

**Speech concerning legislative procedures of the European Union**  
**by senator Edmund Wittbrodt,**  
**Representative of the Polish Parliament to the European Convention**  
**Brussels, 12-13.09.2002.**

Mr. President,

Distinguished Members of the Convention, Ladies and Gentlemen!

Emphasising the need to modernise and strengthen the European Union, I would suggest focusing on following challenges:

**There are too many legislative procedures**

**The procedures are too complex and complicated**

**The legislation process lasts too long**

**The European Parliament does not play sufficient role in the decision-making process**

**and in composing the EU budget**

**We face the democracy deficit**

Therefore, the existing procedures must be simplified.

Referring to the codecision procedure, I suggest maintaining only one system of voting in the Council, to make it more readable. Therefore I would like to propose **the complete abolishment of unanimous voting in the Council within this procedure**. It is important to mention that it actually refers to only three articles in the Treaty of European Community.

My another proposal is **changing the composition of the whole procedure** by eliminating the Conciliation Committee phase, including the Commission in the first reading and introducing strict time limits for each part of this procedure. This solution should shorten and simplify the codecision procedure and strengthen cooperation among three institutions.

**Taking into account the cooperation procedure, I believe that it should be eliminated and replaced by the codecision procedure.** It would reduce the number of procedures and significantly strengthen the role of the European Parliament in the field of economic and monetary policy. It would make the Union closer to the citizens.

To make the decision - making process more democratic and clear, I also postulate that **four cases** including liberalisation of services, adoption of regulations on competition and specific research programmes **should be moved from the qualified majority voting with simple consultation procedure to the codecision.** I regard it as a Community issue, therefore the Parliament should have its contribution.

I consider as well **replacing unanimity with simple consultation by qualified majority voting with codecision in following cases:** adoption of appropriate measures to combat discrimination and measures to achieve economic and social cohesion, which is in accordance with the Nice treaty.

Besides we should **reduce the unanimity within the Council and replace it by qualified majority voting system.** It refers to some cases (like for example: elections in accordance with a uniform procedure, commercial policy: extension to agreements on services and intellectual property, industry, harmonisation of laws) subjected to unanimity with assent, unanimity with simple consultation and unanimity without participation by the Parliament. In the enlarged Union, the unanimity may create a real obstacle in the legislative process. Qualified majority voting system though improves efficiency of the decisions taken in the Council.

Finally, we should focus on the budgetary procedure. I suggest strengthening the role of the Parliament. Therefore, **the division between compulsory and non-compulsory expenditure should be eliminated,** but there is a necessity to maintain the maximum rate of increase.

All these changes lead to more efficient, transparent and democratic decision-making process. More details are included in mine and Marta Fogler's contribution.

Thank you for your attention!