

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC

Questionnaire for the Parliaments of the applicant states

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?

The Committee regularly meets with the Deputy Prime Minister for European Integration and State Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for an update on recent developments in EU Slovak relations and negotiations. Communication with European Commission and the European Parliament is secured by the Permanent Mission of the Slovak Republic in Brussels and directly on various occasions and meetings. For other sources of information we consult Internet, publications and press releases or use our contacts in European Institutions and member states parliaments. The information we have is not always sufficient but if the need for some information occurs we try to retrieve it from all available sources (e.g. Parliamentary Institute – research and analytical department of the National Council of the Slovak Republic).

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?

There is a standard procedure in integration of European legislation into Slovak legal system. Before the bill gets to the Parliament it has to pass through Legislative Council in the Government and subsequently has to be approved by the Government. All bills have to have co-called compatibility attachment, justifying their compatibility with EC law.

The Committee created from its members a Subcommittee on harmonisation of law. The main role of the subcommittee is to monitor that the laws that are especially important from the point of view of Slovakia's accession to EU are submitted to parliament on time and subsequently compatible with EC law. The Committee is also in contact with respective members of the Government whose ministries are responsible for preparation of bills. The experts from the European Integration Departments of those ministries are in regular contact with the committee and discuss the difficulties that could cause problems with implementing EC law in the national law.

3. *Accession negotiations.*

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

Committee regularly hears Position Documents before they are presented in Brussels. The Committee has right to recommend changes in the presented documents, but the main work with them is in the hands of the Government and respective ministries.

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?

There is a standard procedure that applies to all bills submitted to Parliament. Before they get to the Parliament there have to pass through Legislative Council in the Government and subsequently they have to be approved by the Government. All bills have to have co-called compatibility attachment, justifying the compatibility with EC law. The Parliament plays important role in the process of passing the legislation that should be compatible with EC law. In the Parliament there exists a Legal Approximation Department that assesses each bill from the point of view of the compatibility with EC law and writes the opinion, which is distributed to all MPs. The Committee on European Integration deals with bills on ad hoc basis, all bills are discussed in Legal Affairs Committee, and they are also assessed from the point of view of the compatibility with EC law there.

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?

Since the committee commenced its work we have contacted our partner committees in the neighbour states parliaments (V4: Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland) for working discussions on EU integration and bilateral issues, but also on more practical matters related to the committee work. We are in regular contacts with them. We also exchange visits with EU member states parliament committees.

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?

The National Council of the Slovak Republic received assistance from the following funds:

1. *Phare – in form of technical assistance to strengthen capacity of the National Council of the Slovak Republic (seminars on computer and Internet skills, English language skills, EU trainings, interpersonal skills, legal approximation, study visits). National Council of the Slovak Republic also received the IT equipment from these funds.*
2. *British Know How Fund – strengthening of the capacity, legal advise, study visits in the UK, legal assistance with constitutional amendments.*
3. *TAIEX – trainings on various EU related topics.*
4. *French Institute – language trainings for the staff of the National Council of the Slovak Republic.*

We appreciate these aid programmes because the MPs as well as staff of the National Council of the Slovak Republic greatly benefit from this kind of assistance. We hope that the programmes will continue and will assist with the progress and achievement of our accession goals.

