

## AMENDMENT FORM

**Suggestion for amendment of Article III-326 Part III of the Constitution: creation of new article III 326 bis.**

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### **Article III-326bis (new)**

**Taking account of the structural, social and economic situation of the areas of extremely low population density in Finland and Sweden, aggravated by their distant location, long distances to markets and cold climate, a European law or framework law of the Council shall lay down the conditions of application of the Constitution to those regions, insofar as concerns State aids and conditions of access to structural funds. The Council shall act after consulting the European Parliament.**

**The measures referred to in the first paragraph shall take account of the special characteristics and constraints of areas of the areas concerned, without undermining the integrity and the coherence of the Union legal order, including the internal market and common policies.**

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### **Explanation (if any) :**

*In the Accession Treaty of Austria, Finland and Sweden (Protocol 6) it was agreed to give the peripheral regions of Finland and Sweden with an extremely low population density a special status (Objective 6) in the framework of the Structural Funds. The eligibility of the regions for assistance from the Structural Funds was re-examined in 1999 simultaneously with the framework Regulation (EEC) No 2081/93 on Structural instruments and policies.*

*The regions of Finland and Sweden with an extremely low population density were assigned Objective 1 status (Council Regulation 1260/99, Article 3) equivalent to that of the ultra-peripheral regions as defined in Article 299, paragraph 2, of the EC Treaty. As the conditions which formed the basis for the special treatment of the regions of Finland and Sweden with extremely low population density are of permanent character, Finland proposes that the treatment of northern regions with an extremely low population density would be recognised in a new Article III-326bis. The special treatment of the northern areas would be restricted to State aids and access to assistance from structural funds.*