

Reconnecting Europe with its Citizens

Federalists' Position for the Adoption and the Amending of the European Constitution

The Federal Committee of the UEF meeting at Otzenhausen on 17-18 May 2003,

A. Recalling the demands of the UEF to the Convention laid down in the resolution “The federalist view of the future of Europe” adopted in April 2002 by the UEF Federal Committee in Mallorca which will also serve as the basis for our evaluation of the proposals passed by the Convention;

B. Affirming that in case the Convention passes a text that amounts to a huge step towards a more democratic, effective and transparent Union as demanded by the Mallorca resolution thus working out a true European Constitution, this draft must be submitted to the citizens of Europe;

C. Emphasising that the European Parliament has the power to influence the IGC by insisting on certain conditions before giving its legally necessary assent to the opening the IGC;

D. Recognising that many member states already have the constitutional basis for a referendum on fundamental changes to the founding documents of the European integration and that it is therefore certain that the European Constitution will be voted on by the citizens of several of the future 25 member countries.

has adopted the following resolution:

PART I: A Democratic Procedure for the Adoption of the European Constitution

1. If the Convention drafts a true European Constitution it should be submitted to a **Europe-wide vote simultaneously with the elections to the European Parliament on 10-13 June 2004**; such a vote would allow a true European debate on the merits of the Constitution. Isolated national referenda could be held hostage to national political debates raising the danger of negative outcomes because of purely internal reasons.
2. The **question put to the citizens should be identical** in all member states. The text of the Constitution and an explanatory note should be distributed to every European citizen well in advance of the vote.
3. The European Constitution should enter into force if
 - (a) **simple majority of citizens voted “Yes”** in the Europe-wide vote and
 - (b) **the European Parliament has voted in favour.**

No quorum or minimum participation requirement would be necessary for the European vote to be valid; the Constitution will enter into force in those member states in which the majority of the population has voted in favour.

4. The proposed procedure means that **no** member state has a **veto** allowing it to block the entry into force of the Constitution. Member states where a majority of the citizens have rejected the Constitution could be given the possibility to ask for a postponement of its entry into force for a maximum of twelve months. During that time these member states can decide whether their citizens have the chance **to vote on the Constitution a second time**. If there is no positive second referendum any such state shall no longer be considered a member of the European Union and can negotiate **special relations with the Union** outside the Constitution.

PART II. Procedure for amending the Constitution after its entry into force

5. The authority to initiate subsequent amendments to the Constitution should be vested in the **European Parliament, the Council and the Commission**. Substantial amendments are to be prepared by a **Convention**.
6. Draft amendments should have to be adopted by the **European Parliament with a two thirds majority** of its members and **the Council voting by qualified majority**.