

REPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE

ASSEMBLÉE NATIONALE

S É N A T

Questionnaire for the Parliaments of the applicant states

XXIIIrd COSAC - Versailles - 16-17 October 2000

Answers of the Senate of the Czech Republic

1. *Information of the European integration committee.*

How does your Committee get the necessary information ? From the Government ? From the European Commission ? From the European Parliament ? From other sources ? Does your Committee consider the information in its possession sufficient ?

2. *Integration of European legislation.*

Do the standard legislative proceedings apply to the integration of European legislation into national law or do you apply special proceedings ? Does your Committee play a specific role in the legislative integration process ?

3. *Accession negotiations.*

How does your European integration committee follow the accession negotiations ? Does the Committee give its opinion ?

4. *Conformity of national law to European legislation.*

Is there a procedure aiming at scrutinising the compliance of bills submitted to Parliament to European legislation ? Does your Parliament play a role in this procedure ? Is your committee associated to this procedure ?

5. *Other committees for European legislation.*

Did you take your inspiration from the experience of other applicant states when your Committee was created ? Are you in touch with European integration committees from other applicant states ?

6. *Community aid.*

As part of the accession process, had your Parliament received any technical assistance from the Community or from some member states ? What kind of assistance ? Was this assistance sufficient ?

1. The Committee is informed from the Government, from the Czech Parliamentary Research Institute, from the European Official Bulletin, from various non-governmental institutions and associations in the country and international, from universities. However the Committee is not yet on the necessary level of information concerning matters which are still on the preparatory steps in the Union.

2. Legislative proceedings both originated from the Government and from the individual deputies in the Lower House (or groups of deputies) comprise harmonising with the European law as a standard and inevitable step. The Committee oversees whether these steps were realized in a proper way. The later amendments to the bill from the deputies or senators are the special subject of the Committee attendance. The Committee asks for these purposes special legal opinions of the independent experts.

3. The Committee is being informed on the progress of the accession negotiations in special reports, presented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs or by the State Secretary on the European Affairs (who is deputy Foreign Affairs minister). The Committee gives always its opinion.

4. There is a mandatory special procedure to scrutinize compliance of the bills submitted to Parliament to European legislation. All ministries and governmental agencies have a special department or an expert for compliance of the drafts of bills with the European law. There is a special department in the Prime Minister's Office to revise compliance of the bills with the European law before their presentation to the Parliament. The Committee oversees these procedures. The Legislative Department of the Senate revises all the bills submitted to the Chamber and gives its legal opinions for the Senators.

5. The Committee sent a series of delegations of Committee members to the European Integration Committees of the applicant (Slovenia, Cyprus, Estonia, Lithuania, Slovakia, Hungary), as well as to the member states (France, Ireland, The Netherlands, Germany, Belgium, Denmark, Finland.) Chambers. Some of them sent their own delegations to our Chamber (Poland, Slovakia, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, France, Ireland, The Netherlands, Greece), event. Committee. Ambassadors of the presiding member countries are invited to the meetings of the Committee. to hear their opinions on the progress in accession (Finland, Germany, France) We are in permanent touch with the Ambassador of the European Commission in Prague.

6. Technical assistance to the Parliament as part of the accession process has been provided mostly from some member states. As an example: The Dutch Government has arranged a series of courses of European Law for the members of the Chamber, inclusive members of the Committee in The Hague. The same Government has sponsored a group of advanced students of various Czech universities as one-year assistants to the members of the Committee. The House of Lords sent two senior officials of the Committee for European Affairs to instruct about the UK usual practice. More assistance would be needed esp. on the detailed knowledge of the European law and special terminology in English and French, not only to the senators and deputies, but also for the specialized staff of the Chambers.