

AMENDMENT FORM

Suggestion for amendment of Article : Art. 17

Suggestion for protocol :

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Status : - Members and Alternates

Article 17 : The Council of Ministers

1. The Council of Ministers shall, jointly with the European Parliament, enact legislation **and be the budgetary authority** and shall carry out policy-making and co-ordinating functions, as laid down in the Constitution.
2. **With a view to ensuring the consistency and continuity of the Union's policies and actions, the Council shall recommend to the European Council for adoption a multi-annual strategic programme for the three years to come, drawn up in close co-operation with the Commission. In the light of that multi-annual strategic programme, and following appropriate consultations, the Presidencies due to office in the following year shall jointly submit a draft annual operational programme of Council activities during that year.**
3. The Council of Ministers shall consist of a representative of each Member State at ministerial level ~~for each of its formations. Only This representative may~~ **authorised to** commit the **government of the** Member State in question ~~and cast its vote.~~
4. **Where vote is taken, any Member of the Council may also act on behalf of not more than one other member.**
5. **The Presidency of the Council shall be held in turn by each Member State for a term of six months in the order decided by the Council acting unanimously.**

The Council acting unanimously may agree other arrangements for chairing Council's configurations and committees provided for in the Constitutional treaty with the exception of the European Council, the Council in its General Affairs configuration and the Committee consisting of the Permanent Representatives of the Member States.

The Council shall decide on the Presidency for the other Committees and Working Parties established in accordance with its Rules of Procedure.

6. The Council shall meet when convened by its President on his own initiative or at the request of one of its members or of the Commission. It shall adopt its Rules of Procedure .

7. Except where the Constitution provides otherwise, decisions of the Council shall be taken by qualified majority. **When the Council takes decisions by a qualified majority, the votes of the members shall be weighted as set out in article X of Part Two¹.**

8. The Committee consisting of the Permanent Representatives of the member States shall be responsible for preparing the work of the Council and for carrying out the tasks assigned to it by the Council. The Committee may adopt procedural decisions in cases provided for in the Council's Rules of Procedure. The Presidency of the Committee shall be held in turn by each Member State for a term of six months in the order decided by the Council acting unanimously.

9. The Council and the European Council shall be assisted by a General-Secretariat, under the responsibility of a Secretary - General. The Secretary-General shall be appointed by the Council and contributes to ensure continuity.

10. The Council shall meet in such configurations as decided by the European Council.

¹ This article would corresponds to the provisions of the Treaty of Nice and of the Treaty of Accession. Should the Nice package deal on institutions be reopened, another acceptable option would be to introduce single double majority where a decision would require the support of both the majority of the population and the majority of the Member States.

Explanation (if any) :