



## ASSEMBLEIA DA REPÚBLICA

### Answers to the Questionnaire for the XXIIIrd COSAC (Versailles, 16-17 October 2000)

#### Scrutiny of European policy by member states national parliaments

1º) The Law 20/94 of 15 June 1994 ruling the "Review and Evaluation by Parliament of Portugal's participation in the process of construction of the European Union" changed the role of the Committee on European Affairs mainly through the possibility of presenting draft resolutions to the plenary (being the only standing committee that has this possibility beside the Inquiry Committees). There is also a better relationship between the Committee on European Affairs and the other Committees with several hearings in common and a better relation with the Secretary of State of European Affairs.

2º) The Committee does not receive the legislative proposals directly from the government but only accedes to them from the Internet. Although the Protocol and the Law 20/94 are clear about the obligation of sending the proposals to the parliament, the Committees (mainly the Committee on European Affairs) do not have a practice of analysing the proposals. The main subjects are discussed in the monthly meetings with the Secretary of State of European Affairs.

3º) The problem does not relate to the delays for considering the proposals but to a lack of parliamentary practice of considering them. The review is not systematic and only some subjects are chosen and appreciated.

4º) The Committee has not an opinion on this subject. However Law 20/94 has a very broad definition of the acts that should be sent by the government, that includes not binding acts, drafts of conventions, etc.

5°) The Committee has good information upon the activities of the correspondent Committees of the parliaments of France, United Kingdom (and now Scotland), and, in a lesser degree of Italy. There is the major problem of the language for several other parliaments because it is more difficult to read some languages and it would mean a greater effort for some parliaments to translate their activities.

COSAC is a way of knowing what the other Committees on EU affairs are doing and this could be improved by the mean of a questionnaire asking what were the main subjects that the different committees dealt with between COSACs.

6°) The members of our Committee participate regularly in all the joint meetings organised by the European Parliament. There are no suggestions on this subject.