

## HELLENIC PARLIAMENT

### Questionnaire for the Parliaments of Member- States XXIIIrd COSAC- Versailles, 16-17 October 2000

#### Scrutiny of European Policy by member- states' national parliaments

#### Answers by the Committee for European Affairs of the Hellenic Parliament

1. Since 1995, has the role of your Committee been modified, either in its proceedings or in its relationship to other bodies in your Parliament?

1.1 The role of the Committee for European Affairs of the Hellenic Parliament has been significantly upgraded in 1996, by a relevant decision of the Plenary of the Hellenic Parliament. The aforementioned decision has added a new article to the Rules of Proceedings of the Hellenic Parliament, namely 41B.

1.2. Article 41B of the Rules of Proceedings grants to the Committee for European Affairs the following competences:

- to invite the competent Minister for its information
- to organise hearings
- to invite to meetings Greek members of the European Parliament or other useful parties
- to send delegations of its members to the competent committees or other organs of the European Parliament or National Parliaments, in order to jointly discuss the Union's documents
- to formulate opinion to the Minister, concerning the suggested appropriate stance at the Council's meetings
- to be briefed by the Minister on debates having taken place, on decisions made, as well as on the standpoint he formulated.

1.3. The Committee for European Affairs cooperates with the Standing Committees granted with respective competences. In what concerns issues of particular significance and issues of common competence, there is a possibility of joint meetings.

2. Do you think that your Committee receives European legislative proposals in sufficient time? Has the protocol on the role of the National Parliaments in the European Union of the Treaty of Amsterdam improved the situation?

The Committee for European affairs of the Hellenic Parliament endeavours to set the bases for a regular and full cooperation with the Hellenic Ministry for Foreign Affairs, which is responsible for its information. The Protocol of the Amsterdam treaty has led the Committee to increase the initiatives on its briefing by the Government, to the adoption of an Opinion on the ongoing Intergovernmental Conference and to its participation to the drafting of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

3. Do you think that your Committee gets an adequate period of time to consider these legislative proposals? Has the aforementioned Protocol improved the situation?

Article 41B of the Rules of proceedings provides for ensuring the substantial participation of the Parliament, through the Committee for European Affairs and its Standing Committees, in the community decision making process. Nevertheless, its experimental and still partial implementation, does not allow for a more specific answer.

4. Article 7 of the Rules of Procedure of the Council of the European Union is the base for the notion of "legislative proposal" as understood by the protocol on the role of national parliaments in the European Union of the Treaty of Amsterdam. In your opinion, is this definition satisfactory or do you think that some acts, not deemed as legislative by art.7, should be included in the definition?

In the framework of the Greek system of scrutiny of European Policy by the Government, the Government has to send to the President of the Parliament, upon their forwarding to the Council of Ministers of the European Union, all the Union documents presenting interest to the Hellenic Republic, and especially those concerning:

- draft treaties, joint positions, actions or, generally, acts that the Union intends to adopt in the framework of foreign affairs
- draft binding acts of derived law, such as draft regulations and directives
- documents on general economic, political and social directions of the Union, such as documents of the White Papers a.o.

Nevertheless, we are far enough from being satisfied from the implementation.

5. Do you think your committee is sufficiently informed and in good time, on the proceedings of other EU affairs Committees? In what ways could the system be improved?

The briefing is general and partial. The system could be improved by the use of modern communication methods, the adoption of joint action programmes, especially on the important Union affairs, and through the improvement of the coordinating role of the COSAC.

6. Are members of your committee participants to the joint meetings organised by the European Parliament? If such is the case, is there any improvements you would like to suggest?

The joint meetings organised by the European Parliament are very useful. Therefore, it would be desirable for the Minutes of these meetings to be distributed to all the Committees for European Affairs.