

# European Council/ALDE

## Danish and Belgian liberals against treaty change

By Chiade O'Shea | Thursday 28 October 2010

Treaty change is not necessary in order to exact efficient controls over the European/eurozone economies, according to Liberal politicians meeting before the European Council on 28 December.

The Belgian and Danish Liberal voices expressed their scepticism at German Chancellor Angela Merkel's idea of amending the Lisbon Treaty to allow punishments for countries that persistently break rules on budgets, such as suspending their voting rights. They argued for less extreme measures to monitor member states' economies and prevent future crises.

"We don't like the idea of any treaty changes," Danish Prime Minister Lars Lokke Rasmussen said flat out. "We have just ratified the Lisbon Treaty and to start a new process, that would be rather difficult," he added. He noted in particular that he was "frankly not in favour" of withdrawing voting rights but said it was important to let Merkel, and her supporter French president Nicolas Sarkozy, express their view. We have to take them seriously," he concluded.

Reporting the Belgian government's position, Annemie Neyts-Uyttebroeck, ELDR Party President, echoed the Danish view that it was "rather reluctant to start again the whole procedure of amendments to the treaties, changes to the treaties and after that the difficult ratification procedure". And while she too said she was open to listening to Merkel's domestic concerns about the German constitutional court about the current situation, she reiterated that "normally there are ways to perpetuate the control or monitoring mechanism without falling foul of national constitutional principles". Neyts was also wary that the Council's decision should not "give eurosceptics and people who are against the Union this wonderful opportunity to launch this campaign against the EU".

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