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Uachtaránacht na hÉireann ar
Chomhairle an Aontais Eorpaigh
An Ghné Pharlaiminteach

Irish Presidency of the
Council of the European Union
Parliamentary Dimension

CONCLUSIONS OF THE XLIX COSAC
Dublin, 23-25 June 2013

1. Bi-annual Report

1.1. COSAC welcomes the 19th Bi-annual Report prepared by the COSAC Secretariat and thanks the Secretariat for its work. The Report provides useful information on the parliamentary involvement in the Economic and Monetary Union, the European Semester and enlargement. It also examines the subsidiarity scrutiny in Parliaments and documents the extent of interparliamentary cooperation related to this.

2. Recent Parliamentary meetings

1. COSAC welcomes the Presidency Conclusions of the last Conference of Speakers of the EU Parliaments held on 21-23 April 2013 in Nicosia and expresses its support for the agreement reached on the establishment of a Conference, in line with Article 13 of the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union, which could be built on established models of interparliamentary cooperation upon the formula of the Conference on CFSP and CSDP. COSAC looks forward to the inaugural Interparliamentary Conference on Economic and Financial Governance of the European Union to be held in Vilnius, 16-18 October 2013 and urges careful consideration of the arrangements for this and the follow on conference to be co-hosted in Brussels.

2.1. COSAC welcomes the report from the informal meeting held in Copenhagen on 11 March 2013 on the role of national Parliaments in the EU as a forum for open discussion and exchange of ideas.

2.2. COSAC welcomes suggestions to use videoconferencing for interparliamentary cooperation and for the purposes of enhancing the exchange of information between national Parliaments and the suggestion to draw on to a greater extent the COSAC secretariat and national Parliament representatives in Brussels.

2.3. COSAC notes the important role played by national Parliaments in the national decision making process on EU affairs. Many countries have developed methods and procedures on how to integrate EU affairs into the daily life and work of national Parliaments. These experiences and best practices can provide inspiration for others on how to improve EU scrutiny and strengthen accountability also on a national level.



3. Genuine Economic and Monetary Union

3.1. COSAC notes that most Parliaments actively debate key EMU documents and the majority of Parliaments scrutinise the European Council meetings and/or conclusions in some way. COSAC believes that more should be done to also encourage interparliamentary debate on these topics and the wider fundamental issues of democracy in the EU. COSAC therefore calls on future Presidencies to examine how best to do this, particularly in the context of the new conference on the basis of article 13 of the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union.

3.2. COSAC encourages Parliaments to make greater use of existing tools and to seek to develop new ones at national and European level to ensure the democratic legitimacy of the EMU and in particular to ensure that democratic legitimacy and accountability rest at the level where decisions are taken and implemented.

3.3. COSAC encourages the European Parliament and the national Parliaments holding the Presidency of the EU Council in the first semester of the year to consider the constructive comments made in the 19th Bi-annual Report in relation to the organisation of the European Parliamentary Week.

4. Exchange of information between Parliaments on subsidiarity scrutiny

4.1. COSAC welcomes the continued development of procedures and practices relating to the scrutiny of subsidiarity. It highlights, in particular, the increased exchange of information between staff of different Parliaments; the greater cooperation among National Parliament Representatives in Brussels; and the continued high level of attendance at interparliamentary conferences.

4.2. COSAC welcomes the significantly increased exchange of information between Parliaments and Chambers on subsidiarity scrutiny using a variety of exchange methods and networks, in particular the IPEX database and National Parliament Representatives based in Brussels. It is pleased to see the successful intensification of interparliamentary exchange of information since the coming into force of the Lisbon Treaty, in many cases contributing to specific scrutiny outcomes. COSAC reminds national Parliaments of the importance of effectively executing subsidiarity scrutiny and encourages cooperation so that national Parliaments may reach the thresholds when appropriate.

4.3. In the context of this intensified activity, COSAC notes that further improvements could be made, such as: the exchange of information between Parliaments at an even earlier stage in the scrutiny process; improvements to the content of the IPEX website to cover the substantive reasons for breaching the subsidiarity principle and for Parliaments to ensure well-timed availability and accuracy of information and to provide more detailed English and/or French summaries or





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translations of important documents; and greater exchange of information between Members of Parliaments in the forum and/or on the margins of COSAC.

5. Permanent Member of the COSAC Secretariat

5.1. COSAC recalls that the term in office of the current Permanent Member of the COSAC Secretariat expires on 31 December 2013. COSAC underlines that the appointment of the new Permanent Member should take place during the L COSAC, therefore, asks the Lithuanian Presidency to prepare for the appointment.

5.2. COSAC also recalls that the present co-financing of the Permanent Member of the COSAC Secretariat and the costs of running the office and website of COSAC will end on 31 December 2013. COSAC welcomes letters of intent from 22 national Parliaments expressing their commitment for the co-financing for the following two years, i.e. 2014-2015. Furthermore, COSAC welcomes the fact that the threshold of a minimum of the national Parliaments of 14 Member States has been reached. COSAC calls upon the remaining Parliaments/Chambers to renew their commitment for the co-financing.