

Simplification of legislative instruments and procedures

**Contribution by Ivan Korčok,
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Ladies and gentlemen,

I fully agree with the statement expressed in the first sentence of the final report that „*nothing is more complicated than simplification*“. It is even more evident, when the objective is to achieve a transparent, comprehensible, accountable and at the same time efficient system of decision-making in the EU. From the viewpoint of Slovakia as a prospective member of the EU, the question of simplification is of particular importance. There is a clear and direct link between simplification and the credibility and comprehensibility of the system from the citizen's point of view. The simplification of decision-making instruments and procedures, we think, could also facilitate our process of adaptation to function within the EU after accession.

I would like to appreciate the work done by the working Group IX and I would like to comment on some of its points.

1. We welcome the effort to limit the number of **instruments**. We also agree with the change of terminology used in this field as I am sure, that terms „EU law“, „EU framework law“ or „decision“ will be more comprehensible to the citizens. However, I can see an even higher level of simplification by subsuming proposed „delegated regulations“, „implementing regulations“ and „implementing decisions“ under one type of acts – for example „executive regulations“. I would also like to stress, that the use of non-standard acts too often causes negative impression of EU's legislation and leads to a worse perception of the EU among the public.
2. To the **open method of coordination**. In my understanding the constitutional status of this method would not simplify the system but allow the EU to interfere in areas, where it has no competence.
3. Concerning the **procedures**, we strongly support the introduction of the co-decision procedure as the general rule for the adoption of legislative acts. We also favour introducing the qualified majority voting as the general rule for decision-making in the Council in the framework of the codecision procedure. At the same time we

welcome the introduction of the „open doors“ principle when EU institutions exercise legislative functions.

4. As regards the **budgetary procedure**, it is important to maintain the interinstitutional balance when approving the budget. We support the principles stated in the final report, i. e. the principle of dual budgetary authority, with Council and the EP having an appropriate responsibility. We also lean towards the abolishment of distinction between compulsory and non-compulsory expenditure and the use of simplified co-decision procedure.
5. Finally, concerning the planning mechanism. In my understanding the Interinstitutional Agreement of 1999, there are three parties that negotiate – the Council, the Commission and the EP. Thus, the EP should not be merely limited to giving its assent, as proposed in the report of the working group.

In the course of the debate we have emphasized several times that the new EU should be built on its present basis. We support such a reform, which aims to adjust the existing institutional and legal framework to the new conditions of an enlarged EU. Therefore we reject the creation of new institutions and emphasize the necessity to clarify the division of powers in the triangle of the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission. A special accent has to be laid on the demarcating the line between the legislative and executive branch while bearing in mind the necessity to achieve the aforementioned goals – transparency, comprehensibility and effectiveness.