

# ENRIQUE BARON CRESPO MEP: "THE LISBON TREATY SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASES THE POWERS OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT"

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***MEP Enrique Baron Crespo (PES), former president of the European Parliament (1989 &ndash; 1992) and PES Group president (1999 &ndash; 2004) commented in an interview for Gateway Europe certain aspects of the institutional reform of the European Union, introduced with the Lisbon Treaty.***

Crespo attended the official opening of a photo exhibition in Sofia on March 19, 2007, on the occasion of EP&rsquo;s 50th anniversary. The event was organized by the Information office of the European Parliament in Bulgaria.

In his words, the European Union will have more democracy due to the entering into force of the Lisbon Treaty, because the EP will have more powers in more spheres of the European policies. At present the EP has powers in around 35 spheres, this number will increase up to 85, which means that the MEPs will have legislative powers in almost all spheres of activities of the EU, Crespo explained. Moreover, the Lisbon treaty enables the national parliaments to more closely follow the processes, that are taking place on EU level, he added.

Asked on how the relations between the EP and the national parliaments will change, MEP Enrique Baron Crespo commented that the forthcoming changes, stemming from the Lisbon Treaty entering into force, will enable the MEPs and the members of the national parliaments to work better together, in cooperation. This will be the result of the fact that the national parliaments will be given greater opportunities to follow the legislative process. &ldquo;We have to admit, however, that we are not competitors with each other. We work together with the national parliaments. In fact I think that we are expanding the scope of our cooperation&rdquo;, the Spanish MEP added.

In Crespo&rsquo;s words, it is not an easy task to convince the European citizens that it is important to vote in elections for European Parliament. &ldquo;It is like going to school. If we want a subject, taught at school, to be interesting for the pupils, it has to be presented in an interesting and understandable way. Simultaneously, we have to rely on the support not only of the political parties, but also of the civil society and of course of the media&rdquo;, Enrique Baron Crespo concluded.