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From:	General Secretariat of the Council
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Subject:	Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL on the statute and funding of European political parties and European political foundations (recast) - outcome of 4 th trilogue meeting

Delegations will find in annex a note from the Presidency on the abovementioned subject

Proposal for a Regulation on the statute and funding of European political parties and European political foundations (EUPPF)

- **Presidency note on the outcome of the political trilogue held on 29/3 2023**

Items discussed at the trilogue:

A. Gender provisions

A compromise prepared at technical level was preliminary endorsed . The provision that EUPPF's governing bodies should be gender balanced, included already in the revised mandate for the Council, was agreed, together with an addition on the introduction of a protocol in EUPPF's internal work to detect, prevent and continuously work against sexual harassment and discrimination on the basis of gender. These provisions are however not subject to any sanction in case of non-compliance.

B. Involvement of non-EU national parties to EUPPFs

The involvement of non-EU parties remains the main issue of this negotiation. The Presidency underlined that the participation of non-EU parties is a very sensitive topic for the Member States and that the Presidency is bound by a very strict mandate whereby a revised Regulation needs to establish clear safeguards against foreign interference. Against this backdrop, the Presidency also gave a short presentation of the revised mandate on the following points:

- Geographical scope on membership
- Governance provisions, safeguards against foreign interference:
 - o New category of associated membership;
 - o Prohibition against granting voting rights to non-EU parties;
 - o Exclusion of members, associated member parties and their individual representatives, targeted by sanctions under Union restrictive;
 - o regular monitoring of the respect of EU values.

The Presidency also informed the Parliament that the Council mandate remains firm on not to allow any membership fees from parties and organisations outside the Union.

Following the Parliament's request at technical level to include Georgia into the geographical scope, the Presidency introduced a draft compromise text, adding a reference to '*European countries with whom the EU has concluded Association Agreements comprising a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area*'. The Parliament regretted in the trilogue that not all countries currently members of EUPPFs were included in the scope, but signalled openness subject to an overall agreement.

Again subject to an overall agreement, and while stressing the importance of a link between paying a fee and the feeling of genuine belonging for non-EU parties, Parliament also signalled openness to the Council's position not to allow any membership fees from outside the EU.

On the subject of governance however, Parliament repeated the importance of the right to autonomy and freedom of association of EUPPFs. Furthermore, the EP stressed the importance of maintaining good relations with the Union's neighbours and eventually paving the way for accession to the EU through membership in EUPPFs. On this basis, and while being open to finding appropriate safeguards against the risk of foreign interference, the co-rapporteurs made clear that the general prohibition on all voting rights of non-EU parties was a red line. No agreement was thus found on this point. Nevertheless, both sides agreed to continue working at technical level with a view to a mutually acceptable "landing zone".

C. Financing of national referenda

The Presidency reiterated the Council's serious concerns and opposition to allowing EUPPFs to finance national referenda and reminded the Parliament that while the Council mandate does not allow for the possibility of EUPPFs to co-finance national referenda together with national parties, it does not exclude all cooperation, allowing for the possibility of co-financing 'joint events'. The Parliament signalled openness towards conceding also on this point, subject to overall agreement.

Annex 1 to the ANNEX

DRAFT compromise gender balance:

Recitals:

(30) European political parties **and European political foundations** should lead by example in closing the gender gap in the political domain. **Their governing bodies should therefore be gender balanced.** European political parties **and European political foundations** should have internal rules **in place** promoting gender balance, **encouraging active participation of women in all its activities, and should invite their member parties to do the same.** **In addition, European political parties** should be transparent about the gender representation of their member parties **and** should provide evidence **■** on their member parties' gender representation as regards candidates to and Members of the European Parliament. The European political parties are also encouraged to provide information in relation to their member parties' on inclusiveness and representation of minorities.

(30a new) European political parties and European political foundations should promote an internal work environment of fair treatment and equal opportunities. To this end, European Political parties and European Political Foundations should put in place a protocol in their internal rules in order to prevent, detect and work continuously against sexual harassment, as well as discrimination on the basis of gender.

Article 6a new:

Requirements for gender balance rules

- 1. Governing bodies of European political parties and European political foundations shall be gender-balanced.*
- 2. European political parties and European political foundations shall have internal mechanisms in place promoting gender balance and encouraging active participation of women in all their activities.*
- 3. European political parties and European political foundations shall have a protocol in place to prevent, detect and work continuously against sexual harassment as well as discrimination on the basis of gender.*

Annex 2 to the ANNEX

DRAFT compromise on geographical scope – addition of Georgia:

Article 2(4) bis new:

'Associated member parties' are political parties having their seat in an EFTA country, in a former EU Member State, in a candidate country, in a country entitled to use the euro as official currency on the basis of a monetary agreement with the EU, and partners having a stabilisation and association agreement with the EU¹ and European countries with whom the EU has concluded Association Agreements comprising a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area.

'Associated member organisations' means organisations having their seat in an EFTA country, in a former EU Member State, in a candidate country, in a country entitled to use the euro as official currency on the basis of a monetary agreement with the EU, and partners having a stabilisation and association agreement with the EU² and European countries with whom the EU has concluded Association Agreements comprising a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area.

¹ This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

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