter into force following their approval by the Member States in accordance with their respective constitutional requirements.

I understand that we will have an open dialogue on this important topic at the session on "Strengthening of the European Union" of the forthcoming Conference of Speakers of EU Parliaments in Luxembourg on 22-24 May 2016, which I very much look forward to attending.

My colleagues and I look forward to continuing the valuable dialogue on this issue with national Parliaments in the months to come.

For your information, similar letters have been sent to the other national Parliaments that have so far responded to the European Parliament's proposal.

Yours sincerely,



Martin Schulz