

**Association of European Senates  
Rome, 16-17 April 2010**

**QUESTIONNAIRE**

**A. Role of Senates between local autonomies and the European Union**

1. Which provisions regulate the participation of your country in the European Union, with special reference to the role of national and local legislatures?

- ☐ Constitutional provisions  
If so, please specify
- ☐ Statutory provisions  
If so, please specify
- ☐ Provisions in parliamentary rules of procedure  
If so, please specify
- ☐ Interinstitutional agreements, administrative measures, practice  
If so, please specify
- ☐ Other

1a) With reference to the question above, do any such provisions only apply to the Upper Chamber? If so, which ones?

2. Does the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon call for any amendments of regulatory measures in your country?

- ☐ Constitutional amendments.  
If so, please specify
- ☐ Amendments to laws in force.  
If so, please specify
- ☐ Amendments to parliamentary rules of procedure.  
If so, please specify
- ☐ Amendments to administrative measures and practice.  
If so, please specify
- ☐ Other.

2a) With reference to the question above, do any such provisions only apply to the Upper Chamber? If so, which ones?

3. In the framework of the consideration of proposals for legislation under Protocol no. 2 on the application of the principle of subsidiarity and proportionality annexed to the Treaty of

Lisbon, which types of assessment do you expect your parliament and its bodies to make during the eight-week period?

- ☐ Assessment of the subsidiarity principle.
- ☐ Assessment of the proportionality principle.
- ☐ Assessment of the substance.
- ☐ Assessment of the legal basis.
- ☐ Other assessments (*e.g.*, compliance of fundamental human rights as enshrined in the Charter of Rights).

3a) If a plurality of assessments is conducted, please specify if they are to be made jointly by one body or separately by different competent parliamentary bodies and if the outcome of such assessment(s) is published in one or more documents.

3b) With reference to the question above, do any such provisions only apply to the Upper Chamber? If so, which ones?

4. If an issue dealt with by the EU affects regional competences, how do you expect regional legislative assemblies to participate in the consideration of proposals for legislative acts under Protocol no. 2 on the application of subsidiarity and proportionality principles annexed to the Treaty of Lisbon?

- ☐ Directly, by sending their contribution to the competent parliamentary bodies.
- ☐ Through an *ad hoc* parliamentary body liaising with regional assemblies.
- ☐ Through an *ad hoc* parliamentary body specialising in European policies.
- ☐ In other ways (please specify).

4a) With reference to the question above, has legislation been changed or is legislation expected to be changed in order to facilitate the participation of regional legislative assemblies? If so, what is the expected timing of such changes?

5. How does Government inform Parliament about the acts relating to the formation of EU legislation? Which EU measures are forwarded to Parliament by the Government?

- ☐ Only the proposals of the European Commission are forwarded.
- ☐ Also the documents of the European Parliament are forwarded.
- ☐ Also Council documents, including confidential documents, are forwarded.
- ☐ Other documents are forwarded.

5a) What type of information is the Government required to provide to Parliament?

- ☐ Information on a proposal's progress through the European institutions.
- ☐ Information on the national negotiating position.
- ☐ Information on the negotiating positions of other member States.
- ☐ Technical reports and impact assessments.

Which items of information are actually provided by the Government to the Upper Chamber and with what degree of satisfaction?

6. Which procedures does your Chamber follow in scrutinising legislative proposals from the European Union?

- ☐ Is scrutiny performed only on the original proposal or also on later drafts as they emerge from the European law-making process?
- ☐ Does your Chamber have the authority to request Government to provide information and explanations on the national position taken – or to be taken – in the negotiations?
- ☐ Which parliamentary bodies scrutinise legislative proposals?
- ☐ Is the plenary involved?
- ☐ Other.

7. How does your Upper Chamber liaise with the European Parliament?

- ☐ Through visits, hearings, informal meetings between your national and European MPs.  
If so, please specify the type and frequency of such meetings.
- ☐ Through your permanent representative to the European Parliament.
- ☐ Other.

