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Annex
to the Twelfth Bi-annual Report on
Developments in European Union
Procedures and Practices
Relevant to Parliamentary Scrutiny:
Replies
of National Parliaments and
the European Parliament



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Questionnaire: 12th Bi-annual Report of COSAC

Chapter 1: Transparency of the Parliamentary Scrutiny Process

An open and transparent process is of paramount importance in order to allow citizens to follow the work of the European Union and to enhance their sense of participation. Transparency is therefore an ever-topical issue. Certain aspects of it have previously been dealt with by COSAC in the second Bi-annual Report (Transparency and traceability - Nov. 2004) and the fourth Bi-annual Report (Transparency in the Council - Oct. 2005).

The discussion of transparency is often focused on access to documents, however the interests of, and development towards, a more transparent European Union reach beyond this. One example is the increasing openness of the deliberations on legislative matters in the Council. Of particular importance for citizens is access to information and opportunities to follow procedures during the parliamentary scrutiny processes of particular European issues.

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the transparency of the process in parliaments when conducting scrutiny at different stages of the decision-making process in the Union. The issue covers the accessibility of documents that parliaments receive from the EU institutions and governments in the course of the negotiations. It also includes the openness of national parliaments and the European Parliament as regards information on the actual negotiations in the European Union, as well as on their own scrutiny procedures and positions. The chapter will present what information parliaments make available to the public as well as when and in which ways.

Questions:

1. a) Are documents on EU matters that your Parliament/Chamber receives from the EU Institutions and your Government accessible to the public (for example, drafts of European Parliament reports and resolutions, European Parliament amendments and Council common positions in the codecision procedure, preparatory documents for Council working groups and for Coreper and/or the position of your Government)?

b) Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public? If so, please specify at what stage/when and in which language(s)?

c) Does your Parliament/Chamber, in general, receive all the necessary documents for transparent and effective scrutiny of EU matters from your Government? If not, please specify.
2. Are the documents on EU matters produced by your Parliament/Chamber accessible to the public? If so, please specify which documents. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public?
3. Is it possible for the public to be informed through your Parliament/Chamber about the state of play of ongoing negotiations on a specific EU issue, and at what stage/when? If so, please specify.

4. Are the scrutiny deliberations on EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber open to the public? Can the general public attend the meetings of your Committee on European Affairs, specialised committees and plenary debates directly or watch/listen to them on the TV/radio/Internet?
5. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively inform the public about the scrutiny deliberations and their outcome through websites, web streaming, press briefings, news letters etc.?
6. Does your Parliament/Chamber have a section/unit which provides information about the EU to the public? If so, please specify the main tasks of this information section/unit.
7. Are there any ongoing debates or plans in your Parliament/Chamber on ways to make the handling of EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber more transparent?

Chapter 2: Parliamentary Scrutiny of the Stockholm Programme

Negotiations on the next five-year programme concerning cooperation on judicial and home affairs are scheduled to begin during the Swedish Presidency of the Council. Following on from the Tampere and Hague Programmes, a new Stockholm Programme would set the framework for cooperation during the years 2010-2014 in this field, which includes, *inter alia*, police and customs cooperation, criminal and civil law cooperation as well as asylum, migration and visa policies. It is thus a broad political programme covering issues at the core of parliaments' responsibilities, issues which are also of fundamental importance to European citizens. This Programme may concern both EU Affairs Committees and specialised committees in EU parliaments.

It is evident that the individual legislative proposals to be introduced in different policy areas covered by the Programme will be subject to scrutiny and control. Given the importance of the Programme to citizens, and in order to ensure effective influence, a strong case may also be made for parliamentary scrutiny of policy decisions on the Programme as such, and its development into action plans and specific measures.

This chapter will examine how acceptance of this kind of multi-annual political programme can be ensured in parliaments, by describing how parliaments foresee that the Stockholm Programme and its different elements will be scrutinised, when this scrutiny will be conducted and by which parliamentary bodies.

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After preliminary discussions in the Council (JHA) and in working groups since 2007, the Commission presented a Communication¹ on 10 June 2009 on the future Stockholm Programme. The Council is expected to continue working on this matter, with a view to adopting the Programme in early December and presenting it to the European Council on 17-18 December 2009. At a later stage, action plans will be elaborated, and will in turn form the

¹ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council – An area of freedom, security and justice serving the citizen, COM (2009)262 final.

basis for individual legislative proposals and other specific measures. Below, when reference is made to the "Stockholm Programme", all of these (and any other) stages are meant.

Questions:

1. How do you foresee that scrutiny will be conducted in your EU Affairs Committee? At what stages will scrutiny be conducted?
2. Do you foresee that one or more of your specialised committees will be involved in the process? If so, which one(s), how, and at what stages will their scrutiny be conducted?
3. Do you foresee that any other body in your Parliament/Chamber will be involved in the scrutiny? If so, which one(s), how and at what stage?
4. Do you take any specific measures to ensure coordination between the various parliamentary bodies involved in scrutiny?
5. When designing the scrutiny procedure as described above – have you drawn upon experience gained when scrutinizing the Tampere and/or Hague Programmes? If possible, please specify.
6. Do you think that inter-parliamentary cooperation could contribute to making your scrutiny more efficient? If so, in what form and how?

Questionnaire: 12^e Rapport Semestriel de la COSAC

Chapitre 1: Transparence du processus d'examen parlementaire

Un processus ouvert et transparent est d'une importance primordiale pour permettre aux citoyens de suivre les travaux de l'Union européenne et pour développer leur sentiment de participation. La transparence est donc un enjeu toujours d'actualité. Certains aspects de cette question ont été précédemment abordés par la COSAC dans son second rapport semestriel (Transparence et traçabilité – nov. 2004) et dans son quatrième rapport semestriel (Transparence au sein du Conseil – Oct. 2005).

La discussion sur la transparence est souvent concentrée sur l'accès aux documents, toutefois l'intérêt d'une Union européenne plus transparente et les développements en ce sens ont une plus grande portée. L'ouverture croissante des délibérations sur les dossiers législatifs au sein du Conseil en sont un exemple. L'accès à l'information et l'opportunité de suivre les procédures pendant le processus d'examen parlementaire sur des enjeux européens spécifiques sont de première importance pour les citoyens.

Le but de ce chapitre est d'examiner la transparence du processus dans les Parlements lors des différentes étapes du processus de décision dans l'Union. L'enjeu englobe l'accessibilité des documents que les Parlements reçoivent des institutions de l'UE et des Gouvernements pendant les négociations. Il comprend aussi l'ouverture des Parlements nationaux et du Parlement européen en matière d'information sur les négociations réelles au sein de l'Union européenne, ainsi que leurs propres procédures d'examen et leurs positions. Le chapitre présentera les informations rendues publiques par les Parlements ; de même précisera-t-il à quel moment ces informations sont rendues publiques et comment.

Questions:

1. a) Les documents portant sur les questions européennes que reçoit votre Parlement/Chambre de la part des institutions européennes et de votre Gouvernement sont-ils accessibles au public ? (par exemple les projets de rapports et de résolutions du Parlement européen, les amendements du Parlement européen et les positions communes du Conseil dans le cadre de la procédure de codécision, les documents préparatoires des groupes de travail du Conseil et du Coreper, la position de votre Gouvernement).
 - b) Votre Parlement/Chambre prend-il/elle l'initiative de mettre ces documents à la disposition du public ? Si tel est le cas, veuillez préciser à quelle étape de la procédure ces documents sont rendus publics, quand et dans quelle langue.
 - c) Votre Parlement/Chambre reçoit-il de votre Gouvernement tous les documents nécessaires pour un examen effectif et transparent des affaires européennes ? Si ce n'est pas le cas, veuillez préciser.
2. Les documents portant sur les questions européennes émis par votre Parlement/Chambre sont-ils accessibles au public ? Si tel est le cas, veuillez préciser quels documents. Votre

Parlement/Chambre prend-il/elle l'initiative de mettre ces documents à la disposition du public ?

3. Le public peut-il être informé par votre Parlement/Chambre de l'état des négociations en cours sur un sujet spécifique relatif à l'UE et à quel moment ? Si tel est le cas, veuillez préciser.
4. Les débats relatifs à l'examen des affaires européennes qui se tiennent dans votre Parlement/Chambre sont-ils ouverts au public ? Le public peut-il assister aux réunions de votre Commission des affaires européennes, de vos Commissions spéciales et aux débats en séance plénière ? Si tel est le cas, peut-il le faire directement ou par le biais de la TV/Radio/Internet ?
5. Votre Parlement /Chambre prend-t-il/elle l'initiative d'informer le public à propos des débats relatifs à l'examen des affaires européennes et aux décisions au moyen d'internet, de conférences de presse, de communiqués, etc.?
6. Votre Parlement/Chambre dispose-t-il/elle d'un service qui fournit au public des informations sur l'UE ? Si tel est le cas, veuillez préciser les principales fonctions de ce service.
7. Des débats ou des projets ont-ils cours dans votre Parlement/Chambre sur la façon d'accroître la transparence dans le traitement des questions européennes dans votre Parlement/Chambre ?

Chapitre 2 : Examen parlementaire du programme de Stockholm

Il est prévu que les négociations sur le prochain programme quinquennal concernant la coopération en matière judiciaire et d'affaires intérieures commenceront durant la Présidence suédoise du Conseil. Faisant suite aux Programmes Tampere et de La Haye, un nouveau programme, le Programme de Stockholm, établirait la structure pour la coopération dans ces domaines durant les années 2010 – 2014, ce qui comprend entre autres la police et la coopération douanière, la coopération en matière de loi criminelle et civile ainsi que les politiques d'asile, de migration et de visa. C'est donc un programme politique vaste, qui couvre des enjeux au coeur des responsabilités des Parlements, des enjeux qui sont aussi d'importance fondamentale pour les citoyens européens. Ce programme pourrait concerner à la fois des Comités sur les Affaires Européennes et des Comités spécialisés dans les Parlements de l'UE.

Il est évident que les propositions législatives individuelles, qui doivent être introduites dans différents secteurs de politique couverts par le programme, seront soumises à examen et contrôle. Étant donné l'importance du Programme pour les citoyens, et afin de garantir une influence efficace, l'examen parlementaire des décisions politiques au Programme et les plans d'action et mesures spécifiques qui en résultent seront également un point essentiel.

Ce chapitre examinera comment l'acceptation de ce type de programme politique pluriannuel peut être assurée dans les parlements, en décrivant *comment* les parlements prévoient que le Programme de Stockholm et ses différents éléments seront examinés, *quand* cet examen sera effectué et par *quel organe* parlementaire.

Suite aux discussions préliminaires qui ont eu lieu au sein du Conseil (JAI) et des groupes de travail depuis 2007, la Commission² a présenté le 10 juin 2009 une communication sur le nouveau programme de Stockholm. Le Conseil devrait continuer à travailler sur cette question en vue de l'adoption du programme début décembre et de sa présentation au Conseil européen des 17 et 18 décembre 2009. L'étape suivante consistera à élaborer des plans d'action qui constitueront à leur tour la base des propositions législatives et d'autres mesures spécifiques. Toute mention faite ci-dessous au "programme de Stockholm" fait référence à l'ensemble de ces étapes.

Questions :

1. Comment envisagez-vous la conduite de l'examen par la commission chargée des affaires européennes ? A quel moment effectuera-t-elle son examen ?
2. Prévoyez-vous la participation au processus d'une ou plusieurs de vos commissions spécialisées ? Si tel est le cas, la(les)quelle(s), comment et à quel moment sera mené l'examen ?
3. Prévoyez-vous la participation de tout autre organe de votre Parlement/Chambre à cet examen ? Si tel est le cas, le(s)quel(s), comment et à quel moment ?
4. Comment allez-vous assurer la bonne coordination des activités entre les différents organes parlementaires participant à cet examen ?
5. Avez-vous tiré des leçons de l'expérience antérieure de l'examen du programme de Tampere et/ou du programme de La Haye en envisageant les procédures d'examen décrites ci-dessus ? si tel est le cas, veuillez préciser.
6. Pensez-vous que la coopération interparlementaire puisse contribuer à rendre votre examen plus efficace ? Si tel est le cas, quelle(s) forme(s) de coopération et comment ?

² Communication de la Commission au Parlement européen et au Conseil - un espace de liberté, de sécurité et de justice au service des citoyens [COM(2009) 262]).

Austria: Nationalrat and Bundesrat

Chapter 1: Transparency of the Parliamentary Scrutiny Process

1. a) Are documents on EU matters that your Parliament/Chamber receives from the EU Institutions and your Government accessible to the public (for example, drafts of European Parliament reports and resolutions, European Parliament amendments and Council common positions in the codecision procedure, preparatory documents for Council working groups and for Coreper and/or the position of your Government)?

Documents which are directly sent by the European Commission to the Austrian Parliament are available to public on parliament's homepage (see http://www.parlament.gv.at/PE/EUKP/index_Portal.shtml). Documents received from government are only available on the intranet.

- b) Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public? If so, please specify at what stage/when and in which language(s)?

Yes, see above 1)

- c) Does your Parliament/Chamber, in general, receive all the necessary documents for transparent and effective scrutiny of EU matters from your Government? If not, please specify.

Yes.

2. Are the documents on EU matters produced by your Parliament/Chamber accessible to the public? If so, please specify which documents. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public?

Yes, documents produced by an EU affairs committee (for example the Permanent Subcommittee on EU affairs of the Nationalrat http://www.parlament.gv.at/PE/MWR/show.psp?P_INF2=3 are made available on the internet.

3. Is it possible for the public to be informed through your Parliament/Chamber about the state of play of ongoing negotiations on a specific EU issue, and at what stage/when? If so, please specify.

Yes, such requests usually enter parliament at the "citizen" service" (Bürgerservice) and would be forwarded to the competent service (if dealing with more specific issues) See also below 6)

4. Are the scrutiny deliberations on EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber open to the public? Can the general public attend the meetings of your Committee on European Affairs, specialised committees and plenary debates directly or watch/listen to them on the TV/radio/Internet?

General public may attend meetings of the EU affairs committees of both chambers and the plenary. Regarding the plenary of the Nationalrat a discussion of introducing special “EU hours” (for the being we have “EU plenaries”) is going on.

Meetings of specialised committees of the Nationalrat are only open to the public if dealing with and deciding on reports of members of government on behalf of the plenary. Normally there is a live TV broadcast for at least some parts of the plenary of the Nationalrat, in addition sessions may be followed via a live stream on the internet. Whether or not to introduce TV broadcast in the EU committee of the Nationalrat is subject to further ongoing discussion.

5. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively inform the public about the scrutiny deliberations and their outcome through websites, web streaming, press briefings, news letters etc.?

After meetings of the EU Committees (Nationalrat and Bundesrat) the press service of parliament publishes summaries of the deliberations on the internet which also contain adopted decisions. In addition shorter summaries (this is the general way summing up committee meetings) are sent to press agencies and can be found on parliament’s homepage as well.

6. Does your Parliament/Chamber have a section/unit which provides information about the EU to the public? If so, please specify the main tasks of this information section/unit.

Not specifically.

7. Are there any ongoing debates or plans in your Parliament/Chamber on ways to make the handling of EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber more transparent?

Yes, further steps are envisaged in particular in the following fields:

- **focus more on EU issues, eg. on parliament’s kids website of the “Democracy Workshop” (<http://www.demokratiewebstatt.at/>) or on issues of topical interest (eg. Lisbon Treaty)**
- **producing leaflets for visitors of parliament (The Austrian Parliament and the EU)**
- **displaying leaflets of EU institutions at parliament**
- **“Europe Workshop” within the Democracy Workshop of parliament**

Chapter 2: Parliamentary Scrutiny of the Stockholm Programme

1. How do you foresee that scrutiny will be conducted in your EU Affairs Committee? At what stages will scrutiny be conducted?

The respective communication of the European Commission (COM (2009) 262 final) has already been discussed at the meeting of the EU Affairs Committee of the Bundesrat on 21 July (debate will be resumed) and this document as well as the Council document 11300/09 have placed on the agenda of the Permanent Subcommittee on EU affairs of the Nationalrat at its next meeting on 17 September 2009.

2. Do you foresee that one or more of your specialised committees will be involved in the process? If so, which one(s), how, and at what stages will their scrutiny be conducted?

The sectoral committees – in this case the committees on justice and on home affairs – are involved when debating a report of a minister on different parts of the Commission’s legislative and working programme. In addition these committees are addressed when a directive has to be transposed into national law.

3. Do you foresee that any other body in your Parliament/Chamber will be involved in the scrutiny? If so, which one(s), how and at what stage?

A plenary debate on this issue may occur as well.

