



Draft as of 8 January 2017

## Meeting of the Chairpersons of COSAC 21-22 January 2018, Sofia, Bulgaria

### Draft outline for the 29th Bi-annual Report of COSAC

#### CHAPTER 1: The Future of Europe

The *White paper on the future of Europe*<sup>1</sup>, launched by the European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker on 1 March 2017, is a reflection of the many and constantly evolving challenges that Europe is currently facing. Its five scenarios are not only a distinctive image of the European reality, but also a clear message that Europe is in need of change.

One of the scenarios proposed in the White paper is "Doing less more efficiently". It suggests that the EU does not take action unless it is more effective than the one taken at national, regional or local level. The principles of proportionality and subsidiarity are embedded as the main issues of the scenario, along with the possibility certain policies to be returned or re-delegated to the national Parliaments.

Therefore, the first Chapter of the 29<sup>th</sup> Bi-annual Report is dedicated to this particular topic. In this regard, the chapter itself is divided into two sections.

The first section focuses on the **"Task Force on Subsidiarity, Proportionality and "Doing Less More Efficiently"**. Its aim is to take stock of national Parliaments' views on the future of the European Union and on the decision making process, bringing the EU agenda closer to the European citizens.

Following the overall idea of the White Paper on new approaches to the difficulties Europe has to cope with, the second section concentrates on the possibility for **future enlargement of the Union**. The European Commission has recently communicated that the integration of other countries into the Union family remains a topical issue and is a matter of common interest.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/white-paper-future-europe-reflections-and-scenarios-eu27\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/white-paper-future-europe-reflections-and-scenarios-eu27_en)



With view of the mentioned above, the purpose of this section is to examine whether the Parliaments/Chambers are open to the European perspective to other countries and the challenges and opportunities that the enlargement could bring.

## CHAPTER 2: The next Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027

With regard to the next Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027, Chapter two of the 29<sup>th</sup> Bi-annual Report will be concentrating on the **Cohesion Policy after 2020** and the **EU budget in the context of Brexit aftermath**.

Having in mind the upcoming proposal of the European Commission for the next Multiannual Financial Framework 2021 – 2027, an important topical matter is the future of the Cohesion Policy after 2020 – to keep it, modify it, rethink it, reconsider its scope, etc. The EU's main investment policy aims to reduce the differences in the economic development between the regions, macro-regions and the Member States.

Following this concept, the goal of the first section is to explore whether the Parliaments/Chambers have already discussed the future of the Cohesion policy and if they have, what is their vision on the topic.

The negotiations on Brexit have just entered their second stage. Along with the other aspects (social, economic, legal, etc.) of UK's withdrawal from the Union, in the current reality the influence of Brexit on the EU budget could be crucial. Taking into account that UK is one of the biggest net donors in the 2014 – 2020 Programming period, Brexit could trigger significant structural changes in the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021 – 2027.

While the first section focusses on the expenditure side of the MFF, the second part emphasises on its revenue side. It raises a number of important issues before the parliamentarians, such as the total MFF amount for 2021-2027 in comparison to the one of 2014 – 2020, and the philosophy behind the financing of the expenditure policies (such as the share of the “genuine” own resources, a possible new approach for calculating the VAT-based revenues, the size of the GNI-based national contributions, etc.). The section seeks to summarise the views of the national Parliaments and the European Parliament on the next 7-year EU budget.



## CHAPTER 3: “European Pillar of Social Rights”

The third and final chapter of the 29th Bi-annual Report is dedicated to the **“European Pillar of Social Rights”**, presented on 26 April 2017 by the European Commission and proclaimed by the EU leaders at the Social Summit in Gothenburg, Sweden, on 17 November 2017. Delivering on those principles and rights is a joint responsibility of the EU institutions, member states, Parliaments/Chambers, social partners and other stakeholders.

Labour markets and societies are evolving quickly. They are facing changes due to the digital revolution, the transformation of work patterns and the societal and demographic developments. Therefore, the goal of the European Pillar of Social Rights is to make sure that the Member States are answering adequately to those changes by promoting equal opportunities, access to the labour market, fair working conditions, social protection and inclusion.

In chapter 3 of the 29th Bi-annual Report of COSAC, Parliaments/Chambers will be asked to give their views on how social and employment issues and related policies at a European and national level, can be better monitored and coordinated at the level of Parliaments/Chambers while respecting national governmental competences. This Chapter will also examine parliamentary scrutiny over the implementation of social policies and actions taken at European level, focusing mainly on the equal opportunities and access to the labour market, fair working conditions and social protection and inclusion.

This chapter is divided into two sections - the first one will focus on “Jobs and Growth” and the second one on “Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion”. Their aim is to examine and share best practices and to seek ways to strengthen and improve the parliamentary surveillance over sustainable growth, employment and social issues, as well as to highlight the potential role that Parliaments/Chambers could play in these important policy areas.