7a) If you have a representative to the European Parliament, please specify:

- ☐ Grade of officer(s) (if more than one, please indicate number).
- ☐ Whether such officer or officers participate regularly in the sessions in Strasbourg.
- ☐ Any other modes of liaising with other European institutions.
- ☐ Participation in the COSAC and other interparliamentary meetings.
- ☐ Relations with the permanent representative(s) of the Lower Chamber.

7b) How does your permanent representative stay in contact with the Upper Chamber?

- ☐ He/she regularly comes back to the Upper Chamber.  
If so, please specify how often.
- ☐ He/she reports from Brussels.  
If so, please specify how and how often.
- ☐ He/she reports to certain bodies or offices of your Upper Chamber.  
If so, please specify.
- ☐ Other.

8. In Italy, Parliament transposes European legislation (either directly or by delegating legislative power to the Government) through a yearly Act of Parliament called the Community Bill. How does your country transpose EU legislation?

- ☐ Periodically by law (similar to the Italian case).
- ☐ On a case by case basis, through *ad hoc* legislation.

- ☐ By delegating transposition to the Government.
- ☐ Transposition is ensured entirely by the Government.
- ☐ Other.

8a) With reference to the question above, do any such provisions only apply to the Upper Chamber? If so, which ones?

9. How does your country transpose EU legislation affecting the competences of regional and local governments?

- ☐ Same as EU legislation affecting the competence of the State.
- ☐ Through an *ad hoc* procedure at State level.
- ☐ Through an *ad hoc* procedure involving the regional legislative assemblies.
- ☐ Through the regional legislative assemblies.
- ☐ Other.

10. If regional legislative assemblies directly apply EU legislation affecting their competences, which tools (IT-based or other) enable your Upper Chamber to track the progress of such process?

- ☐ The Upper Chamber is directly involved in the transposition process.
- ☐ Regions have an obligation to report on completion of transposition.
- ☐ Regions feed a database on transposition.
- ☐ Regions have IT tools in place enabling Parliament to access such information.
- ☐ Other.

10a) With reference to the question above, does the Upper Chamber have any specific role? If so, how is this regulated?

11. Is there a body coordinating regional legislative assemblies during the formation and transposition of European legislation? If so, what is its role?

12. How are your national members in the EU institutions designated and appointed?

- ☐ Does Parliament play a role?
- ☐ Does the Upper Chamber play a specific role?
- ☐ Do regional legislative assemblies play any role in appointing members to the Committee of Regions?
- ☐ Other.

13. When the members of your Chamber take part in interparliamentary events (joint parliamentary meetings or joint committee meetings), do they report to the plenary or their committees on the substance and outcomes of such meetings?

- ☐ If so, how is this process regulated?
- ☐ If so, is the ensuing report sent to the Government?
- ☐ In practice, how often do they report on such meetings and their outcome?

14. Does your Chamber have an Office specialising in European Affairs?

- ☐ If so, by how many officers is it staffed? What are their grades and specialisations?
- ☐ If there is no such office, which offices deal with European Affairs?
- ☐ Are scrutiny of European regulatory measures and transposition of European legislation dealt with by the same Office?

15. Does your Chamber have an *ad hoc* Office specialising in Regional Affairs?

- ☐ If so, by how many officers is it staffed? What are their grades and specialisations?
- ☐ If there is no such office, which offices deal with Regional Affairs?

16. Do any plans exist to reform the structure and role of the Upper Chamber?

- ☐ If so, how far and in which way do such plans intend to strengthen, overhaul or anyway modify the Upper Chamber's relations with local government? *Please specify how this will be done.*
- ☐ If plans to reform the Upper House exist, how and in which way do they intend to reconcile relations with local government on such subjects as:
  - a) horizontal subsidiarity (relations with civil society organisations);
  - b) European integration;
  - c) foreign policy.

## **B. Perspectives of parliamentary diplomacy in the 21st century. The role of Senates**

1. What are the main parliamentary diplomacy goals of your Upper Chamber?

- ☐ Enhancement of the role of the Upper Chamber (or Parliament in general) in foreign policy issues.
- ☐ Training of Parliamentarians on international policy issues.
- ☐ Development of external relations.
- ☐ Parliamentary oversight of the Government.
- ☐ Contacts with the international civil society.