4. Do you take any specific measures to ensure coordination between the various parliamentary bodies involved in scrutiny?

Parliamentary work is mainly coordinated on the level of the “conference of presidents” (both chambers dispose of such a body) and more informally among the political groups themselves.

5. When designing the scrutiny procedure as described above – have you drawn upon experience gained when scrutinizing the Tampere and/or Hague Programmes? If possible, please specify.

Yes, see above 2)

6. Do you think that inter-parliamentary cooperation could contribute to making your scrutiny more efficient? If so, in what form and how?

Of course, you can always learn from others in particular regarding a “best practise model”.

Belgium: Chambre des Représentants

Chapitre 1: Transparence du processus d'examen parlementaire

1. a) *Les documents portant sur les questions européennes que reçoit votre Parlement/Chambre de la part des institutions européennes et de votre Gouvernement sont-ils accessibles au public ? (par exemple les projets de rapports et de résolutions du Parlement européen, les amendements du Parlement européen et les positions communes du Conseil dans le cadre de la procédure de codécision, les documents préparatoires des groupes de travail du Conseil et du Coreper, la position de votre Gouvernement).*

Non. Les documents portant sur les questions européennes en provenance des institutions européennes et de notre gouvernement ne sont pas systématiquement accessibles au public. Les propositions de la Commission européenne sont accessibles au public via les bases de données de la Commission même ainsi que via IPEX.

Le plus important réside dans le fait que les documents intermédiaires (projets de résolution, etc.) sont accessibles aux parlements nationaux. La Chambre des représentants de Belgique reçoit via la Représentation permanente tous les documents du Conseil de l'Union européenne, y compris les documents de travail.

Les projets de résolution du Parlement européen sont, en principe, accessible sur le site du Parlement européen (annexés aux rapports).

- b) *Votre Parlement/Chambre prend-il/elle l'initiative de mettre ces documents à la disposition du public ? Si tel est le cas, veuillez préciser à quelle étape de la procédure ces documents sont rendus publics, quand et dans quelle langue.*

Non. Notre institution ne prend pas l'initiative de mettre ces documents à la disposition du public.

- c) *Votre Parlement/Chambre reçoit-il de votre Gouvernement tous les documents nécessaires pour un examen effectif et transparent des affaires européennes ? Si ce n'est pas le cas, veuillez préciser.*

Oui. Notre institution reçoit de notre gouvernement via la Représentation permanente tous les documents mentionnés dans la question.

2. *Les documents portant sur les questions européennes émis par votre Parlement/Chambre sont-ils accessibles au public ? Si tel est le cas, veuillez préciser quels documents. Votre Parlement/Chambre prend-il/elle l'initiative de mettre ces documents à la disposition du public ?*

Oui. Ces documents sont accessibles au public. Il s'agit des rapports du Comité d'avis fédéral chargé de Questions européennes relatifs au briefing et débriefing des Conseils européens des chefs d'État et de gouvernement, des documents exposant les autres auditions au sein du Comité d'avis, des rapports d'initiative consacrés aux questions européennes ainsi que des avis des commissions permanentes portant sur la subsidiarité.

3. *Le public peut-il être informé par votre Parlement/Chambre de l'état des négociations en cours sur un sujet spécifique relatif à l'UE et à quel moment ? Si tel est le cas, veuillez préciser.*

Oui et ce, par le biais des rapports publiés par la Chambre des représentants ou par le biais des questions et interpellations.

4. *Les débats relatifs à l'examen des affaires européennes qui se tiennent dans votre Parlement/Chambre sont-ils ouverts au public ? Le public peut-il assister aux réunions de votre Commission des affaires européennes, de vos Commissions spéciales et aux débats en séance plénière ? Si tel est le cas, peut-il le faire directement ou par le biais de la TV/Radio/Internet ?*

Oui, ces débats sont ouverts au public. Le public peut assister directement aux réunions de notre Comité d'avis fédéral chargé de Questions européennes et aux travaux de la séance plénière. Les séances plénières sont également diffusées en direct sur le site internet de la Chambre (www.lachambre.be).

5. *Votre Parlement /Chambre prend-t-il/elle l'initiative d'informer le public à propos des débats relatifs à l'examen des affaires européennes et aux décisions au moyen d'internet, de conférences de presse, de communiqués, etc.?*

La Chambre des représentants prend l'initiative d'informer le public sur les débats relatifs à l'examen des affaires européennes par le biais de la rubrique « Europe » du site internet de la Chambre (www.lachambre.be), de conférences de presse lorsqu'il s'agit d'événements importants (ex. : Constitution européenne, Charte des Droits fondamentaux...) ainsi que de communiqués de presse.

6. *Votre Parlement/Chambre dispose-t-il/elle d'un service qui fournit au public des informations sur l'UE ? Si tel est le cas, veuillez préciser les principales fonctions de ce service.*

Les informations sur l'Union européenne sont dispensées via la division des affaires européennes de la Chambre des représentants. En la matière, il n'existe aucun service spécifique au sein de notre institution.

7. *Des débats ou des projets ont-ils cours dans votre Parlement/Chambre sur la façon d'accroître la transparence dans le traitement des questions européennes dans votre Parlement/Chambre ?*

Oui. Plusieurs initiatives tendant à accroître la transparence dans le traitement des questions européennes ont été prises au sein de notre institution. Mais, une nouvelle réflexion en la matière devrait s'engager au cours de la prochaine session dans la perspective de la mise en œuvre du Traité de Lisbonne.

Chapitre 2 : Examen parlementaire du programme de Stockholm

1. *Comment envisagez-vous la conduite de l'examen par la commission chargée des affaires européennes ? A quel moment effectuera-t-elle son examen ?*

The Advisory Committee on European Affairs will have a coordinating and stimulating role. The scrutiny of the policy domains covered by the Stockholm Programme will be object of the foreseen subsidiarity and proportionality procedure, stipulated in the Regulations of the Belgian House of representatives (in particular art. 37bis).

This implies that an administrative task force (European analysis division as part of the Secretariat of the Advisory Committee on European Affairs) will analyze the proposals of the European institutions (in particular the European Commission and the Council of the European Union). This analysis will result in a draft opinion.

The draft note will then be sent to the competent Standing Committee to decide whether it will formalize an opinion. The opinion formulated at the level of the competent Committee is considered as the opinion of the Belgian House of representatives.

Only if 1/3 of the members of the Committee ask for the submission to the plenary, the plenary needs to adopt the opinion.

2. *Prévoyez-vous la participation au processus d'une ou plusieurs de vos commissions spécialisées ? Si tel est le cas, la(les)quelle(s), comment et à quel moment sera mené l'examen ?*

Yes, see 1.

3. *Prévoyez-vous la participation de tout autre organe de votre Parlement/Chambre à cet examen ? Si tel est le cas, le(s)quel(s), comment et à quel moment ?*

Yes, see 1.

4. *Comment allez-vous assurer la bonne coordination des activités entre les différents organes parlementaires participant à cet examen ?*

The Secretariat of the Advisory Committee on European Affairs has a coordinating role.

5. *Avez-vous tiré des leçons de l'expérience antérieure de l'examen du programme de Tampere et/ou du programme de La Haye en envisageant les procédures d'examen décrites ci-dessus ? si tel est le cas, veuillez préciser.*

Up till now, there is little experience with the scrutiny of the Tampere and/or The Hague programmes.

6. *Pensez-vous que la coopération interparlementaire puisse contribuer à rendre votre examen plus efficace ? Si tel est le cas, quelle(s) forme(s) de coopération et comment ?*

Yes. Interparliamentary cooperation can have an alert role vis-à-vis certain problems.

Belgium: Sénat

Chapter 1: Transparency of the Parliamentary Scrutiny Process

1. a) Are documents on EU matters that your Parliament/Chamber receives from the EU Institutions and your Government accessible to the public (for example, drafts of European Parliament reports and resolutions, European Parliament amendments and Council common positions in the codecision procedure, preparatory documents for Council working groups and for Coreper and/or the position of your Government)?
These documents are used for internal purposes only. They are transmitted to MP's and their staff, but they are not available on the website etc.
- b) Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public? If so, please specify at what stage/when and in which language(s)? [see a\)](#)
- c) Does your Parliament/Chamber, in general, receive all the necessary documents for transparent and effective scrutiny of EU matters from your Government? If not, please specify. [We receive all necessary documents from the Commission and are also provided by the office of the Permanent Representative with all necessary documents. We receive so much documents that we are obliged to make a selection.](#)
2. Are the documents on EU matters produced by your Parliament/Chamber accessible to the public? If so, please specify which documents. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public? [All documents produced by the Senate are published on the website and published in paper format. The website has a new search engine for finding these documents and the website will be renewed soon.](#)
3. Is it possible for the public to be informed through your Parliament/Chamber about the state of play of ongoing negotiations on a specific EU issue, and at what stage/when? If so, please specify. [No](#)
4. Are the scrutiny deliberations on EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber open to the public? Can the general public attend the meetings of your Committee on European Affairs, specialised committees and plenary debates directly or watch/listen to them on the TV/radio/Internet? [Normally all Committee and Plenary meetings are open for the public. Plenary meetings can be followed through the website.](#)
5. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively inform the public about the scrutiny deliberations and their outcome through websites, web streaming, press briefings, news letters etc.? [Sometimes press briefings are organised, but not systematically.](#)
6. Does your Parliament/Chamber have a section/unit which provides information about the EU to the public? If so, please specify the main tasks of this information section/unit. [We provide all necessary information to MP's and their staff, but not to the public. However there is an international section on the website who provides basic information.](#)
7. Are there any ongoing debates or plans in your Parliament/Chamber on ways to make the handling of EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber more transparent? [No](#)

Chapter 2: Parliamentary Scrutiny of the Stockholm Programme

1. How do you foresee that scrutiny will be conducted in your EU Affairs Committee? At what stages will scrutiny be conducted? **Scrutiny will be conducted on an ad hoc-basis. When the topic is mentioned in meetings, it will be discussed. The prime committees responsible for following the Stockholm Programme are the Home Affairs Committee and the Justice Committee.**
2. Do you foresee that one or more of your specialised committees will be involved in the process? If so, which one(s), how, and at what stages will their scrutiny be conducted? **At the moment there are no plans to scrutinize this programme. Usually these programmes are discussed on an ad-hoc basis during debates and auditions about domestic events or federal points of interest.**
3. Do you foresee that any other body in your Parliament/Chamber will be involved in the scrutiny? If so, which one(s), how and at what stage? **No**
4. Do you take any specific measures to ensure coordination between the various parliamentary bodies involved in scrutiny? **No. The normal coordination mechanisms are used: informal contacts, joint committee meetings, etc.**
5. When designing the scrutiny procedure as described above – have you drawn upon experience gained when scrutinizing the Tampere and/or Hague Programmes? If possible, please specify. **No. The mentioned programmes were not scrutinised in a formal way, but were subject to constant follow-up when mentioned in other meetings**
6. Do you think that inter-parliamentary cooperation could contribute to making your scrutiny more efficient? If so, in what form and how? **Yes, through formal exchange of opinions, resolutions, conclusions, etc not only on the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality, but also through subject related discussions (COSAC, joint EP-NP meetings, IPEX publication, etc).**

Bulgaria: Narodno Sabranie

Chapter 1: Transparency of the Parliamentary Scrutiny Process

1. a) Question: Are documents on EU matters that your Parliament/Chamber receives from the EU Institutions and your Government accessible to the public (for example, drafts of European Parliament reports and resolutions, European Parliament amendments and Council common positions in the codecision procedure, preparatory documents for Council working groups and for Coreper and/or the position of your Government)?

Answer: The website of the National Assembly publishes under the rubric “European Union” all proposed EU acts which come from the European Commission. With regard to the activity of the Public Consultations Council with the parliamentary Committee on European Issues, there is a rubric “Documents” where the committee publishes analyses and opinions of the government and its experts.

- b) Question: Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public? If so, please specify at what stage/when and in which language(s)?

Answer: The directorate “European Union” at the National Assembly publishes a weekly bulletin “Euronews” which features a rubric “News from European Institutions”. The bulletin is published in print and electronically.

- c) Question: Does your Parliament/Chamber, in general, receive all the necessary documents for transparent and effective scrutiny of EU matters from your Government? If not, please specify.

Answer: The National Assembly adopts an Annual Working Programme on EU Issues which includes the Commission’s proposals subject to in-depth parliamentary scrutiny. The Government submits to parliament its framework position and expert opinions on the acts included in the programme. When a parliamentary committee demands it, the Government also submits other working documents related to proposals that are not included in the annual working programme of the National Assembly.

2. Question: Are the documents on EU matters produced by your Parliament/Chamber accessible to the public? If so, please specify which documents. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public?

Answer: All opinions of the Committee on European Affairs which are related to the Government’s position on specific European Acts are accessible to the public through the website of the National Assembly.

3. Question: Is it possible for the public to be informed through your Parliament/Chamber about the state of play of ongoing negotiations on a specific EU issue, and at what stage/when? If so, please specify.

Answer: Yes, this takes place through hearings at the parliamentary committees of ministry representatives who participate in the Council negotiations. As a rule, hearings are public. They are held at different stages of the negotiation process in the Council.

4. Question: Are the scrutiny deliberations on EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber open to the public? Can the general public attend the meetings of your Committee on European Affairs, specialised committees and plenary debates directly or watch/listen to them on the TV/radio/Internet?

Answer: Debates on EU matters are public with the exception of certain separate cases related to the current foreign policy, defence and security.

5. Question: Does your Parliament/Chamber actively inform the public about the scrutiny deliberations and their outcome through websites, web streaming, press briefings, news letters etc.?

Answer: Stenographic reports of debates on European issues as a rule are accessible to the public through the website of the National Assembly. Discussions about significant issues are published in the parliament's bulletin "Euronews". Conferences are held with the participation of chairpersons of parliamentary committees at which the position of the National Assembly on specific proposals of European acts is presented.

6. Question: Does your Parliament/Chamber have a section/unit which provides information about the EU to the public? If so, please specify the main tasks of this information section/unit.

Answer: One of the tasks of Directorate "European Union" is to provide information on European matters to the public. Such information is also provided through the department "Press Center and Public Relations" as well as through the Public Consultations Council with the Committee on European Issues.

7. Question: Are there any ongoing debates or plans in your Parliament/Chamber on ways to make the handling of EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber more transparent?

Answer: Yes, it is foreseen substantial to increase the public information on European matters on the website of the Parliament.

Chapter 2: Parliamentary Scrutiny of the Stockholm Programme

1. Question: How do you foresee that scrutiny will be conducted in your EU Affairs Committee? At what stages will scrutiny be conducted?

Answer: Parliamentary scrutiny of individual proposals for legislative acts of the EU starts at the moment the National Assembly receives the Government's position on the specific proposal. The scrutiny covers the whole process of decision taking in the Council.

2. Question: Do you foresee that one or more of your specialised committees will be involved in the process? If so, which one(s), how, and at what stages will their scrutiny be conducted?

Answer: According to the practice so far, parliamentary committees involved in justice and home affairs, participate in parliamentary scrutiny and adopt their own opinions on proposals under discussion. These opinions are used by the Committee on European Affairs to elaborate a common opinion of the National Assembly.

3. Question: Do you foresee that any other body in your Parliament/Chamber will be involved in the scrutiny? If so, which one(s), how and at what stage?

Answer: The directorate “European Union” prepares expert materials which it provides to the Committee on European Affairs and to other parliamentary committees that take part in the scrutiny of European issues, including in matters of justice and home affairs.

4. Question: Do you take any specific measures to ensure coordination between the various parliamentary bodies involved in scrutiny?

Answer: Coordination is carried out by the president of the National Assembly who is assisted by the directorate “European Union”.

5. Question: When designing the scrutiny procedure as described above – have you drawn upon experience gained when scrutinizing the Tampere and/or Hague Programmes? If possible, please specify.

Answer: Bulgaria’s National Assembly has not carried out parliamentary scrutiny under the mentioned programmes.

6. Question: Do you think that inter-parliamentary cooperation could contribute to making your scrutiny more efficient? If so, in what form and how?

Answer: Yes, inter-parliamentary cooperation is particularly important in increasing the efficiency of parliamentary scrutiny in the indicated field. More specifically, this can take place for example through:

- Exchange of good practices,
- Exchange and internship of experts,
- Joint training seminars,
- Joint sessions of parliamentary committees.

Cyprus: Vouli ton Antiprosopon

Chapter 1: Transparency of the Parliamentary Scrutiny Process

1. a) Are documents on EU matters that your Parliament/Chamber receives from the EU Institutions and your Government accessible to the public (for example, drafts of European Parliament reports and resolutions, European Parliament amendments and Council common positions in the codecision procedure, preparatory documents for Council working groups and for Coreper and/or the position of your Government)?

