

Positions of the Greek Government on the  
Intergovernmental Conference  
For the EU Constitution

According to the Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the memorandum of the Greek government to the Italian Presidency, overall, the Greek government supports the Constitutional draft proposed by the Convention and believes it should be adopted by the IGC, without great alterations. In principle, Greece would favour a Constitution with greater political ambition that would allow the EU move down the federal road. However, it realizes that the current political realities in Europe are not yet mature for such a step.

In particular, on the presidency of the Council, the Greek government believes that except of the Foreign Affairs Council (which should have a fixed Presidency), the Presidency of the Council should be subject to the rotation system on a strictly equal basis among Member States. It is in favour of the introduction of Team Presidencies, preferably shared by 3 member states and of one-year terms. Both the composition of the teams and the allocation of the different Council formations should be fixed in advance based on geographical and political equality. On defence, the Greek government favours the inclusion of a mutual assistance clause within the framework of European Common Defence Policy. With regard to CFSP, Greece supports the adoption of Qualified Majority Voting, five years after the EU Constitution has been put into force, with the exception of cases when a member state evokes vital national interests. In this case, the proposal would be forwarded to a European Council where the issue will be decided by unanimity. It is also in favour of including “the strengthening and development of mutual political solidarity among member states” should be included in the EU Foreign Minister’s responsibilities (art. 27 of the draft Constitution).

On the number of the Commissioners, Greece favours a Commission of twenty-five members, only fifteen of whom would have voting rights. However, it proposes that the ten Commissioners with no general voting rights, be able to vote on issues of competence so that they can be effective. On Qualified Majority Voting, instead of the threshold of a majority of states and 60% of the EU population for a proposal to pass, Greece proposes a double majority: majority of member states and majority of EU population. The Greek government argues that the number of members of European Parliament per Member State should be five, instead of four (art. 19). Furthermore, Greece would like to see “tourism” included in the policy areas of shared competence (art. 13 of the draft Constitution). Regarding EMU, it believes that “contribution to full employment” should be added to the goals of the ECB. Finally, Greece thinks that article 59 (voluntary withdrawal from the EU) should be deleted, as it will only cause ambiguity and political confusion.

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