Press release | 13.03.2012

Inheritiance and succession law

New EU rules will clear up uncertainties with cross-border inheritances

The European Parliament today voted to adopt new EU legislation on inheritance and succession aimed at simplifying the rules for cross-border inheritances (Succession Directive). The Greens welcomed the legislative agreement, with Green legal affairs spokesperson **Eva Lichtenberger** stating after the vote:

"The rules adopted today will help simplify the process of cross-border inheritances. The situation surrounding inheritances can be traumatic enough for those involved and removing administrative complications is one measure which can help mitigate this.

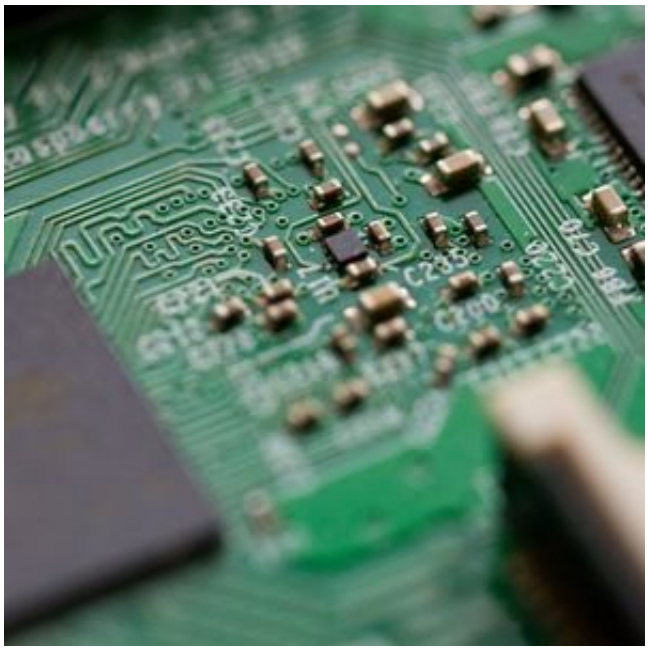
"In future, EU citizens will be free to choose that their national law applies to the succession but, if no choice is made, the applicable law will be that of the country in which the deceased had their centre of interests. This will help end the often long and costly disputes about cross-border inheritance.

"For the Greens, it was important to ensure that same-sex couples in civil partnerships are not discriminated against based on the different legal rights recognised or afforded in different jurisdictions. This has thankfully been secured in the final legislation adopted today.

"It is regrettable that Ireland, the UK and Denmark have chosen not to participate in the legislation, particularly in the case of the UK, given the high proportion of inheritances in non-transparent trusts and funds in the UK. Unfortunately, it was impossible to overcome this roadblock in negotiations with the Council."

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