No.

- b) Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public? If so, please specify at what stage/when and in which language(s)?

Yes. Such documents are available in Greek to interested parties and NGOs, whenever they are asked to express their views on a specific matter examined by the Parliamentary Committee on European Affairs.

- c) Does your Parliament/Chamber, in general, receive all the necessary documents for transparent and effective scrutiny of EU matters from your Government? If not, please specify.

The proposals are received directly from the Commission, following the Barroso initiative. Further information regarding specific proposals scrutinized by the Parliament is requested from the Government.

2. Are the documents on EU matters produced by your Parliament/Chamber accessible to the public? If so, please specify which documents. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public?

Reports by the Parliamentary Committee on European Affairs and/or other sectoral committees when dealing with EU matters may be accessible to the public. As a general rule, all reports submitted to the plenary are considered public documents.

3. Is it possible for the public to be informed through your Parliament/Chamber about the state of play of ongoing negotiations on a specific EU issue, and at what stage/when? If so, please specify.

Due to Cyprus being a presidential democracy, with a clear separation of powers, the executive is vested with the sole responsibility of carrying out negotiations on European issues, therefore, the executive is the only authority that can inform the public on the state of negotiations. As a general rule the public is not informed through the Parliament about ongoing negotiations. However, during meetings of the Parliamentary Committee on European Affairs, where matters discussed at the European level are scrutinized, interested parties may be invited to express their opinions on the matter at hand. The reports of these meetings may be accessible to the public.

4. Are the scrutiny deliberations on EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber open to the public? Can the general public attend the meetings of your Committee on European Affairs, specialised committees and plenary debates directly or watch/listen to them on the
- Interested parties are invited at meetings of the Parliamentary Committee on**

European Affairs and other sectoral committees when dealing with EU matters. As a general rule, meetings are open to the public through the media, excluding cameras and live links. However, plenary sessions are open to the general public.

5. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively inform the public about the scrutiny deliberations and their outcome through websites, web streaming, press briefings, news letters etc.?
Yes. Reports of meetings of the Parliamentary Committee on European Affairs and/or other sectoral committees when dealing with EU matters are accessible to the public.
6. Does your Parliament/Chamber have a section/unit which provides information about the EU to the public? If so, please specify the main tasks of this information section/unit.
Yes. The European Affairs Service, among other, is responsible for the dissemination of EU information to the MPs and the general public.
7. Are there any ongoing debates or plans in your Parliament/Chamber on ways to make the handling of EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber more transparent?
Yes. The current scrutiny procedure on EU matters involves the invitation of interested parties to attend the meetings of the Parliamentary Committee on European Affairs. However, there are plans under discussion to increase transparency in the scrutiny process through the enhancement of the involvement of the public.

Chapter 2: Parliamentary Scrutiny of the Stockholm Programme

1. How do you foresee that scrutiny will be conducted in your EU Affairs Committee? At what stages will scrutiny be conducted?

This matter has not yet been raised or discussed in the European Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives. It should be noted, however, that due to the fact that Cyprus political system is presidential democracy with a complete separation of powers, the House of Representatives cannot legally bind the government or impose its views and opinions on the government with respect to the position that it will take at the EU level, thereby guaranteeing its influence on the European decision-making process. However, the Cyprus Parliament can exert political pressure on the government in an attempt to ensure that its views are taken into consideration in the formulation of policy by the Cyprus government.

In the framework of exercising parliamentary scrutiny and control on matters falling within the ambit of European Affairs, the European Affairs Committee may select to scrutinize individual legislative proposals that will be introduced in the different policy areas covered by the Stockholm Programme, after the latter's adoption by the Council and presentation to the European Council in December 2009. Given the importance of the Stockholm Programme and its different elements to citizens, as well as the fact that the issues it covers are at the core of parliaments' responsibilities, it is also possible for policy decisions on the Programme as such and its development into action plans to be subject to scrutiny and control (i.e. prelegislative phase). The European Affairs Committee, within the sphere of exercising parliamentary control, invites the competent ministries to attend its meetings during which the Ministers or their representatives (Ministry officials) present the government's position and policy concerning a matter

under examination including the reasons for having chosen the specific position, provide further information, answer questions and hear the views/position of the committee on the matter at hand. In addition, scrutiny can also be conducted through, inter alia, the submission of questions to the various Ministries and the registration of matters pertaining to the actions of the executive to be discussed before the committee.

2. Do you foresee that one or more of your specialised committees will be involved in the process? If so, which one(s), how, and at what stages will their scrutiny be conducted?

The Stockholm Programme is the work programme that will form the basis of the EU's work in the area of justice and home cooperation over the next five years including issues such as police and customs cooperation, rescue services, criminal and civil law cooperation, asylum, migration and visa policy. Taking into account its paramount importance, it is possible that sectoral parliamentary committees would also be involved in the scrutiny process, within the framework of the exercise of parliamentary control as provided for under the Constitution of Cyprus and the Rules of Procedure of the House of Representatives. In the case of the Cyprus Parliament, the relevant competent committees are the Parliamentary Committee on Internal Affairs and the Parliamentary Committee on Legal Affairs.

3. Do you foresee that any other body in your Parliament/Chamber will be involved in the scrutiny? If so, which one(s), how and at what stage?

Nothing prevents the plenary from being involved in the scrutiny of the Stockholm Programme, though, until now the plenary was not involved in the scrutiny of documents emanating from EU institutions.

4. Do you take any specific measures to ensure coordination between the various parliamentary bodies involved in scrutiny?

No. The Rules of Procedure of the House of Representatives provide the framework for the conduct of parliamentary scrutiny.

5. When designing the scrutiny procedure as described above – have you drawn upon experience gained when scrutinizing the Tampere and/or Hague Programmes? If possible, please specify.

Not applicable.

6. Do you think that inter-parliamentary cooperation could contribute to making your scrutiny more efficient? If so, in what form and how?

The House of Representatives considers that inter-parliamentary cooperation could contribute to making the exercise of parliamentary scrutiny more efficient. Joint meetings, for example, provide a good opportunity for discussion, sharing ideas and exchange of information and best practices among parliaments.

Czech Republic: Poslanecká sněmovna

Chapter 1: Transparency of the Parliamentary Scrutiny Process

1. a) Are documents on EU matters that your Parliament/Chamber receives from the EU Institutions and your Government accessible to the public (for example, drafts of European Parliament reports and resolutions, European Parliament amendments and Council common positions in the codecision procedure, preparatory documents for Council working groups and for Coreper and/or the position of your Government)?

The Chamber of Deputies receives documents from the EU Institutions through the Government via Extranet of the Council. The documents originating from the Commission (initial legislative proposals, communications, green and white papers etc.) are presented to the members of the Committee for European Affairs in the form of weekly annotated overviews prepared by the Parliamentary Institute (information and research service for the Parliamentarians). These overviews are published without delay on the website of the Institute. However, the documents themselves are stored in an internal database of the Chamber, which is not accessible to the public.

All documents, including those created during the EU decision-making process, distributed to the national Governments via Council Extranet together with the Czech positions for Coreper and the positions of the Government are stored in a database, which forms part of the Government's Information System for the Approximation of Law. Access to this database is limited (requires password).

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- b) Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public? If so, please specify at what stage/when and in which language(s)?

No.

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- c) Does your Parliament/Chamber, in general, receive all the necessary documents for transparent and effective scrutiny of EU matters from your Government? If not, please specify.

In general, yes. The Government is obliged to provide the Chambers of Deputies with its position to all scrutinized EU issues. Moreover, following a request from the Committee for European Affairs, the responsible member of the Government has to attend a Committee session before Council meeting and present the Government's position to the issues on the Council agenda. However, the Government doesn't inform the Chamber of Deputies of its evolving position during the EU decision-making process if not requested (and sometimes even if so) to do so.

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2. Are the documents on EU matters produced by your Parliament/Chamber accessible to the public? If so, please specify which documents. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public?

In principle, all documents produced by the Chamber of Deputies are public. Nearly all documents on EU matters are produced by the Committee for European Affairs, mostly in the form of Committee resolutions accompanied by the report of the Deputy responsible (rapporteur). The resolutions are published after each Committee meeting on the

Committee website and also monthly in print. The paper form is distributed to selected libraries.

3. Is it possible for the public to be informed through your Parliament/Chamber about the state of play of ongoing negotiations on a specific EU issue, and at what stage/when? If so, please specify.

In principle, yes. The Parliamentary Institute or the Secretariat of the Committee for European Affairs are able to provide such information on request. However, there is no information service providing such information actively and regularly.

4. Are the scrutiny deliberations on EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber open to the public? Can the general public attend the meetings of your Committee on European Affairs, specialised committees and plenary debates directly or watch/listen to them on the TV/radio/Internet?

The scrutiny deliberations on EU matters in the Chamber of Deputies are public. Access restrictions apply only to deliberation of classified documents/information. The most effective way to follow the deliberations is to attend the meeting of the Committee for European Affairs in person, since media coverage of the committee's work is rather limited. The same applies to other specialized committees.

Plenary sessions may be attended by the general public as well or followed on the Internet in the form of live audiovisual and sound transmission or stenographic records. The stenographic records for the ongoing session are continuously updated. Sound and stenographic records are stored in a digital archive on the Chamber's website. Media coverage of the plenary sessions is also rather small.

5. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively inform the public about the scrutiny deliberations and their outcome through websites, web streaming, press briefings, news letters etc.?

The course of scrutiny deliberations in the committees and their outcomes are published on the committees' websites in the form of minutes and resolutions. Plenary sessions are covered by the audiovisual and sound transmission and stenographic records on the Internet (see also answer no. 4). Issues scrutinized by the plenary including course of the procedure, proposed amendments and final outcome are stored in a publicly accessible database on the Chamber's website. Orders of the sessions, voting results by names and parliamentary questions are available on the website as well.

6. Does your Parliament/Chamber have a section/unit which provides information about the EU to the public? If so, please specify the main tasks of this information section/unit.

No. The Chamber of Deputies has only a general information center. However, some units can provide such information on individual request (see also answer no. 3).

7. Are there any ongoing debates or plans in your Parliament/Chamber on ways to make the handling of EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber more transparent?

No.

Chapter 2: Parliamentary Scrutiny of the Stockholm Programme

1. How do you foresee that scrutiny will be conducted in your EU Affairs Committee? At what stages will scrutiny be conducted?

It is very likely that scrutiny of the “Stockholm Programme” in Committee on European Affairs of the Chamber of Deputies will be conducted on a regular basis – no specific procedure is therefore expected. But it is presumed that also other specialised Committees of the Chamber of Deputies will be involved (see answers 2 and 3).

It is also possible, as it already happened in the past, that Committee on European Affairs won’t adopt a specific position but will intermit this proceeding and wait for further progress. In this case, Committee might require an information from the government about its position.

This scrutiny will supposedly take place before Justice and Home Affairs Council meeting where will be the Stockholm Programme negotiated. It is also to be stressed that the the government is obliged to take into account the position of the Committee on European Affairs.

However, conducting of the scrutiny of the “Stockholm Programme” in the Committee on European Affairs might be a little bit hindered due to the Chamber of Deputies elections in October 2009.

2. Do you foresee that one or more of your specialised committees will be involved in the process? If so, which one(s), how, and at what stages will their scrutiny be conducted?

Within the regular proceedings of the Committee on European Affairs, this Committee can ask other Committees of the Chamber of Deputies for their position. Nevertheless, position of these Committees is in no case binding and has thus only recommending nature.

Thematically closest to those issues – in the current structure of the Chamber of Deputies – are Committee on Constitutional and Legal Affairs and the Committee on Security. Therefore is expected that these two Committees might be asked for their position, before the Committee on European Affairs adopts its own position.

3. Do you foresee that any other body in your Parliament/Chamber will be involved in the scrutiny? If so, which one(s), how and at what stage?

No other body in the Chamber of Deputies will be involved in the scrutiny. Apart from Committees there are only few other bodies in the Chamber of Deputies (eg. Commissions), but those bodies have specific tasks with limited scope of competence. Therefore are not regarded as standard bodies in this sense, participating in this scrutiny.

The only body which might be involved in this scrutiny, apart from Committees, only plenary session of the Chamber of Deputies could be taken into account.

4. Do you take any specific measures to ensure coordination between the various parliamentary bodies involved in scrutiny?

It can't be said there are specific measures to ensure coordination between those bodies or Committees involved in scrutiny. It is because only Committee on European Affairs is for this scrutiny responsible.

Other Committees are involved only when Committee on European Affairs consider opinions of other Committees are appropriate or needed for proper evaluation of this scrutiny. So there is no space for coordination in this sense but it depends on the political will of the Members of Committee on European Affairs.

5. When designing the scrutiny procedure as described above – have you drawn upon experience gained when scrutinizing the Tampere and/or Hague Programmes? If possible, please specify.

The Czech Republic was not member of the European Union until 2004 and therefore did not fully participate in the legislative process of the Tampere Programme. The Committee on European Affairs gathered its first valuable experiences only when scrutinizing the Hague Programme, which may be reflected when scrutinizing the Stockholm Programme.

Do you think that inter-parliamentary cooperation could contribute to making your scrutiny more efficient? If so, in what form and how?

As results from this inter-parliamentary cooperation so far, it helps to share the valuable information and best practices concerning the scrutiny procedures among the national parliaments.

The Chamber of Deputies is continuously restrained to proposals establishing new platforms of inter-parliamentary cooperation, but rather supports the improvements within the existing platforms of cooperation, such as IPEX, COSAC or Joint Parliamentary/Committee Meetings (JPMs/JCMs) organised by the EP in cooperation with the national parliament of the Member State which is actually holding the Presidency of the EU Council.

Czech Republic: Senát

Chapter 1: Transparency of the Parliamentary Scrutiny Process

1. a) Are documents on EU matters that your Parliament/Chamber receives from the EU Institutions and your Government accessible to the public (for example, drafts of European Parliament reports and resolutions, European Parliament amendments and Council common positions in the codecision procedure, preparatory documents for Council working groups and for Coreper and/or the position of your Government)?

Yes, but not all. The Senate makes accessible to the public all EU documents (legislative proposals, communication documents and others) which it decides to deal with in the frame of ex ante scrutiny. They can be found at Senate's website. This is, however, the case only of the initial documents of (in most cases) the Commission. Documents mentioned in the question in brackets, be it documents originating in later phases of the decision-making process or the position of the government to the initial document, are not publicly accessible. Nonetheless, their content is not kept secret and as both the committees and the plenary sit in public, all these documents are openly debated (unless there is a vote passed to close the meeting for specific reasons – this happens only exceptionally and very rarely).

- b) Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public? If so, please specify at what stage/when and in which language(s)?

Yes. All the documents mentioned in the first part of the answer to question a) are made accessible at the Senate's web pages and the Senat Information Centre after the Czech language version of the document is delivered. Only the Czech language version of the document is used.

- c) Does your Parliament/Chamber, in general, receive all the necessary documents for transparent and effective scrutiny of EU matters from your Government? If not, please specify.

Yes. The Senate's access to government document flow in the process of European policy formulation is quite extensive. The Senate has access through its expert service to several government EU databases where intra-government exchange takes place and negotiation strategies are formed. All the documents submitted to the weekly meeting of government's main EU coordinating body – the government Committee on the EU – are made accessible to the Senate and an official of the Senate Office is even a non-voting member of this Committee on working level. Shortly prior to the Czech EU presidency, a new comprehensive database with all relevant materials (programmes, preparatory materials, instructions, mandates and reports from working groups, Coreper, Councils, etc.) has been launched, the Senate being again enabled access therein.

2. Are the documents on EU matters produced by your Parliament/Chamber accessible to the public? If so, please specify which documents. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public?

Yes. All the resolutions on EU dossiers of the Committee on European Affairs, the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Security, all the specialised committees and the Senate

plenary are made accessible to the public on Senate's web pages and in paper copy at the Senate's Information Centre. They are also being e-mailed out upon request. Occasionally, the media also reports on Senate EU-related debates and their conclusions.

3. Is it possible for the public to be informed through your Parliament/Chamber about the state of play of ongoing negotiations on a specific EU issue, and at what stage/when? If so, please specify.

Yes. If the issue is debate at a meeting of one of the committees or the plenary which are all open to the public. State of play of various major initiatives is also regular topics of plenary debates over upcoming European Councils and subsequent debates on their outcomes. Plenary debates are instantly web streamed and televised with some delay.

