



DIRECTORATE GENERAL FOR INTERNAL POLICIES

POLICY DEPARTMENT
CITIZENS' RIGHTS AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS 

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Degressive proportionality in the European Union

Degressive proportionality vs proportionality (apportionment)

Proportionality

- precisely defined
- free choice:
 - rounding procedure

Degressive prop.

- a plethora of options
- free choice:
 - allocation scheme
 - rounding procedure

Degressive prop. – an algorithm

- we have to set three variables:
 - the **number of seats in the EP** – S ;
 - the **allocation scheme** – A ;
 - the **rounding method** – $[\cdot]$.
- the allocation scheme:

p (*population*) $\rightarrow A_d(p)$ (*seats*)

$$\sum_{i=1}^N [A_d(p_i)] = S$$

Seventy seven allocations

Number of seats:

- 751
- $678 = 751 - 73$
- optimal size
- minimum size

Rounding method:

- downward
- to the nearest integer
- upward

Allocation scheme:

- base + prop (CC)
- piecewise linear
- quadratic (parabolic)
- base + power (MCC)
- homographic
- linear + hyperbolic
- min-max proportional

With/without the UK

Balanced solutions

- **some transfer of seats is inevitable**
 - *positive*: France, the United Kingdom (if applicable), Spain, Estonia
 - *neutral*: Germany, Italy, Poland, the Netherlands, Denmark, Finland, Slovakia, Ireland, Croatia, Slovenia, Latvia, Cyprus, Luxembourg, Malta
 - *negative*: Romania, Belgium, Greece, the Czech Republic, Portugal, Sweden, Hungary, Austria, Bulgaria, Lithuania
- **change the *status quo* as little as possible**

Base + power scheme

- the Modified Cambridge Compromise (*base + power* scheme)
 - expresses more accurately the principle of degressive proportionality
 - results in the minimum transfer of seats in the EP, (regardless of its size), with the rounding method adjusted to the size
 - *preserving the current size of the EP (751)*
 - *reducing the size by all British seats (to 678)*
 - *intermediate solution*

Smooth transition

- Brexit: an opportunity to implement a **smooth transition** to a new balanced allocation system in such a way that each Member State **obtains at least the current number of seats** in the EP
- The **minimum size** of the EP (after Brexit) for which such a smooth solution exists is **721**

Population data

- the exact numbers of MEPs are given in our briefing
- they are sensitive to the population data
- we use the based on the Council Decision 2016/2353 of 8 December 2016
- decision on the data to be used and the frequency of their updating

Balance of power

- transition to the MCC system
 - increases the share of representatives for a few of the largest Member States and reduces it for the medium sized ones
- a simultaneous modification of the voting system in the **Council**
- the **Jagiellonian Compromise** (*square root weights + optimal quota*) strengthens the voting power of the medium sized states

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