



RESOLUTION

Adoption of a mandatory system of *Spitzenkandidaten* in the selection process of the President of the European Commission

Adopted at the YEPP Council Meeting in Valencia, 14.09.2019

Recognizing that:

- In accordance with the Treaty of the European Union (TEU) it is the responsibility of the European Council to "propose to the European Parliament a candidate for President of the Commission"¹.
- Neither the TEU nor any other legally binding agreement literally enshrines the system of *Spitzenkandidaten* in the process of nomination or confirmation of the President of the Commission.
- The TEU requires Member States to "[take] into account the [results of] the elections to the European Parliament"² when proposing to the EP a candidate for President of the Commission.
- The system of *Spitzenkandidaten* has been used in the previous two elections to the EP but was only concluded in 2014 with the nomination and confirmation of Jean-Claude Juncker as President of the Commission.
- The system of *Spitzenkandidaten* is preceded in several European countries, such as Federal Republic of Germany and the Republic of Austria, where it is also not mandated by law but a customary practice.
- In the TEU the Member States have committed themselves to the promotion of Democracy.

Acknowledging that:

- Albeit the current nominee for President of the European Commission has not been a candidate in the election for the European Parliament, she nevertheless is democratically legitimized given the approval of the elected Members of the European Parliament.
- A European debate evolving around the alleged 'Democracy Deficit' within the European Union has surrounded every election since the adoption of the TEU.
- The turnout of the elections to the EP is generally lower than of national elections.

¹ Article 17 (7).

² Article 17 (7).



- A majority of European citizens questioned in surveys have expressed their support for the system of *Spitzenkandidaten*.

YEPP calls on:

- The European Council to only nominate a Spitzenkandidat of a European political party as Commission President who can command a majority in the Council and in the Parliament
- The European Union to adopt this procedure during the next Treaty review.
- The European Council and the EP to strengthen European democracy and thus increasing the influence of each individual European voter over the politics and policies of the EU.
- The designated President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, to honour her pledge to strengthen the system of *Spitzenkandidaten* in respect to the next election to the EP in 2024.