4. Are the scrutiny deliberations on EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber open to the public? Can the general public attend the meetings of your Committee on European Affairs, specialised committees and plenary debates directly or watch/listen to them on the TV/radio/Internet?

Yes. All of the scrutiny deliberations (and in fact also any other deliberations) in the Senate are open to the public, unless the Standing Rules of the Senate provide otherwise, or the resolution of the Committee in question declares the meeting, or a part thereof, as being held in camera (happens seldom). Plenary debates can be followed via Internet - web streamed plus verbatim record. Record of every vote, Senator by Senator, is instantly available on the website and in paper in the plenary hall.

5. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively inform the public about the scrutiny deliberations and their outcome through websites, web streaming, press briefings, news letters etc.?

Yes. All the resolutions of both the Committee on European Affairs, specialized committees and plenary on EU documents are made accessible to the public on the Senate's web pages. Hard copies are available in Senate's Information Centre. Plenary debates are web-streamed and televised on national television (though not live). The Senate issues a free popular magazine informing on the debates taking place in the Senate.

6. Does your Parliament/Chamber have a section/unit which provides information about the EU to the public? If so, please specify the main tasks of this information section/unit.

No particular body for such active promotion exists. Basic information on the EU legislative process and the Senate's role in EU scrutiny together with specific information on currently deliberated dossiers can be obtained on the Senate's web, in its Information Centre or (more detailed) from its EU Unit.

7. Are there any ongoing debates or plans in your Parliament/Chamber on ways to make the handling of EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber more transparent?

No.

Chapter 2: Parliamentary Scrutiny of the Stockholm Programme

1. How do you foresee that scrutiny will be conducted in your EU Affairs Committee? At what stages will scrutiny be conducted?

The EU Affairs Committee will scrutinize the Communication (COM 262), as well as the Evaluation of the Hague Programme (COM 263) in September, as it has already chosen these two documents for scrutiny. The Committee is ready, and has a tradition based in The Hague Programme initiatives, to scrutinize other proposals and ensuing measures related to the Stockholm Programme, as it considers JHA/FSJ agenda as one of its scrutiny priorities.

2. Do you foresee that one or more of your specialised committees will be involved in the process? If so, which one(s), how, and at what stages will their scrutiny be conducted?

Yes. The Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Security will be involved in the process, as it is responsible for second and third pillar issues. It will deal with the Stockholm Programme in later phases and will not deal with the current Communication.

3. Do you foresee that any other body in your Parliament/Chamber will be involved in the scrutiny? If so, which one(s), how and at what stage?

Yes. It is expected that the plenary will debate the Programme at some stage in the autumn on recommendation of the EU Committee. No other bodies are to be involved in the scrutiny at the programming phase. However, many of them are likely to be involved in the scrutiny of subsequent particular FSJ measures.

4. Do you take any specific measures to ensure coordination between the various parliamentary bodies involved in scrutiny?

No. The EU Affairs Committee and the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Security will have equal position in the process. If the plenary is seized with conflicting recommendations from the two committees, it shall resolve the issue. No specific measures are foreseen.

5. When designing the scrutiny procedure as described above – have you drawn upon experience gained when scrutinizing the Tampere and/or Hague Programmes? If possible, please specify.

Yes, partly. The Czech Senate did scrutinize The Hague Programme in 2004. It needs to be said, that the system and real practice of EU scrutiny has evolved considerably since that time shortly after the accession to the EU. The Senate will thus mainly draw from its experience in scrutiny of the various Hague measures.

6. Do you think that inter-parliamentary cooperation could contribute to making your scrutiny more efficient? If so, in what form and how?

Yes. Inter-parliamentary cooperation is capable of providing added value, in the area of FSJ especially. The established forms of experience-sharing or exchange of views with other parliaments/chambers are welcome. The autumn JPM in preparation will provide a welcome forum for such exchange. Of course, information shared via IPEX is the obvious complementing tool. The thorough debate on future form of NPs' involvement in oversight of Europol and Eurojust under the French and Czech presidency is a good example of how interparliamentary cooperation in FSJ matters is essential, and how more is needed.

Denmark: Folketing

Chapter 1: Transparency of the Parliamentary Scrutiny Process

1. a) Are documents on EU matters that your Parliament/Chamber receives from the EU Institutions and your Government accessible to the public (for example, drafts of European Parliament reports and resolutions, European Parliament amendments and Council common positions in the codecision procedure, preparatory documents for Council working groups and for Coreper and/or the position of your Government)?

Documents received from EU institutions are accessible to the public, if the documents are not classified confidential or limited in any way.

However, the European Affairs Committee receives most documents via the government (the Ministry of Foreign Affairs). This means that the parliament simply follows the government's classification of the documents as public or confidential/limited.

In general the Parliament does not receive European Parliament reports and resolutions, European Parliament amendments and Council common positions in the codecision procedure, preparatory documents for Council working groups and for Coreper and/or the position of the Danish Government. Instead the government informs the European Affairs Committee and relevant sector committees about relevant positions in the European Parliament as well as the Council and council working groups. This information is given as part of the mandatory information from the government to the European Affairs Committee before every meeting in the committee - that is before or when mandates are discussed and given.

- b) Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public? If so, please specify at what stage/when and in which language(s)?

All documents (from both EU institutions, the government, NGO's, private persons etc.) sent to the European Affairs committee and/or sector committees are made automatically public on the parliament's webpage if they are not marked as confidential or limited. All public documents sent to the European Affairs Committee are also made public on the webpage of the EU Information Office of the Folketing.

- c) Does your Parliament/Chamber, in general, receive all the necessary documents for transparent and effective scrutiny of EU matters from your Government? If not, please specify.

In general yes. However, a discussion has been raised recently in the committee about the consequences of the growing number of 1st reading agreements. Some members of parliament argue that in cases of 1st reading agreements the information given by the government today is not sufficient, as it is often given after the Coreper has mandated the EU presidency to start negotiations with EP. The argument points out that at this stage Denmark has already committed itself to a certain opinion on a legislative proposal and that it's undermining the parliamentary control of the government's EU policy if the case has not been discussed in the European Affairs Committee beforehand – even at this early stage of negotiations at EU level.

2. Are the documents on EU matters produced by your Parliament/Chamber accessible to the public? If so, please specify which documents. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public?

Yes, most of them. Only a few are classified as confidential or limited.

The following EU-documents produced by the Danish Parliament are accessible to the public:

- **Agendas for meetings of the European Affairs committee**
- **Fact sheets, notes, analyses and reports on specific EU related matters, legislative proposals, rulings from the ECJ etc.**
- **Minutes from public meetings**

Those documents are made public on the webpage of the EU Information Office of the Folketing.

The following documents are limited:

- **Annotated / explanatory agendas for the Committee**
- **Minutes from closed meetings**
- **Certain notes prepared for closed meetings**

3. Is it possible for the public to be informed through your Parliament/Chamber about the state of play of ongoing negotiations on a specific EU issue, and at what stage/when? If so, please specify.

Yes - the government's information to the European Affairs Committee on the development of negotiations of specific cases are publicly accessible - either in the written information from the government to the European Affairs Committee or in the minutes from the meetings of the European Affairs Committee.

Moreover it's possible to contact the EU Information office if you need help to find that information.

4. Are the scrutiny deliberations on EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber open to the public? Can the general public attend the meetings of your Committee on European Affairs, specialised committees and plenary debates directly or watch/listen to them on the TV/radio/Internet?

Yes – meetings of the European Affairs Committee are open to the public, although there are a limited number of seats for the public. Meetings are videotaped, streamed live on the webpage of the parliament and accessible as video on demand afterwards. Plenary debates on EU matters are occasionally broadcasted on national television. By the end of 2009 the parliament will launch its own TV station where both meetings from the European Affairs Committee and the plenary will be broadcasted.

It happens from time to time that minor parts of the meetings of the European Affairs Committee are closed to the public because either the government or the committee wishes to have confidential discussions on a certain topic or case.

5. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively inform the public about the scrutiny deliberations and their outcome through websites, web streaming, press briefings, news letters etc.?

Until now only by web streaming the meetings of the European Affairs Committee. From November 2009 by broadcasting meetings in the European Affairs Committee on the parliament's TV channel. We do not send out press releases or newsletters on a regular basis.

6. Does your Parliament/Chamber have a section/unit which provides information about the EU to the public? If so, please specify the main tasks of this information section/unit.

Yes – The EU Information Office of the Folketing.

The primary task for the EU Information Office is to provide accessible information on EU matters to the general public. This aim is primarily pursued by answering questions from the public by phone or e-mail, by running a webpage and by publishing leaflets, brochures and books targeting different groups. The EU Information Office offers its services to all members of the parliament as well.

7. Are there any ongoing debates or plans in your Parliament/Chamber on ways to make the handling of EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber more transparent?

A few years ago such discussions led to the opening of the meetings of European Affairs Committee to the public (in 2006) and web streaming of the meetings (in 2007). Since then transparency of the parliamentary scrutiny of EU matters has not been an issue.

Chapter 2: Parliamentary Scrutiny of the Stockholm Programme

1. How do you foresee that scrutiny will be conducted in your EU Affairs Committee? At what stages will scrutiny be conducted?

As usual: by the European Affairs Committee when the government presents its opinion on the Stockholm Programme.

2. Do you foresee that one or more of your specialised committees will be involved in the process? If so, which one(s), how, and at what stages will their scrutiny be conducted?

Possible the sector committee on justice and/or the sector committee on integration and immigration will scrutinise the programme as well, as it's a rather extensive programme. It's up to each sector committees to decide whether and when they would like to be involved in the scrutinizing process by initiating discussions with the relevant minister and/or giving opinions to the European Affairs Committee.

3. Do you foresee that any other body in your Parliament/Chamber will be involved in the scrutiny? If so, which one(s), how and at what stage?

Not apart from committees mentioned above.

4. Do you take any specific measures to ensure coordination between the various parliamentary bodies involved in scrutiny?

The European Affairs Committee does not coordinate the different bodies involved in scrutinizing, though it recommends to the sector committees to coordinate their opinion to the European Affairs Committee, if more sector committees are involved in scrutinizing the same case.

5. When designing the scrutiny procedure as described above – have you drawn upon experience gained when scrutinizing the Tampere and/or Hague Programmes? If possible, please specify.

No.

6. Do you think that inter-parliamentary cooperation could contribute to making your scrutiny more efficient? If so, in what form and how?

Possibly: Through exchange of general information on access to documents and timing and type of information given by the government to the parliament.

Less likely: Through exchange of information on specific legislative acts to be scrutinised, as procedures are not at all parallel in time across the Member States.

Estonia: Riigikogu

Chapter 1: Transparency of the Parliamentary Scrutiny Process

1. a) Are documents on EU matters that your Parliament/Chamber receives from the EU Institutions and your Government accessible to the public (for example, drafts of European Parliament reports and resolutions, European Parliament amendments and Council common positions in the codecision procedure, preparatory documents for Council working groups and for Coreper and/or the position of your Government)? **It depends and is dealt with on a case-by-case basis in respect of Council-related materials; EU drafts (EC proposals for directives, White Papers, Green Papers) are public.**

b) Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public? If so, please specify at what stage/when and in which language(s)? **No**

c) Does your Parliament/Chamber, in general, receive all the necessary documents for transparent and effective scrutiny of EU matters from your Government? If not, please specify. **Yes**
2. Are the documents on EU matters produced by your Parliament/Chamber accessible to the public? If so, please specify which documents. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public? **Yes, decisions –minutes of the committees' sessions are public and accessible via Riigikogu's Internet site.**
3. Is it possible for the public to be informed through your Parliament/Chamber about the state of play of ongoing negotiations on a specific EU issue, and at what stage/when? If so, please specify. **Via press-releases and the minutes of the committees involved.**
4. Are the scrutiny deliberations on EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber open to the public? Can the general public attend the meetings of your Committee on European Affairs, specialised committees and plenary debates directly or watch/listen to them on the TV/radio/Internet? **Usually not, but special public sessions of the committee (EU and others) have been held+ most recent decision by the EU Affairs Committee to have the meetings with the Prime Minister before the European Council meetings public (open meeting+broadcast via internet+ available recording on the committee homepage).**
5. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively inform the public about the scrutiny deliberations and their outcome through websites, web streaming, press briefings, news letters etc.? **As of July 24 the EU Affairs Committee has started to use Facebook <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Tallinn-Estonia/Euroopa-Liidu-asjade-komisjon/101539093220?v=wall&viewas=100000097524061> and Twitter <http://twitter.com/ELkomisjon> as additional sources.**
6. Does your Parliament/Chamber have a section/unit which provides information about the EU to the public? If so, please specify the main tasks of this information section/unit. **No separate unit, usually EU-specific info is handled by EU affairs Committee and in addition the Press Department of the Riigikogu support.**

7. Are there any ongoing debates or plans in your Parliament/Chamber on ways to make the handling of EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber more transparent? **Yes**

Chapter 2: Parliamentary Scrutiny of the Stockholm Programme

1. How do you foresee that scrutiny will be conducted in your EU Affairs Committee? At what stages will scrutiny be conducted?

As normal scrutiny procedure foresees; the first discussion will be on July 10 in relation to the non-formal Justice and Home Affairs Council meeting on July 15-17. It will be parallel: council-related and document-related.

2. Do you foresee that one or more of your specialised committees will be involved in the process? If so, which one(s), how, and at what stages will their scrutiny be conducted? **Yes, Constitutional Affairs Committee and Legal Affairs Committee- document-based scrutiny-the committees will give their opinions on related documents to the EU affairs Committee.**

3. Do you foresee that any other body in your Parliament/Chamber will be involved in the scrutiny? If so, which one(s), how and at what stage? **No**

4. Do you take any specific measures to ensure coordination between the various parliamentary bodies involved in scrutiny? **No**

5. When designing the scrutiny procedure as described above – have you drawn upon experience gained when scrutinizing the Tampere and/or Hague Programmes? If possible, please specify. **Yes- the existing scrutiny mechanisms have proven to be working.**

6. Do you think that inter-parliamentary cooperation could contribute to making your scrutiny more efficient? If so, in what form and how? **Information exchange via IPEX seems to be sufficient.**

Finland: Eduskunta

Chapter 1: Transparency of the Parliamentary Scrutiny Process

1. a) Are documents on EU matters that your Parliament/Chamber receives from the EU Institutions and your Government accessible to the public (for example, drafts of European Parliament reports and resolutions, European Parliament amendments and Council common positions in the codecision procedure, preparatory documents for Council working groups and for Coreper and/or the position of your Government)?

Finland's Constitution requires that the Government keep the Parliament informed on the preparation of matters in the European Union. When doing this the documents and the position of the Government are accessible to the public after the Grand Committee meeting (EU Affairs Committee). Furthermore, the minutes of a meeting (available in Finnish and in Swedish), normally become accessible to the public after the meeting.

- b) Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public? If so, please specify at what stage/when and in which language(s)?

See reply to question 1.

- c) Does your Parliament/Chamber, in general, receive all the necessary documents for transparent and effective scrutiny of EU matters from your Government? If not, please specify.

Finland's Constitution requires that the Government keep the Parliament informed on the preparation of matters in the European Union. There is no specific deadline to do this but it should be done as soon as the language versions of the EU documents (fi and swe) are available.

The Government must also hear Parliament's views on proposals being discussed in the EU and must explain and justify the policies it adopts within the EU. According to the Constitution, the Government and each minister must enjoy the confidence of Parliament in all of their activities.

2. Are the documents on EU matters produced by your Parliament/Chamber accessible to the public? If so, please specify which documents. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public?

See reply to question 1.

3. Is it possible for the public to be informed through your Parliament/Chamber about the state of play of ongoing negotiations on a specific EU issue, and at what stage/when? If so, please specify.

Following negotiations in the EU the relevant minister is required to report to the Grand Committee about the state of play of ongoing negotiations. This also applies to the Prime Minister concerning European Council meetings and inter-governmental conferences in the EU. When doing this the documents and the position of the Government are accessible to the public after the Grand Committee meeting. Exceptionally, the information on ongoing negotiations may remain confidential and not available to the public.

4. Are the scrutiny deliberations on EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber open to the public? Can the general public attend the meetings of your Committee on European Affairs, specialised committees and plenary debates directly or watch/listen to them on the TV/radio/Internet?

The Grand Committee meetings and EU scrutiny deliberations are not held in public. However, the plenary sessions are open to public and they can be followed via web and occasionally via radio and TV.

5. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively inform the public about the scrutiny deliberations and their outcome through websites, web streaming, press briefings, news letters etc.?

The Grand Committee has an information officer who is responsible of EU-matters. The press release is normally published after the Grand Committee meeting on Wednesdays and Fridays.

