

COSAC Working Group on the Role of National Parliaments in the European Union

List of ideas raised at this stage before the working group

Right of initiative ("green card") of national parliaments:

- Take inspiration from the European Parliament's right of indirect initiative (Art. 225 TFEU): the European Commission should take over the initiative presented by the national parliaments or, failing that, explain its refusal
- In terms of procedures, there would be an initial phase of informal consultation between chambers before a phase of gathering support
- To ensure that the mechanism is truly used, the threshold for triggering the initiative would be reasonable: the support of the chambers should represent 25% of the votes OR 25% of the population of the Union and come from at least 4 Member States
- Possibility of establishing a link with citizens' initiatives (Art. 11 TEU)

Legislative role of national parliaments (except for the "green card"):

- Simplification of subsidiarity check (lowering the threshold of the "yellow card" in particular)
- Provide for a systematic response from the European Commission to reasoned opinions, even when the "yellow card" threshold is not reached

- Direct participation of national parliamentarians in the examination of texts in the European Parliament (possibility of tabling amendments)

Control of the European policy of the governments / the Council:

- Improved information for national parliaments, particularly with regard to discussions in the Council and within trilogues: transmission of provisional conclusions drawn up by the Council Presidency and of the "four-column tables" of trilogues
- Appointment of shadow *rapporteurs* in national parliaments, on the most important texts, to follow the work of the Council
- Strengthening the permanent secretariat of Cosac (see below)

Direct control of the European institutions by the national parliaments:

- Provide for the possibility for the presidents of the European affairs committees of national parliaments to put written questions to the European Commission, under conditions similar to those existing for MEPs
- Opening of this same right, collectively, for Cosac

Dialogue with the European institutions:

- Better consideration of the position of national parliaments at the stage of drafting legislative proposals by strengthening the dialogue upstream, or even systematically consulting national parliaments (which are not just another stakeholder) for the most important initiatives
- Building a more systematic and regular dialogue with the European institutions:
 - o *Ad hoc* interparliamentary conferences when legislative packages are presented or for the main texts on the Commission's legislative agenda
 - o More regular thematic inter-parliamentary conferences with European commissioners or ministers of the State to chair the Council

- Increased participation of European Commissioners and MEPs in the work of national parliaments (presence in committees, hearings, etc.)

Interparliamentary cooperation

- Strengthening of the network of national parliaments through a consequent reinforcement of Cosac and its permanent secretariat to allow, in particular, a better follow-up of the work of the Council
- Establishment of a true third chamber, composed of national parliamentarians (to be articulated with the Cosac)
- Establishment of joint control by national parliaments and the European Parliament of the Frontex agency, as provided for in the 2019 regulation