

AMENDMENT FORM

Suggestion for amendment of Article: 17a and 17b, Part I – Title IV

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Status: Members and alternate members.

Article 17a: Council formations

- ~~1.—The General Affairs Council shall ensure consistency in the work of the Council of Ministers. With the participation of the Commission, it shall prepare meetings of the European Council.~~
- ~~2.—The Legislative Council shall consider and, jointly with the European Parliament, enact European laws and European framework laws, in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution. Each Member State's ministerial representative may be assisted by one or, if necessary, two specialist ministers, reflecting the business on the Council agenda.~~
- ~~3.—The Foreign Affairs Council shall, on the basis of strategic guidelines laid down by the European Council, flesh out the Union's external policies, and ensure that its actions are consistent. It shall be chaired by the Union's Foreign Minister.~~
- ~~4.—The Council shall also meet in the configuration of an Economic and Financial Affairs Council, and a Council on Justice and Security.~~
- ~~5.—The Council, in its General Affairs formation, may decide on further formations.~~
- ~~6.—The European Council may decide by consensus that the Presidency of a Council formation, other than that of Foreign Affairs, should be undertaken by a Member State for a period of at least a year, taking into account European political and geographical balance and the diversity of all Member States.~~

Article 17b: Qualified majority

- ~~1.—When the European Council or the Council take decisions by qualified majority, such a majority shall consist of the majority of Member States, representing at least three fifths of the population of the Union.~~

~~2. Within the European Council, its President and the President of the Commission do not vote.~~

Explanation:

We propose to bring together all relevant provisions on the Council of Ministers in one short resounding Article. This amendment proposal therefore entails the deletion of the proposed Articles 17a and 17 b. Concerning the question of qualified majority voting, an excellent compromise has only just been reached and signed in the Treaty of Accession. We see no need to reopen this compromise. Concerning the question of the presidency of the Council, it is felt that an elected Chairman of The European Council should be combined with the upholding of the present Presidency of the Council to preserve the principle of equality of Member States. Finally, in line with current practice, it is not felt that the question of Council formations should be settled at Treaty level. This is matter for the Council's Rules of Procedure.