6. Does your Parliament/Chamber have a section/unit which provides information about the EU to the public? If so, please specify the main tasks of this information section/unit.

The Finnish parliament has the Visitor's Centre where citizens will find information about Parliament and the European Union. There is a possibility to watch videos about the Parliament or read brochures. The staff provide information and answers questions. Furthermore, the Foreign Ministry's Europe Information office in Helsinki operates in the Visitor's Centre. The Europe Information office produces and distributes information about European integration and the Finnish membership in the European Union. The approach is national and the aim is to offer a wide range of material and different views concerning the EU to support public debate.

Link to the Visitor's Centre

<http://web.eduskunta.fi/Resource.phx/parliament/services/visitorscentre.htx>

7. Are there any ongoing debates or plans in your Parliament/Chamber on ways to make the handling of EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber more transparent?

The Finnish parliament has launched a working group in order to enhance transparency and give more visibility to the EU-matters. One option considered by this working group would be to have more discussions on EU-matters in the plenary being the most important political forum in Finland.

Chapter 2: Parliamentary Scrutiny of the Stockholm Programme

1. How do you foresee that scrutiny will be conducted in your EU Affairs Committee? At what stages will scrutiny be conducted?

The Grand Committee has already been informed by the Government in a preparatory phase in 2007. After the Commission adoption of the programme the Grand Committee has received the position of the Government in January 2009 and the scrutiny is in process.

2. Do you foresee that one or more of your specialised committees will be involved in the process? If so, which one(s), how, and at what stages will their scrutiny be conducted?

The committees involved are: Administration (internal affairs), Legal Affairs and Constitutional Law. The Grand Committee (EU Affairs Committee) and Legal Affairs committee have already given opinions.

3. Do you foresee that any other body in your Parliament/Chamber will be involved in the scrutiny? If so, which one(s), how and at what stage?

No.

4. Do you take any specific measures to ensure coordination between the various parliamentary bodies involved in scrutiny?

Yes, the normal coordination will take place. The final coordination will be made by the Grand Committee (EU Affairs Committee).

5. When designing the scrutiny procedure as described above – have you drawn upon experience gained when scrutinizing the Tampere and/or Hague Programmes? If possible, please specify.

The main focus was on content, not on the scrutiny process itself.

6. Do you think that inter-parliamentary cooperation could contribute to making your scrutiny more efficient? If so, in what form and how?

No.

France: Assemblée nationale

Chapitre 1: Transparence du processus d'examen parlementaire

1. a) Les documents portant sur les questions européennes que reçoit votre Parlement/Chambre de la part des institutions européennes et de votre Gouvernement sont-ils accessibles au public ? (par exemple les projets de rapports et de résolutions du Parlement européen, les amendements du Parlement européen et les positions communes du Conseil dans le cadre de la procédure de codécision, les documents préparatoires des groupes de travail du Conseil et du Coreper, la position de votre Gouvernement).

La page Union Européenne de l'Assemblée nationale (<http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/europe/>) permet au public d'avoir accès à la liste complète des textes européens soumis par le Gouvernement aux assemblées en application de l'article 88-4 de la Constitution. A l'origine, le champ des documents transmis se limitait aux projets d'actes européens entrant dans le domaine de la loi française. Depuis la réforme constitutionnelle du 23 juillet 2008, l'information des assemblées est désormais presque exhaustive : le Gouvernement leur soumet en effet tous les projets d'actes de l'Union européenne, quelle qu'en soit la nature. Ces documents sont aisément consultables sur le site précité (à la page http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/europe/index-dossiers_e.asp). Ils ne couvrent cependant que les projets d'actes initiaux.

Les autres textes utiles au contrôle des affaires européennes, soit transmis par le Gouvernement (l'article 6 bis de l'ordonnance du 17 novembre 1958, modifié par la loi du 15 juin 2009, disposant que le Gouvernement « peut également communiquer [aux Commissions des affaires européennes de chaque assemblée], de sa propre initiative ou à la demande de leur président, tout document nécessaire » sans autre précision), soit consultés par la Commission des affaires européennes par ses propres moyens (rapports du Parlement européen, communiqués de la Commission, etc.), ne sont en revanche pas reproduits sur le site internet de l'Assemblée. La page Union européenne précitée fournit néanmoins des liens vers les sites appropriés des diverses institutions de l'Union.

- b) Votre Parlement/Chambre prend-il/elle l'initiative de mettre ces documents à la disposition du public ? Si tel est le cas, veuillez préciser à quelle étape de la procédure ces documents sont rendus publics, quand et dans quelle langue.

Comme il a été vu, l'Assemblée nationale publie en ligne, dès leur réception, l'ensemble des documents qui lui sont transmis par le Gouvernement. Ces documents sont produits en français. Dans la mesure où l'article 88-4 de la Constitution fait obligation au Gouvernement de soumettre les projets d'actes européens « dès leur transmission au Conseil de l'Union », ces textes sont généralement accessibles dans des délais brefs suivant la publication des propositions initiales.

- c) Votre Parlement/Chambre reçoit-il de votre Gouvernement tous les documents nécessaires pour un examen effectif et transparent des affaires européennes ? Si ce n'est pas le cas, veuillez préciser.

L'étendue du champ des documents transmis aux assemblées permet un examen efficace et transparent des affaires européennes. Par ailleurs, l'intensité des contacts quotidiens entre la Commission des affaires européennes et les administrations françaises chargées de l'Europe (Représentation permanente à Bruxelles, Secrétariat général des affaires européennes assurant, sous l'autorité du Premier ministre, la coordination interministérielle des questions européennes, spécialistes au sein de chaque ministère, etc.) assure une pleine fluidité de l'information. En outre, comme il a été vu, l'article 6 bis de l'ordonnance de 1958 modifié en 2009 permet, dans les cas très exceptionnels où le recours à cette procédure se justifie, au Président de la Commission des affaires européennes d'adresser une demande formelle de documents au Gouvernement, qui reste cependant libre des suites à lui donner.

2. Les documents portant sur les questions européennes émis par votre Parlement/Chambre sont-ils accessibles au public ? Si tel est le cas, veuillez préciser quels documents. Votre Parlement/Chambre prend-il/elle l'initiative de mettre ces documents à la disposition du public ?

La Commission des affaires européennes publie divers types de documents, tous mis à la disposition du public par format papier (rapports d'information, comptes rendus des réunions, etc.) et/ou par voie électronique (page Union européenne du site de l'Assemblée nationale).

– Tous les documents soumis par le Gouvernement, c'est-à-dire tous les projets d'actes européens, font l'objet d'une instruction par la Commission. Les fiches explicatives rédigées par la Commission, le compte-rendu des débats auxquels ils ont donné lieu et la position finale de la Commission sont publiés et mis en ligne sur un rythme en général mensuel dans des rapports dits « balais » (par exemple : <http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/13/europe/rap-info/i1727.asp>).

– Les textes les plus importants font l'objet d'un rapport d'information, qui peut être suivi du dépôt d'une proposition de résolution soumise à l'Assemblée nationale dans son ensemble. Des conférences de presse peuvent être organisées à l'initiative des rapporteurs.

– La Commission des affaires européennes publie enfin une lettre électronique (par exemple <http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/europe/lettre/lettre24.asp>) qui détaille régulièrement les divers travaux de la Commission et présente une sélection commentée de divers textes européens choisis pour leur intérêt particulier (jurisprudence de la Cour de justice de l'Union européenne, décisions de la Commission, etc.).

3. Le public peut-il être informé par votre Parlement/Chambre de l'état des négociations en cours sur un sujet spécifique relatif à l'UE et à quel moment ? Si tel est le cas, veuillez préciser.

Les comptes rendus des réunions de la Commission, en particulier des auditions auxquelles elle procède et ses divers rapports d'information permettent au public d'accéder aux informations pertinentes sur l'évolution des négociations. Le service des affaires européennes de l'Assemblée nationale traite pour sa part des différentes demandes d'information émises par les parlementaires et, dans la mesure du possible, par le public général.

4. Les débats relatifs à l'examen des affaires européennes qui se tiennent dans votre Parlement/Chambre sont-ils ouverts au public ? Le public peut-il assister aux réunions de votre Commission des affaires européennes, de vos Commissions spéciales et aux débats en séance plénière ? Si tel est le cas, peut-il le faire directement ou par le biais de la TV/Radio/Internet ?

Le bureau de la Commission des affaires européennes est compétent pour organiser la publicité des travaux de celle-ci par les moyens de son choix. Les réunions peuvent ainsi être ouvertes à la presse, voire faire l'objet d'une diffusion audiovisuelle, par exemple sur la chaîne parlementaire LCP AN. Toutes les réunions font l'objet d'un compte rendu publié selon les formes décrites *supra*.

Les débats en séance publique (vote sur les résolutions européennes, débats préalables aux Conseils européens, débats d'actualité sur l'Europe, etc.) sont diffusés et ouverts au public.

5. Votre Parlement /Chambre prend-t-il/elle l'initiative d'informer le public à propos des débats relatifs à l'examen des affaires européennes et aux décisions au moyen d'internet, de conférences de presse, de communiqués, etc.?

Voir la réponse à la question n° 2.

6. Votre Parlement/Chambre dispose-t-il/elle d'un service qui fournit au public des informations sur l'UE ? Si tel est le cas, veuillez préciser les principales fonctions de ce service.

L'Assemblée nationale ne dispose pas d'un service spécifiquement dédié à cette tâche. Cependant, comme il a été vu *supra*, le service des affaires européennes assure cette mission en tant que de besoin et dans la mesure de ses possibilités.

7. Des débats ou des projets ont-ils cours dans votre Parlement/Chambre sur la façon d'accroître la transparence dans le traitement des questions européennes dans votre Parlement/Chambre ?

La transparence dans le traitement des affaires européennes ne génère aujourd'hui pas de débats. Les travaux actuels portent principalement sur les moyens d'alerter efficacement les parlementaires le plus en amont possible du processus décisionnel européen sur les textes soulevant des difficultés politiques, qui pose moins une question d'accès au document que de réactivité et de sélectivité dans leur traitement.

Chapitre 2 : Examen parlementaire du programme de Stockholm

1. Comment envisagez-vous la conduite de l'examen par la commission chargée des affaires européennes ? A quel moment effectuera-t-elle son examen ?

La délégation pour l'Union européenne de l'Assemblée nationale (devenue Commission chargée des affaires européennes) a désigné deux rapporteurs, M. Thierry Mariani et M. Christophe Caresche, Députés, pour répondre à la consultation publique lancée le 25 septembre 2008 par la Commission européenne. La contribution de la Délégation pour l'Union européenne a été publiée sur le site de la Commission européenne.

La Commission des affaires européennes a auditionné, conjointement avec la Commission des lois constitutionnelles, de la législation et de l'administration générale de la République, le vice-président de la Commission européenne, M. Jacques Barrot.

Au cours de l'automne, il est prévu que des rapporteurs de la Commission des affaires européennes soient désignés afin de suivre les travaux relatifs au programme de Stockholm et de porter la position de la Commission.

2. Prévoyez-vous la participation au processus d'une ou plusieurs de vos commissions spécialisées ? Si tel est le cas, la(les)quelle(s), comment et à quel moment sera mené l'examen ?

Il est probable que la Commission des lois constitutionnelles, de la législation et de l'administration générale de la République travaille également sur le programme de Stockholm.

3. Prévoyez-vous la participation de tout autre organe de votre Parlement/Chambre à cet examen ? Si tel est le cas, le(s)quel(s), comment et à quel moment ?

Il est trop tôt pour le dire.

4. Comment allez-vous assurer la bonne coordination des activités entre les différents organes parlementaires participant à cet examen ?

Il n'y aura pas de difficultés à cet égard, dans la mesure où la Commission chargée des affaires européennes et les Commissions spécialisées sont régulièrement amenées à travailler ensemble ou successivement, aux différentes étapes de la procédure, notamment s'agissant des propositions de résolution, sur les mêmes sujets européens.

5. Avez-vous tiré des leçons de l'expérience antérieure de l'examen du programme de Tampere et/ou du programme de La Haye en envisageant les procédures d'examen décrites ci-dessus ? si tel est le cas, veuillez préciser.

Il n'y a pas eu de leçon particulière à tirer.

6. Pensez-vous que la coopération interparlementaire puisse contribuer à rendre votre examen plus efficace ? Si tel est le cas, quelle(s) forme(s) de coopération et comment ?

Il est certain qu'une expression conjointe des parlements nationaux aurait un poids important dans l'élaboration du programme de Stockholm. Une réunion interparlementaire consacrée à ces questions, par exemple au cours de la COSAC, pourrait être discutée.

France: Sénat

Chapitre 1: Transparence du processus d'examen parlementaire

1. a) Les documents portant sur les questions européennes que reçoit votre Parlement/Chambre de la part des institutions européennes et de votre Gouvernement sont-ils accessibles au public ? (par exemple les projets de rapports et de résolutions du Parlement européen, les amendements du Parlement européen et les positions communes du Conseil dans le cadre de la procédure de codécision, les documents préparatoires des groupes de travail du Conseil et du Coreper, la position de votre Gouvernement).

Sont uniquement accessibles au public, sur le site Internet du Sénat, les documents qui font l'objet d'un examen par le Sénat, c'est-à-dire tous les projets ou propositions d'actes transmis par le Gouvernement dans le cadre de l'article 88-4 de la Constitution et, parmi les textes transmis par la Commission européenne dans le cadre de l'initiative Barroso, ceux qui font l'objet d'observations. Dans les deux cas, les documents accessibles au public correspondent à la première étape du processus législatif européen. Tout autre document transmis ultérieurement au Sénat pour compléter son information (positions communes du Conseil, documents préparatoires des groupes de travail du Conseil et du Coreper, position du Gouvernement) ou dont il pourrait avoir connaissance par ailleurs (projets de rapports et de résolutions du Parlement européen, les amendements du Parlement européen) n'est pas accessible au public. Il ne relève pas de la mission du Sénat d'organiser la publicité des documents européens, à l'exception de ceux sur lesquels il est amené à prendre position.

- b) Votre Parlement/Chambre prend-il/elle l'initiative de mettre ces documents à la disposition du public ? Si tel est le cas, veuillez préciser à quelle étape de la procédure ces documents sont rendus publics, quand et dans quelle langue.

Le Sénat met à la disposition du public, sur le site Internet du Sénat, les textes européens dès leur transmission par le Gouvernement, avant tout examen par la commission des affaires européennes. Parmi les textes envoyés par la Commission européenne dans le cadre de l'initiative Barroso, sont rendus accessibles au public (sur le site Internet du Sénat) ceux sur lesquels la commission des affaires européennes du Sénat a décidé, au cours d'une de ses réunions, d'adresser des observations à la Commission européenne. Il s'écoule donc une période de plusieurs semaines entre la réception de ces textes par le Sénat et leur publication à l'issue de la réunion. L'ensemble des documents publiés est en langue française.

- c) Votre Parlement/Chambre reçoit-il de votre Gouvernement tous les documents nécessaires pour un examen effectif et transparent des affaires européennes ? Si ce n'est pas le cas, veuillez préciser.

Oui. D'une façon générale, nous sommes satisfaits de la documentation (abondante) transmise par les instances gouvernementales, qui nous permet de mener à bien notre travail de contrôle. De plus, nous entretenons des relations constantes aussi bien avec la structure interministérielle basée à Paris qui s'occupe du suivi des questions européennes (Secrétariat général des affaires européennes, placé sous l'autorité du Premier ministre),

qu'avec la Représentation permanente de la France à Bruxelles (grâce au travail réalisé sur place par le responsable de l'antenne administrative du Sénat). Dans ces conditions, si nous souhaitons obtenir un document qui ne nous aurait pas été transmis dans le cadre de la procédure habituelle, il nous est très facile (sauf cas exceptionnel, par exemple, les documents relatifs aux procédures d'infraction) d'avoir accès au document souhaité.

2. Les documents portant sur les questions européennes émis par votre Parlement/Chambre sont-ils accessibles au public ? Si tel est le cas, veuillez préciser quels documents. Votre Parlement/Chambre prend-il/elle l'initiative de mettre ces documents à la disposition du public ?

Tout document produit par la commission des affaires européennes (communications, rapports d'information, propositions de résolution) est mis à la disposition du public, de même que les débats au sein de la commission.

3. Le public peut-il être informé par votre Parlement/Chambre de l'état des négociations en cours sur un sujet spécifique relatif à l'UE et à quel moment ? Si tel est le cas, veuillez préciser.