- ☐ Direct knowledge of foreign parliamentary realities.
  - ☐ Other (*please specify*).
2. What forms of parliamentary diplomacy is your Upper Chamber active in? (Please provide instances for each of the categories below).
- ☐ International parliamentary assemblies.
  - ☐ International conferences.
  - ☐ Interparliamentary Union.
  - ☐ Bilateral cooperation.
  - ☐ Other (*please specify*).
- 2b. In addition to the Association of European Senates, are there any other events where your Chamber participates as the sole Chamber of Parliament?
- 2c. Is there any form of coordination or liaison between the Upper and Lower Chamber in parliamentary diplomacy initiatives? If so, please specify
3. What are the mechanisms for selecting parliamentarians participating in the various organisations? (only applicable to such organisations where participation is not pre-determined by international regulations)
- ☐ Parliamentary Rules of procedure (*please specify current provisions*).
  - ☐ Current practice (*please describe*).
  - ☐ Current trends (*please specify*).
- 3b. Is an equitable participation of Government and Opposition and of minorities provided for? (*please specify*)
- 3c. Is gender balance foreseen or enforced? (*please specify*)
4. Is any particular background required of members participating in parliamentary diplomacy forums?
- ☐ Knowledge of foreign languages.
  - ☐ Knowledge of the subject matter.
  - ☐ Membership of relevant committee in national Parliament.
  - ☐ Other requirements (*please specify*).
  - ☐ No requirement.
5. What kind of support is given to MPs participating in parliamentary diplomacy forums?
- ☐ Support on procedures and substance of meetings.
  - ☐ Practical organisation of missions abroad.
  - ☐ Assistance during missions abroad.
  - ☐ Translation and interpretation service (*if so, please specify circumstances, eligibility criteria and scope of such service*).
  - ☐ Other (*please specify*).

6. What type of documentation supporting parliamentary diplomacy is provided?
- ☐ Documentation produced by the Government.
  - ☐ Documentation produced by Parliament.
  - ☐ Documentation by independent sources (research institutions, think tanks, the press).
7. A lack of national follow-up to the activities and decisions resulting from parliamentary diplomacy is often lamented. Does your Upper Chamber have any procedures in place in this connection?
- 7a. If so, please specify.
- 7b. If so, please specify if the practice is consistent with the rules.
- 7c. If no, is there any unmodified practice? Please specify.
- 7d. If the national follow-up to international diplomacy activities is deemed unsatisfactory, how does your chamber plan to improve it?
8. What type of relations are there, if any, between parliamentary diplomacy activities of your Upper Chamber and your Government?
- ☐ Interaction with the Government **before and after** interparliamentary meetings.
  - ☐ Parliamentary attendance of intergovernmental meetings.
  - ☐ Government attendance of parliamentary meetings.
  - ☐ Other (*please specify*).
9. What type of relations are there, if any, between parliamentary diplomacy activities of your Upper Chamber and the media?
- ☐ Official forms of publicity (*please specify*).
  - ☐ Non-official forms of publicity (*please specify*).
  - ☐ Internet sites.
  - ☐ Please describe the relations between your Upper Chamber and the press and the media at large.
10. What type of relations are there, if any, between parliamentary diplomacy activities of your Upper Chamber and civil society? (*please describe type of relations for each of the categories below*)
- ☐ NGOs
  - ☐ Think tanks.
  - ☐ Schools and universities.
  - ☐ Other (*please specify*).
11. How large is the share of international events and parliamentary diplomacy in relation to your Upper Chamber's overall activities?
- ☐ Large

- ☐ Average
- ☐ Small

12. How many staff work in your Upper Chamber's international sector? Please give number of members of staff and percentage against total Upper Chamber staff, also with respect to staff professional categories.
13. Despite their administrative differences, all Upper Chambers share public spending concerns. How much does your Upper Chamber invest, in terms of financial resources, in parliamentary diplomacy? Please briefly describe how parliamentary diplomacy is funded, how much a share it takes of your Chamber's budget, what are its main challenges and future perspectives.
14. May public diplomacy be funded through sources other than your Upper Chamber's budget? May the private sector (individuals and/or companies, foundations, banks) contribute? If so, how and with what limitations?