Le public peut prendre connaissance de l'évolution des négociations sur un sujet précis à travers les travaux de la commission rendus publics (voir question 2). Au-delà, il n'est pas dans la mission du Sénat d'informer le citoyen sur l'évolution des discussions au niveau des institutions européennes. Le service des affaires européennes du Sénat s'efforce cependant de répondre aux demandes d'information de cette nature, formulées individuellement par les citoyens français (par Internet principalement). Dans la plupart des cas, il s'agit de guider ces personnes vers les sources d'information adéquates (sites Internet des institutions européennes), si le Sénat n'a pas déjà examiné le texte concerné.

4. Les débats relatifs à l'examen des affaires européennes qui se tiennent dans votre Parlement/Chambre sont-ils ouverts au public ? Le public peut-il assister aux réunions de votre Commission des affaires européennes, de vos Commissions spéciales et aux débats en séance plénière ? Si tel est le cas, peut-il le faire directement ou par le biais de la TV/Radio/Internet ?

Les débats qui se tiennent au sein des commissions du Sénat ne sont pas ouverts au public. Toutefois, certaines réunions peuvent être ouvertes à la presse (TV/Radio/Presse écrite) ou faire l'objet d'un enregistrement télévisé qui est diffusé sur Internet et/ou sur la chaîne de télévision du Parlement français. Les débats qui se tiennent en séance plénière sont par nature ouverts au public, y compris ceux portant sur des sujets européens.

5. Votre Parlement /Chambre prend-t-il/elle l'initiative d'informer le public à propos des débats relatifs à l'examen des affaires européennes et aux décisions au moyen d'internet, de conférences de presse, de communiqués, etc.?

Tous les travaux et débats portant sur des sujets européens sont publiés (documents imprimés / Internet) et mis à la disposition du public (voir question 2). En fonction de l'intérêt qu'ils suscitent, certains travaux peuvent bénéficier d'une publicité accrue grâce à l'organisation de conférences de presse ou à la diffusion de communiqués de presse.

6. Votre Parlement/Chambre dispose-t-il/elle d'un service qui fournit au public des informations sur l'UE ? Si tel est le cas, veuillez préciser les principales fonctions de ce service.

Il n'existe pas au sein du Sénat de service dédié à cette mission. L'information du public sur l'Union européenne est réalisée par le service des affaires européennes dans les conditions décrites précédemment.

7. Des débats ou des projets ont-ils cours dans votre Parlement/Chambre sur la façon d'accroître la transparence dans le traitement des questions européennes dans votre Parlement/Chambre ?

Non.

Chapitre 2 : Examen parlementaire du programme de Stockholm

1. Comment envisagez-vous la conduite de l'examen par la commission chargée des affaires européennes ? A quel moment effectuera-t-elle son examen ?

La commission des affaires européennes du Sénat a désigné trois rapporteurs (représentant chacun un groupe politique différent) afin de conduire un travail de fond sur le programme de Stockholm. Avant même la publication de la communication de la Commission européenne sur le nouveau programme, ils ont mené deux séries d'auditions à Bruxelles et à Paris. De nouvelles auditions sont programmées au cours des mois de septembre et octobre 2009. Les trois rapporteurs présenteront leurs conclusions devant leurs collègues de la commission des affaires européennes au cours du mois d'octobre.

La commission des affaires européennes a par ailleurs organisé le 7 juillet 2009 une audition de M. Jacques Barrot, vice-président de la Commission européenne, portant sur le programme de Stockholm. Cette réunion était ouverte à l'ensemble des sénateurs (<http://www.senat.fr/europe/r07072009.html>).

Enfin, sur la base du travail accompli en commission, le programme de Stockholm pourrait faire l'objet d'un débat en séance plénière en présence du Gouvernement, vers la fin du mois d'octobre, sous la forme d'une « question orale européenne avec débat ».

2. Prévoyez-vous la participation au processus d'une ou plusieurs de vos commissions spécialisées ? Si tel est le cas, la(les)quelle(s), comment et à quel moment sera mené l'examen ?
3. Prévoyez-vous la participation de tout autre organe de votre Parlement/Chambre à cet examen ? Si tel est le cas, le(s)quel(s), comment et à quel moment ?
4. Comment allez-vous assurer la bonne coordination des activités entre les différents organes parlementaires participant à cet examen ?

L'association des commissions spécialisées est effective grâce au principe de double appartenance des membres de la commission des affaires européennes. Ainsi, deux des rapporteurs désignés par la commission des affaires européennes sont également membres

de la commission des lois dont le domaine de compétence recouvre les problématiques du programme de Stockholm. Au-delà, la commission des lois n'a pas prévu pour le moment de conduire un examen du programme de façon distincte ou en coopération avec la commission des affaires européennes. Cela ne préjuge pas, toutefois, de ce qui aura lieu lorsque les textes normatifs inspirés par le programme de Stockholm seront soumis à l'examen du Sénat. La procédure régulière d'examen des textes européens donne en effet toute sa place aux commissions spécialisées pour qu'elles se prononcent sur les textes européens.

5. Avez-vous tiré des leçons de l'expérience antérieure de l'examen du programme de Tampere et/ou du programme de La Haye en envisageant les procédures d'examen décrites ci-dessus ? si tel est le cas, veuillez préciser.

L'examen du programme de Stockholm par la commission des affaires européennes est guidé par le même principe qui s'appliquait pour les programmes de La Haye et de Tampere : assurer l'information des sénateurs sur le contenu du programme. Comme les fois précédentes, cet examen se déroule conformément aux dispositions du Règlement du Sénat en vigueur en matière de questions européennes.

6. Pensez-vous que la coopération interparlementaire puisse contribuer à rendre votre examen plus efficace ? Si tel est le cas, quelle(s) forme(s) de coopération et comment ?

Les échanges entre assemblées parlementaires des différents États membres sont toujours profitables et de nature à améliorer le travail conduit au niveau national. Le Sénat se réjouit à cet égard que deux réunions interparlementaires (la XLIIe réunion de la COSAC en octobre et la réunion interparlementaire en partenariat avec le Parlement européen à Bruxelles, en novembre 2009) organisées dans le cadre de la Présidence suédoise, aient à leur ordre du jour le programme de Stockholm. Ces débats interparlementaires auront une portée d'autant plus importante qu'ils se tiendront à un moment opportun et utile, c'est-à-dire avant la décision du Conseil européen de décembre 2009.

Germany: Bundestag

Chapter 1: Transparency of the Parliamentary Scrutiny Process

1. a) *Are documents on EU matters that your Parliament/Chamber receives from the EU Institutions and your Government accessible to the public (for example, drafts of European Parliament reports and resolutions, European Parliament amendments and Council common positions in the codecision procedure, preparatory documents for Council working groups and for Coreper and/or the position of your Government)?*

The German Bundestag does not offer a general public access to documents received by the Federal Government. If documents become part of a paper of the Bundestag, e.g. EU reports, they are published within the papers and are therefore accessible to the public, also through the Bundestag's website.

- b) *Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public? If so, please specify at what stage/when and in which language(s)?*

As described above some EU documents are publicly available after they have been deliberated by the plenary. Public access to Bundestag's printed papers is actively offered (paper, digital). As part of its public-relations activities the Bundestag, moreover, offers broad information on Europe via its website and brochures.

- c) *Does your Parliament/Chamber, in general, receive all the necessary documents for transparent and effective scrutiny of EU matters from your Government? If not, please specify.*

Currently information on matters concerning the European Union (documents etc.) is provided by the Federal Government and partly by the European Parliament (EP resolutions etc.) to the German Bundestag at most instances. The procedure as it is currently being administered is for the most part satisfactory and facilitates parliamentary control. Political discussions mostly concentrate on technical details of the communication between Bundestag and Federal Government.

2. *Are the documents on EU matters produced by your Parliament/Chamber accessible to the public? If so, please specify which documents. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public?*

Please refer to question one.

3. *Is it possible for the public to be informed through your Parliament/Chamber about the state of play of ongoing negotiations on a specific EU issue, and at what stage/when? If so, please specify.*

There is no general or coordinated public information procedure on ongoing negotiations.

4. *Are the scrutiny deliberations on EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber open to the public? Can the general public attend the meetings of your Committee on European Affairs, specialised committees and plenary debates directly or watch/listen to them on the TV/radio/Internet?*

It depends on the respectively responsible committee if deliberations are open to public. The EU Affairs Committee of the Bundestag regularly meets in closed session.

Nevertheless, public hearings on topics of general interest, e.g. Treaty of Lisbon, are held regularly. Plenary debates are public and transmitted on TV and the internet.

5. *Does your Parliament/Chamber actively inform the public about the scrutiny deliberations and their outcome through websites, web streaming, press briefings, news letters etc.?*
There is no general or coordinated public information procedure.
6. *Does your Parliament/Chamber have a section/unit which provides information about the EU to the public? If so, please specify the main tasks of this information section/unit.*
Please refer to question 7.
7. *Are there any ongoing debates or plans in your Parliament/Chamber on ways to make the handling of EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber more transparent?*

The Bundestag has always taken transparency and openness to public as an indefeasible principle of its work and its openness to public. The Bundestag holds a major visitor service as well as a public relations division and other divisions responsible for the communication of policy issues, also concerning EU affairs. Nevertheless, a general or coordinated information procedure on EU affairs is currently not discussed.

Chapter 2: Parliamentary Scrutiny of the Stockholm Programme

1. *How do you foresee that scrutiny will be conducted in your EU Affairs Committee? At what stages will scrutiny be conducted?*
The scrutiny of the Stockholm program in the EU Affairs Committee of the German Bundestag has begun at an early stage of the political process through reports of the relevant German and European institutions, e.g. by Vice-President Barrot, the Minister of Justice, the Minister of Interior and several written and oral reports of the Ministries to the Committee. Detailed questions of the Stockholm Program's implementation in national law will be discussed by the leading/specialised and participating committees.
2. *Do you foresee that one or more of your specialised committees will be involved in the process? If so, which one(s), how, and at what stages will their scrutiny be conducted?*
The leading committee will most likely be the Committee of Internal Affairs. The Committee on Legal Affairs and the Committee on the Affairs of the European Union will most likely be participating. The Commission's communication (11060/09) might be referred as an item to the Committees on August 26, 2009. The Committee on Internal Affairs and the Committee on Legal Affairs held a common hearing on the Stockholm Program in September 2008.
3. *Do you foresee that any other body in your Parliament/Chamber will be involved in the scrutiny? If so, which one(s), how and at what stage?*
Please refer to question two.
4. *Do you take any specific measures to ensure coordination between the various parliamentary bodies involved in scrutiny?*

The scrutiny procedure follows the regular scrutiny mechanism of the German Bundestag. Apart from the involvement and interaction of the Committees within the legislative procedure the Committees usually exchange information, hold joint sessions and share documents.

5. *When designing the scrutiny procedure as described above – have you drawn upon experience gained when scrutinizing the Tampere and/or Hague Programmes? If possible, please specify.*

Since the scrutiny procedure as regulated today was set into force after the negotiations of the Hague Programme concrete analogies between the scrutiny of the Hague and the Stockholm Programme do not exist.

6. *Do you think that inter-parliamentary cooperation could contribute to making your scrutiny more efficient? If so, in what form and how?*

An inter-parliamentary cooperation is generally beneficial for the parliamentary scrutiny, esp. to get an insight into other parliament's perspectives on the political and legislative process. An increase of efficiency, however, might not be given. Concerning initiatives as the Stockholm program cooperation at an early stage would be useful, e.g. accompanying the negotiations of the responsible High Level Groups.

Germany: Bundesrat

Chapter 1: Transparency of the Parliamentary Scrutiny Process

1. a) Are documents on EU matters that your Parliament/Chamber receives from the EU Institutions and your Government accessible to the public (for example, drafts of European Parliament reports and resolutions, European Parliament amendments and Council common positions in the codecision procedure, preparatory documents for Council working groups and for Coreper and/or the position of your Government)?

To the extent that the Bundesrat scrutinizes EU matters, the legislative proposals and/or consultation documents are printed as official Bundesrat documents. These official documents are made available to the public and may also be accessed online at the Bundesrat website. The same is true of the recommendations of the Bundesrat committees and the decisions taken by the plenary on the basis thereof. EU documents are otherwise publicly accessible to the extent that they are made available via the EU databases and IPEX. Documents of the Federal Government and the *Länder* as well as those of the Bundesrat, aside from the documents mentioned above, are not accessible to the public.

- b) Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public? If so, please specify at what stage/when and in which language(s)?

The documents mentioned in the response to Question 1 a) are made available to the public via the Bundesrat website. They are posted there as quickly as possible and generally in the German language.

- c) Does your Parliament/Chamber, in general, receive all the necessary documents for transparent and effective scrutiny of EU matters from your Government? If not, please specify.

Under Article 23 paragraph 2, second sentence, of the Basic Law, the Federal Government is obligated to keep the Bundesrat informed comprehensively and at the earliest possible time. This takes place through the comprehensive transmission of EU documents by the Federal Government. The details are regulated in an agreement between the Federal Government and the governments of the *Länder*.

2. Are the documents on EU matters produced by your Parliament/Chamber accessible to the public? If so, please specify which documents. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public?

Reference is made to the responses to Questions 1 a) and 1 b).

3. Is it possible for the public to be informed through your Parliament/Chamber about the state of play of ongoing negotiations on a specific EU issue, and at what stage/when? If so, please specify.

Since the Federal Government conducts negotiations at EU level on Germany's behalf, the questioners are asked to contact the Federal Government for information concerning the status of negotiations on specific EU issues.

4. Are the scrutiny deliberations on EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber open to the public? Can the general public attend the meetings of your Committee on European Affairs, specialised committees and plenary debates directly or watch/listen to them on the TV/radio/Internet?

Pursuant to the Rules of Procedure of the Bundesrat, the deliberations of its committees are not public. The plenary sessions, by contrast, are open to the public. They are presently not broadcast in their entirety on television, radio or the Internet.

5. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively inform the public about the scrutiny deliberations and their outcome through websites, web streaming, press briefings, news letters etc.?

The Bundesrat informs the public about the individual items on the agendas of the plenary sessions. This information, which summarizes the content of the regulatory measures and the results of the committee meetings, is made available to the public on the Thursday of the week preceding the given plenary session, which generally takes place on Friday.

On the Wednesday before the plenary session, information summarizing the most important items on the agenda is published in a press preview. The results of the deliberations on these items are published in press releases immediately after the plenary sessions.

6. Does your Parliament/Chamber have a section/unit which provides information about the EU to the public? If so, please specify the main tasks of this information section/unit.

The Bundesrat has no special section/unit which provides information about the EU to the public. A wide variety of information on the EU is made available by the *Länder*.

7. Are there any ongoing debates or plans in your Parliament/Chamber on ways to make the handling of EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber more transparent?

There are currently no plans to change the procedure described in the foregoing.

Chapter 2: Parliamentary Scrutiny of the Stockholm Programme

1. How do you foresee that scrutiny will be conducted in your EU Affairs Committee? At what stages will scrutiny be conducted?

The Commission's Communication on the Stockholm Programme was transmitted by the Federal Government to the Bundesrat on 18 June 2009. The Communication will be scrutinized by the Bundesrat committees during the week of 1 to 4 September 2009, i.e. after the summer recess. On the basis of these deliberations, the Bundesrat will likely

adopt an opinion on the Commission's Communication during the plenary session on 18 September 2009. The opinion will reflect the status of the negotiations at that time.

2. Do you foresee that one or more of your specialised committees will be involved in the process? If so, which one(s), how, and at what stages will their scrutiny be conducted?

The Commission's Communication will be scrutinized by the Committee on Questions of the European Union as lead committee and by the specialised committees that have been asked for their opinions, namely the committees on labour and social policy, women and youth, internal affairs, legal affairs, transport and economic affairs.

3. Do you foresee that any other body in your Parliament/Chamber will be involved in the scrutiny? If so, which one(s), how and at what stage?

-

4. Do you take any specific measures to ensure coordination between the various parliamentary bodies involved in scrutiny?

The Commission's Communication will be scrutinized by the Bundesrat within the framework of the normal procedure. The Committee on Questions of the European Union as lead committee will ensure coordination of the votes of the specialised committees that have been asked for their opinions.

5. When designing the scrutiny procedure as described above – have you drawn upon experience gained when scrutinizing the Tampere and/or Hague Programmes? If possible, please specify.

The Bundesrat did not scrutinize the Tampere or Hague Programmes.

6. Do you think that inter-parliamentary cooperation could contribute to making your scrutiny more efficient? If so, in what form and how?

The exchange of experience and opinion facilitated and furthered by inter-parliamentary cooperation is in general conducive to a high quality of parliamentary scrutiny, as it broadens the purely national perspective. One can therefore assume that the impetus for deeper cooperation among the national parliaments to be supplied by the future early warning system will contribute to making parliamentary scrutiny of EU proposals even more efficient.

Greece: Vouli Ton Ellinon

CHAPTER 1: Transparency of the Parliamentary Scrutiny Process

1. a) Are documents on EU matters that your Parliament/Chamber receives from the EU Institutions and your Government accessible to the public (for example, drafts of European Parliament reports and resolutions, European Parliament amendments and Council common positions in the codecision procedure, preparatory documents for Council working groups and for Coreper and/or the position of your Government)?

No

- b) Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public? If so, please specify at what stage/when and in which language(s)?

No

- c) Does your Parliament/Chamber, in general, receive all the necessary documents for transparent and effective scrutiny of EU matters from your Government? If not, please specify.

The Government responds to all our requests regarding the support of parliamentary scrutiny procedures.

2. Are the documents on EU matters produced by your Parliament/Chamber accessible to the public? If so, please specify which documents. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public?

At the moment, the Parliament's website does not contain such documentation, though there are plans to create a special section in our website (www.parliament.gr) containing the progress of the EU Affairs Committee's proceedings, the documents transmitted by the European Commission, the adopted opinions regarding European issues, the minutes of relevant committee meetings, the current developments on crucial EU issues, etc.

3. Is it possible for the public to be informed through your Parliament/Chamber about the state of play of ongoing negotiations on a specific EU issue, and at what stage/when? If so, please specify.

In addition to a series of communication alternatives, an option is given to the public to get informed regarding all issues by contacting the Special Secretariat of the Speaker of the Parliament directly using the following email address: infopar@parliament.gr. Concluding, the public can be informed upon request.

4. Are the scrutiny deliberations on EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber open to the public? Can the general public attend the meetings of your Committee on European Affairs, specialised committees and plenary debates directly or watch/listen to them on the TV/radio/Internet?

The plenary debates are open to the public and lively broadcasted both on Parliament's Television Channel and on the internet³. Theoretically, the committees meetings are also open to the public.

The sittings of the Standing Parliamentary Committees, as well as parts of the sittings of the other Parliamentary Committees are broadcasted via deferred coverage on Parliament's TV Channel.

The Hellenic Parliament has launched a radio station, which, for the time being, operates in a "pilot phase" and is available only through the internet. The program includes broadcasting of plenary debates and committee meetings.

5. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively inform the public about the scrutiny deliberations and their outcome through websites, web streaming, press briefings, news letters etc.?

For the time being, scrutiny deliberations are available only through IPEX .

6. Does your Parliament/Chamber have a section/unit which provides information about the EU to the public? If so, please specify the main tasks of this information section/unit.

The amended Standing Orders of the Hellenic Parliament (April 2009), provide for new departments or new tasks to the existing departments in order to facilitate the collection and the distribution of the information concerning EU issues.

It is the intention of the Hellenic Parliament to create a solid, timely and reliable system for the information of the public through the co-operation and the co-ordination between five different departments (European Union Department, European Documentation Department, Department of Public Information, Liaison Office of the Hellenic Parliament at the European Parliament, Department of web-based applications).

³ <http://www.parliament.gr/videoaudio/video/par/olo/vouliTV.html>

7. Are there any ongoing debates or plans in your Parliament/Chamber on ways to make the handling of EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber more transparent?

Following the political deliberations already completed with the adoption of the new Standing Orders of the Hellenic Parliament (as mentioned above, answering questions 2, 4, 6), the administrative services are currently implementing phase by phase the new framework.

CHAPTER 2: Parliamentary Scrutiny of the Stockholm Programme

1. How do you foresee that scrutiny will be conducted in your EU Affairs Committee? At what stages will scrutiny be conducted?

A preliminary examination of the relevant Communication text, published by the European Commission, is going to be discussed by the Committee for European Affairs and the Competent Standing Committee (Committee for Public Administration, Public Order and Justice), in the presence of the competent Ministers. The Ministers will also be invited to inform the Committees later on the course of deliberations inside the JHA Council.

The same procedure will be implemented when scrutinizing individual legislative proposals and other specific measures stemming from the "Stockholm Programme"

2. Do you foresee that one or more of your specialised committees will be involved in the process? If so, which one(s), how, and at what stages will their scrutiny be conducted?

See above.

3. Do you foresee that any other body in your Parliament/Chamber will be involved in the scrutiny? If so, which one(s), how and at what stage?

No other involvement is foreseen (or necessary).

4. Do you take any specific measures to ensure coordination between the various parliamentary bodies involved in scrutiny?

Our Parliament's Standing Orders provide for the convocation of joint committee meetings and this is the usual practice followed for European affairs scrutiny.

5. When designing the scrutiny procedure as described above – have you drawn upon experience gained when scrutinizing the Tampere and/or Hague Programmes? If possible, please specify.

Yes, though in the past scrutiny was focused rather on oral presentations by competent Ministers or other government officials and not on acquired documents. (when the direct transmission by the European Commission had not been initiated).

6. Do you think that inter-parliamentary cooperation could contribute to making your scrutiny more efficient? If so, in what form and how?

Undoubtedly the interparliamentary cooperation is very useful. In order to get this kind of feedback and ensure the exchange of views in fields of common interest our European Affairs Committee always invites Greek MEPs to its meetings. The convocation of Joint Committee meetings or Interparliamentary meetings by the European Parliament is also appreciated a lot by the presence of sizable Greek Delegations

In any case, all relevant texts adopted by other National Parliaments and/or the European Parliament, available at IPEX or at EUROPARL are included in the working documents that are distributed to MPs for their information, before our committee meetings.

Hungary: Országgyűlés

Chapter 1: Transparency of the Parliamentary Scrutiny Process

1. a) Are documents on EU matters that your Parliament/Chamber receives from the EU Institutions and your Government accessible to the public (for example, drafts of European Parliament reports and resolutions, European Parliament amendments and Council common positions in the codecision procedure, preparatory documents for Council working groups and for Coreper and/or the position of your Government)?

No, documents received from the EU Institutions and the Government are not accessible for the public. They are accessible for the users of the Intranet of the National Assembly.

- b) Does your Parliament/Chamber **actively** make such documents available to the public? If so, please specify at what stage/when and in which language(s)?

No, actively not. Public EU documents are made available on the website of the different European institutions and on-line databases like Pre-Lex, OEIL and EUR-Lex. To ensure direct access to EU document being scrutinised or put on the Committee on European Affairs' agenda a link is put on the Committee's website driving to the public EU databases. The Hungarian language version of the documents is preferred to be linked. (Since Government positions are classified as non-public ("Nem nyilvános!") it is not possible to make them accessible for the citizens.)

- c) Does your Parliament/Chamber, in general, receive all the necessary documents for transparent and effective scrutiny of EU matters from your Government? If not, please specify.

Yes, in general the Hungarian National Assembly receives all the documents necessary for conducting a transparent and effective scrutiny procedure.

A lack of information reveals when the EU decision-making process suddenly steps forward for reaching common agreement on a certain issue (e.g. sudden first reading agreement on Coreper level).

2. Are the documents on EU matters produced by your Parliament/Chamber accessible to the public? If so, please specify which documents. Does your Parliament/Chamber **actively** make such documents available to the public?

Documents produced by the Hungarian National Assembly in the course of the scrutiny procedure are not accessible to the public, since both the government position and both the standpoint of the National Assembly are classified as non-public. The only public document produced in course of the procedure is the opinion of the sectoral (specialised) committee.

On the other hand, verbatim minutes of all the public committee meetings (including minutes of those meetings when EU drafts are discussed under scrutiny procedure by sectoral committees and the Committee on European Affairs) are accessible through the website of the National Assembly. Besides, other documents on EU matters produced by the MPs or the plenary in

course of the traditional legislation procedure are handled alike any other legislative document and are available on the website of the Hungarian National Assembly. Access to verbatim minutes and parliamentary documents are ensured not only via Internet but in the Library of the Parliament as well.

3. Is it possible for the public to be informed through your Parliament/Chamber about the state of play of ongoing negotiations on a specific EU issue, and at what stage/when? If so, please specify.

(Note: It is not clear if this question refers to the state of play of ongoing scrutiny procedures or of the EU decision making procedure.)

Generally, no information on the EU decision making process is made actively public by the National Assembly. The deposit library of the EU operated by the Library of the Parliament can provide information upon request on the state of the play of the decision making process on a specific issue for the visitors of the Library. (The Library gives information on the basis of facts and data available through public EU databases.)

However it is worth mentioning that there are also information materials produced by the EU Department of the Hungarian National Assembly on current EU affairs but this is accessible to a limited public of MPs, MEPs and some other selected audience. Moreover, from time to time the Parliament (often together with other stakeholders like the European Commission's Representation) organizes events, conferences to foster the information of the public on EU affairs.

Please note that in the case of Hungary, EU communication as such lays with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, therefore informing public is also the responsibility of the Government.

4. Are the scrutiny deliberations on EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber open to the public? Can the general public attend the meetings of your Committee on European Affairs, specialised committees and plenary debates directly or watch/listen to them on the TV/radio/Internet?

Scrutiny deliberations on EU matters conducted by the Committees are open to the press.

Access to plenary sittings and committee meetings are treated differently in the Hungarian National Assembly. According to Article 41 (1) of the [Standing Orders](#) "The sittings of Parliament – with the exceptions specified in paragraph (1) of Standing Order No. 42 – shall be public.". On the other hand Article 68 (1) of the Standing Orders regulating the openness of the committee meetings states that committee sittings shall be open (only) to the press. Since the scrutiny procedure is conducted generally by the committees (Article 134/B (1) of the Standing Orders), openness of the procedure is carried out via access to public verbatim minutes accessible through the [website](#) of the National Assembly and [participation of the press](#) in the sittings of committees that also ensures transparency of parliamentary work. Besides, a memorandum of each public meeting of the Committee on European Affairs with direct links to EU documents is available on the [EU affairs website](#) of the National Assembly.

To participate a committee meeting, permission from the Chairperson is required. Access to in camera sittings (e.g. adoption of the standpoint of the National Assembly by the Committee on

European Affairs; in specific issues the Government can ask holding an in camera meeting) are very restricted regulated by 69 (3) of the Standing Orders.

Plenary meetings are broadcasted live on national television (m2, the public service channel) in three hours on Mondays and in five hours on Tuesdays (and Wednesdays). Radio Kossuth MR 1 broadcasts plenary meetings from beginning to end and a live broadcast is also available on the parliamentary web-site. Committee meetings are not broadcasted.

Plenary sittings of the National Assembly may be visited according to a set schedule. MPs may also provide an opportunity for parliamentary visits for their electorates.

5. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively inform the public about the scrutiny deliberations and their outcome through websites, web streaming, press briefings, news letters etc.?

Yes, the Hungarian National Assembly actively informs the public about the scrutiny deliberations. It operates a separate website collecting all the relevant information on EU affairs in the Parliament. The EU affairs website ([HU](#), [EN](#)) includes information about general relation of the National Assembly and the EU, the activity of the Committee on European Affairs, the role of the Speaker in EU issues, the activity of the Consultation Meeting and its four-party working group dealing with the preparation for the 2011 EU-presidency, EU issues discussed on the plenary and in the specialised committees, the relation of the EP and the National Assembly, the relation with the MEPs and their participation in the work of the National Assembly, and finally gives information about the services available at the EU documentation centre of the Library of the Parliament.

Concerning informing about the scrutiny deliberations most of the public information produced in course of the procedure is made available on the EU affairs website. Besides the title of the scrutinised EU drafts a kind of fact sheets are published collecting basic information about the procedure and links to relating documents.

Another tool to provide information about ongoing scrutiny procedures is the IPEX website. The National Assembly updates information published on this inter-parliamentary site regularly and a direct link to the IPEX page is put on the EU affairs website.

Press conferences are familiar tools of providing information to the public. Following in camera meetings the chairperson of the committee holds press conferences on an ad hoc basis. In case of the Consultation Meeting the Speaker or in case of its special forum dealing with the preparation for the 2011 EU-presidency the Chairpersons regularly gives door-step interviews and answers questions of the journalist right after the end of the meeting.

The Civil Bureau operated by the Cabinet of the Speaker plays a vital role in liaising with members of civil society, taking care of citizens' complaints and declarations, as well as gathering society opinion on the operation of parliament. The Parliament Journal (also available on-line) published quarterly targets primarily members of civil society and often deals with EU-related issues. Usually EU affairs in general and questions of strategic importance (like the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty, preparations for the 2011 EU presidency) are mentioned in the newsletter. Daily running of the scrutiny procedure is rarely concerned.

6. Does your Parliament/Chamber have a section/unit which provides information about the EU to the public? If so, please specify the main tasks of this information section/unit.

Yes, the deposit Library of the European Union is operated by the Library of the Parliament. The collection, processing and provision of documents and information concerning international and supranational organisations play a priority role among the responsibilities of the Library of the Parliament as reference library of parliamentary, legal and political sciences. In the scope of these activities, the library has been attributing outstanding importance to the questions related to the European Communities and the European Union for several decades. The library's rich stock of domestic and foreign books and periodicals on legal matters, political sciences and history and databases on foreign and Hungarian law built up unaided provide favourable conditions for both information gathering as well as analytical and research work. The collection of documents available to the general public institutionally ensures the knowledge of the rules of law, directives and other literature of the Union. The EU collection of the library and a specialized reading-room that provides work conditions has been available to the readers and interested parties since 30 January 2001. You can read more about the services of the Library [here](#).

Besides the services of the deposit Library the Information Centre of MPs operates a telephone-line and e-mail service for citizens. There, all questions concerning the institutional structure and operation of the National Assembly are answered, also including information about EU issues being discussed in the Parliament. As mentioned above the Civil Bureau has also some duties in this respect.

7. Are there any ongoing debates or plans in your Parliament/Chamber on ways to make the handling of EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber more transparent?

At the moment there is no ongoing debate on making handling of EU matters more transparent.

Chapter 2: Parliamentary Scrutiny of the Stockholm Programme

1. How do you foresee that scrutiny will be conducted in your EU Affairs Committee? At what stages will scrutiny be conducted?

Launching any kind of parliamentary scrutiny on any European issue is a political decision. The chairman and the members of the Committee on European Affairs will take a decision in this respect when it becomes topical. According to the estimation of the staff of the Committee such decision could take place at the beginning of September when the next parliamentary semester starts.

On the other hand, evaluation of the Hague Programme and examination of some elements of the Stockholm Programme had been already started in the National Assembly by the Committee on European Affairs, but outside the ordinary scrutiny procedure regulated by Act LIII of 2004. The Committee on European Affairs had consultations with the Government in this issue three times during the last parliamentary session. In 2009 the minister for justice and law enforcement has informed the committee about the actual developments of the Stockholm Programme on 10 March, 15 April and 16 June 2009 in course of his ordinary hearing.

According to our expectations such oral reports will be continued during the next semester as well. Discussion of the Stockholm Programme by the Committee is also kept on the agenda because of the preparations for the 2011 EU Presidency. The trio of the Spain, Belgium and Hungary programme (especially on the area of freedom, security and justice) is largely determined by the Stockholm Programme and by the developments reached in this field during the Swedish Presidency.

(According to the practice of the Committee on European Affairs scrutiny under the rules of Act LIII of 2004 is expected to be launched on the legislative proposals tabled by the Commission on the basis of an adopted Stockholm Programme.)

2. Do you foresee that one or more of your specialised committees will be involved in the process? If so, which one(s), how, and at what stages will their scrutiny be conducted?

In case ordinary scrutiny procedure will be launched by the Committee on European Affairs at least one specialised committee will be involved in the process. The Constitutional, Judicial and Standing Orders Committee, the Defence and Law Enforcement Committee and the Committee on Human Rights, Minorities, Civil and Religion Affairs could be the ones asked to build an opinion on the EU draft(s).

3. Do you foresee that any other body in your Parliament/Chamber will be involved in the scrutiny? If so, which one(s), how and at what stage?

According to the Standing Orders special parliamentary bodies can not be involved in ordinary scrutiny procedure but could put such questions on its agenda individually.

It is possible that the four-party working group of the Consultation Meeting established to follow the preparations for the 2011 EU Presidency will put the Stockholm Programme or some of its elements on its agenda when discussing the justice and home affairs programme of the trio or the Republic of Hungary. The Consultation Meeting – what's duty is to provide the possibility to have consultations with the Prime Minister and the Minister for Foreign Affairs prior to meetings of the European Council – could also discuss the Stockholm Programme as part of the European Council's agenda. Besides, the plenary also have its tools to put this Programme on its agenda, e.g. in course of a debate day. Sectoral Committees like the Constitutional, Judicial and Standing Orders Committee could also hold hearings on this issue apart from scrutiny procedure regulated by Act LIII of 2004.

4. Do you take any specific measures to ensure coordination between the various parliamentary bodies involved in scrutiny?

No, such specific measures are not planned to take.

5. When designing the scrutiny procedure as described above – have you drawn upon experience gained when scrutinizing the Tampere and/or Hague Programmes? If possible, please specify.

It must be noted that the first scrutiny procedure was launched in September 2004 by the Hungarian National Assembly. The Hague Programme was discussed through individual legislative proposals put forward in the area of freedom, security and justice.

However, the next five-year programme in this field was put first on the agenda of the Committee on European Affairs this March. For the details, see answer 1.

6. Do you think that inter-parliamentary cooperation could contribute to making your scrutiny more efficient? If so, in what form and how?

Inter-parliamentary cooperation could give an added value, but it is not necessarily needed to conduct an effective scrutiny procedure by the parliaments. The Joint Parliamentary meeting scheduled for November 2009 is considered to be a useful tool in this respect.

Ireland: Houses of the Oireachtas

Chapter 1: Transparency of the Parliamentary Scrutiny Process

1. a) Are documents on EU matters that your Parliament/Chamber receives from the EU Institutions and your Government accessible to the public (for example, drafts of European Parliament reports and resolutions, European Parliament amendments and Council common positions in the codecision procedure, preparatory documents for Council working groups and for Coreper and/or the position of your Government)?

Documents are not made available on the website Oireachtas website. However a list of documents to be considered by the Joint Committee on European Scrutiny is published in advance of each meeting. Reports of deliberations by Committees are published and the transcripts of all public meetings are readily available.

- b) Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public? If so, please specify at what stage/when and in which language(s)?

See answer to a) above

- c) Does your Parliament/Chamber, in general, receive all the necessary documents for transparent and effective scrutiny of EU matters from your Government? If not, please specify.

*In accordance with the European Scrutiny Act 2002, the Government is obliged to submit to the Oireachtas a copy of each draft legislative measure published by the Commission along with an information note outlining the content and purpose and the possible implications for Ireland of the proposed measure. Under agreed guidelines, the proposed measure and information note should be submitted within 20 days working days of publication. Based on analysis of these documents the **Joint Committee on European Scrutiny** may decide further examination of a proposal is necessary. Additional information may be requested from the Government Minister responsible or officials from the relevant Department. The Minister or officials may be requested to attend a public hearing of the relevant parliamentary Committee to discuss the proposal in further detail. A report of the Committee's scrutiny would be agreed and published.*

*While Commission Green and White Papers are not specifically covered by the EU Scrutiny Act (referred to above which covers legislative measures); agreed guidelines in relation to Oireachtas Scrutiny provide that Green and White papers are considered in a similar manner and that a copy of the paper along with an information note is submitted to the **Joint Committee on European Affairs** within 20 days working days of publication (or as agreed).*

*The **Joint Committee on European Affairs** is satisfied with the level of cooperation it receives from Government in terms of the scrutiny of Green and White papers and in terms of its regular meetings with the Minister for Foreign Affairs (or minister of State for European Affairs) in advance of every General Affairs and External Relations Council. In*

relation to the Joint Committee's consideration/oversight of other general matters or non legislative documents the Joint Committee is also satisfied with the material provided to it.

2. Are the documents on EU matters produced by your Parliament/Chamber accessible to the public? If so, please specify which documents. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public?

Reports of deliberations by Oireachtas Committees are published on the Oireachtas website and the transcripts of all public meetings are also readily available. In addition a list of all draft legislative measures to be considered by the Joint Committee on European Scrutiny is published in advance of each meeting.

Reports of Oireachtas Committees produced in relation to EU matters are published on the Oireachtas website. They include:

Meeting Reports of the Joint Committee on European Scrutiny. *These reports of Committees meetings, highlight the decisions taken by the Committee in relation to proposed EU legislative measures. The reports include details of any witnesses appearing before the Committee and details of any scrutiny reports adopted.*

Scrutiny Reports *which usually contain recommendations to the Government regarding specific draft EU proposals. These may be produced by the two European Committees of the Oireachtas or by any Sectoral Committee.*

Special Reports: *on selected subjects, for example the Joint Committee on European Scrutiny's consideration of the Enhanced Role for National Parliaments under the Lisbon Treaty.*

Policy reports: *These may include reports on Green or White papers produced by the Joint Committee on European Affairs. Another example is the final report of the Sub-Committee on Ireland's future in the European Union.*

Reports on Contributions *made by the Joint Committee on European Affairs to the European Commission on specific non legislative documents such as the Commission's Annual Policy Strategy 2010.*

The European Affairs Committee also has a dedicated webpage

Note: Some reports are published by formal press launch and/or press release for wider publication depending on level of importance of the draft proposal or issue considered.

3. Is it possible for the public to be informed through your Parliament/Chamber about the state of play of ongoing negotiations on a specific EU issue, and at what stage/when? If so, please specify.

The relevant Minister may use the opportunity of Pre-Council briefings to the appropriate committee to update it on negotiations in certain EU briefs. The Joint Committee on European Scrutiny may also request a Government Department to keep it informed of developments in negotiations on a particular legislative proposal. There are also

statements in plenary by the Taoiseach following each European Council meeting in which negotiations on a particular portfolio may be raised.

4. Are the scrutiny deliberations on EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber open to the public? Can the general public attend the meetings of your Committee on European Affairs, specialised committees and plenary debates directly or watch/listen to them on the TV/radio/Internet?

*The Joint Committees on European Affairs and European Scrutiny hold **public** hearings when scrutinising a proposed measure or when considering other EU matters and these hearings are open to the public. Transcripts of all public meetings are made available on the website.*

*Prior to meetings of the General Affairs and External Relations council (GAERC), the Minister for Foreign Affairs briefs the **Joint Committee on European Affairs** on the items for discussion and decision on the agenda of the Council meetings and the Government's approach in relation to these matters. This enables the Committee to make its views known in advance of the Minister's participation in meetings of the General Affairs and External Relations Council. The pre-GAERC meetings are conducted in public and as with all public Committee meetings a transcript of the proceedings is made available on the Oireachtas website.*

*Notifications of upcoming meetings are issued to the press and also published on the Oireachtas website and the **Joint Committee on European Scrutiny** makes available a list of all draft legislative measures to be considered in advance of each meeting*

5. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively inform the public about the scrutiny deliberations and their outcome through websites, web streaming, press briefings, news letters etc.?

As mentioned above all reports of Oireachtas Committees are published on the Oireachtas website. This includes Meeting Reports of the Joint Committee on European Scrutiny highlighting the decisions taken by the Committee in relation to all proposed EU legislative measures considered at an initial stage and includes Scrutiny Reports which report on detailed scrutiny of particular proposals.

The Oireachtas is currently considering a protocol for the webcasting of proceedings of Committees. It is likely that selected meetings of Oireachtas Committees will be webcast live in the near future. All meetings undertaken by the Sub-Committee on Ireland's future in the European Union (a Sub-Committee of the Joint Committee on European Affairs) were webcast live.

6. Does your Parliament/Chamber have a section/unit which provides information about the EU to the public? If so, please specify the main tasks of this information section/unit.

Not currently. The Joint Committee on European Scrutiny and later the Sub-Committee on Ireland's future in the European Union recommended the establishment in the Oireachtas of an EU information office. This recommendation has received general support and it is expected that progress towards its establishment will be made.

7. Are there any ongoing debates or plans in your Parliament/Chamber on ways to make the handling of EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber more transparent?

The establishment of an EU Information Office in the Oireachtas and the likelihood that Committee meetings will be webcast are two initiatives already mentioned that would improve the transparency of the handling of EU matters. Both the European Affairs Committee and the European scrutiny Committee agree that debate in plenary of EU matters should be more frequent and both Committees actively seek to promote such plenary debate.

Chapter 2: Parliamentary Scrutiny of the Stockholm Programme

1. How do you foresee that scrutiny will be conducted in your EU Affairs Committee? At what stages will scrutiny be conducted?

The scrutiny of the Stockholm Programme falls under the normal scrutiny and oversight functions of the Oireachtas, which are carried out by the Joint Committees on European Affairs, European Scrutiny and Justice, Equality, Defence and Women's Rights. In addition, the Oireachtas has a role in approving Ireland's participation in measures under the area of Justice and Home Affairs.

The Joint Committee on European Affairs is likely to consider the Commission Communication and related matters in the non-legislative phase. Once legislative proposals emerge the focus will shift to the Joint Committee on European Scrutiny in conjunction with the Joint Committee on Justice, Equality, Defence and Women's Rights. The Scrutiny Committee may decide to refer matters to the Joint Committee on Justice, Equality, Defence and Women's Rights or may decide to seek the observations of that Committee and conduct the detailed consideration of proposals itself.

Where participation in a Title VI measure, constitutes the exercise of an "option or discretion" within the meaning of Article 29.4.6 of the Irish Constitution, the prior approval of both Houses of the Oireachtas is required to allow Ireland to agree to the adoption of the measure. The decision on such matters is usually delegated by both Houses to the Joint Committee on Justice, Equality, Defence and Women's Right

2. Do you foresee that one or more of your specialised committees will be involved in the process? If so, which one(s), how, and at what stages will their scrutiny be conducted?

See answer to 1 above.

3. Do you foresee that any other body in your Parliament/Chamber will be involved in the scrutiny? If so, which one(s), how and at what stage?

A plenary debate on any of the reports produced is a possibility, it is usual for the Joint Committees on European Affairs and European scrutiny to seek a plenary debate on one or both Houses of the Oireachtas on reports produced.

4. Do you take any specific measures to ensure coordination between the various parliamentary bodies involved in scrutiny?

Specific measures are not set out but the report of the European Affairs Committee's consideration will be made available to the Scrutiny committee.

5. When designing the scrutiny procedure as described above – have you drawn upon experience gained when scrutinizing the Tampere and/or Hague Programmes? If possible, please specify.

No

6. Do you think that inter-parliamentary cooperation could contribute to making your scrutiny more efficient? If so, in what form and how?

Interparliamentary cooperation would make scrutiny more effective and perhaps more meaningful.

Italy: Camera dei Deputati and Senato della Repubblica

Chapter 1: Transparency of the Parliamentary Scrutiny Process

1. a) Are documents on EU matters that your Parliament/Chamber receives from the EU Institutions and your Government accessible to the public (for example, drafts of European Parliament reports and resolutions, European Parliament amendments and Council common positions in the codecision procedure, preparatory documents for Council working groups and for Coreper and/or the position of your Government)?

The documents on EU affairs transmitted to the Italian Chambers by the EU institutions or by the Government are not immediately and directly accessible to the public. That said, the Italian Senate, since 2007 - and from 2008 in cooperation with the Italian Chamber - set up a database “Progetti comunitari” (EU proposals) – hosted in the joint website www.parlamento.it and also in the Senate website www.senato.it. Through this database, available to the public, it is possible to follow all the parliamentary activities of both Chamber and Senate related to EU legislative proposals and EU consultation documents.

The database contains for every EU document, besides the original proposal of the European Commission, also:

- **the related documents of the EU Council, with a distinction between documents of the Council which are available to the public and documents with a limited regime of circulation;**
- **the reference to the related activity of the European Parliament, both in the competent Committee and in the Plenary, with the reference to the approved report and resolution (but not the text);**
- **the related activity of other national Parliaments of the EU, through a link to the relevant IPEX page.**

In the database are published only EU documents in Italian.

- b) Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public? If so, please specify at what stage/when and in which language(s)?

See above.

- c) Does your Parliament/Chamber, in general, receive all the necessary documents for transparent and effective scrutiny of EU matters from your Government? If not, please specify. **The Italian Parliament receives all the official documents, but not the ones related to the working groups of the Council where the negotiations are conducted. Furthermore, there is no direct transmission for the documents related to infringement procedures, but they are, in specific cases, available upon request.**

2. Are the documents on EU matters produced by your Parliament/Chamber accessible to the public? If so, please specify which documents. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public?

Yes, all the documents and acts adopted by Parliamentary bodies are published on the parliamentary acts and accessible through the Chamber of deputies and the Senate websites.

The parliamentary acts include the minutes of each sitting of the Standing Committees and of the Plenary.

The acts adopted are also published on the IPEX website.

3. Is it possible for the public to be informed through your Parliament/Chamber about the state of play of ongoing negotiations on a specific EU issue, and at what stage/when? If so, please specify.

Through the database “Progetti comunitari” the public can have access to all relevant documents and acts related to a specific UE legislative proposal. Besides, when scrutinising draft EU proposals, the Government informs the Parliament about the negotiations. These informations are published on the parliamentary acts and, consequently, are made available to the public.

4. Are the scrutiny deliberations on EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber open to the public? Can the general public attend the meetings of your Committee on European Affairs, specialised committees and plenary debates directly or watch/listen to them on the TV/radio/Internet?

The public can follow the debates and be informed on the adopted acts through the publicity of the parliamentary acts which are published on the Internet site of the two Chambers, but can not participate to the meetings of parliamentary committees.

All the debates of the Plenaries are web streamed live and also accessible through the satellite TV of the Chamber and of the Senate. Recently, also the hearings organised by the parliamentary committees are web streamed.

5. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively inform the public about the scrutiny deliberations and their outcome through websites, web streaming, press briefings, news letters etc.?

Not at the moment.

6. Does your Parliament/Chamber have a section/unit which provides information about the EU to the public? If so, please specify the main tasks of this information section/unit.

No, both the Chamber and the Senate do not have a section or unit entirely dedicated to the information about EU to the general public. When necessary, information on EU Affairs is provided by the EU affairs Department or the Research Department of each of the two chambers.

7. Are there any ongoing debates or plans in your Parliament/Chamber on ways to make the handling of EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber more transparent?

Yes, the debate on ways to make the handling of EU matters more transparent is part of a wider reflection recently opened up by the parliamentary administration of the Chamber on how to make the website of the Chamber more user friendly and closer to the citizens. The newly shaped web site of the Chamber will contain a calendar of the

interparliamentary activity at EU level, as well as information on the current activity of the Chamber in the field of the EU affairs.

In the Senate, in order to increase transparency on EU affairs, the European Union section of the web site has been recently redesigned in order to offer updated and exhaustive information on EU related activities. The informations uploaded include also a calendar of the meetings attended by senators in the field of parliamentary cooperation (interparliamentary meetings, Cosac, etc.), all the documents adopted by the committees under the scrutiny procedures and the description of the competences of the Senate in the Italy's membership of the European Union.

Chapter 2: Parliamentary Scrutiny of the Stockholm Programme.

1. How do you foresee that scrutiny will be conducted in your EU Affairs Committee? At what stages will scrutiny be conducted?

Commission Communication COM (2009) 262 on the future Stockholm Programme will be examined by the Italian Chamber of Deputies according to art.127 of the Rules of Procedure.

According to art. 127 any proposals issued by the Council of the European Union or the European Commission, or the drafts of such acts, are referred for consideration to the relevant Committees according to the subject matter, with the opinion of the EU Policy Committee. The relevant Committees can express in a final document their own opinion on the appropriateness of any possible initiatives.

On June 23rd 2009 the President of the Chamber referred the Commission Communication COM(2009)262 to the Constitutional Affairs Committee and to the Justice Committee, which will jointly start the scrutiny by the end of July 2009.

The two standing Committees already expressed some suggestions on the future Programme 2010-2014 for AFSJ in a joint resolution adopted on 20th November 2008 on European Parliament resolution of 25 September 2008 on the annual debate on the progress made in 2007 in the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice.

In the Senate, the scrutiny will be conducted according to article 144, par. 1, of the Rules of Procedure, that states that the EU proposals are scrutinised by the committees responsible by subject matters. The Committee on Foreign affairs and the Committee on EU policies shall be requested for opinions. At the end of the scrutiny procedure, the relevant committee may adopt resolutions laying down principles and guidelines for the Government. Besides, the Committee on EU Policies, in the event that the committee responsible by subject matter does not issue an opinion within 15 days of referral, may request that its opinions be forwarded to the Government (substitutive power).

On 23 July 2009, the Presidency of the Senate referred for consideration the Commission Communication COM (2009)262 and the Commission Communication COM (2009)263 to the Constitutional Affairs Committee and to the Justice Committee, for a joint scrutiny. The Committee on EU Policies and the Committee on Foreign affairs have been asked for their opinions. The consideration should start at the end of September.

2. Do you foresee that one or more of your specialised committees will be involved in the process? If so, which one(s), how, and at what stages will their scrutiny be conducted?

See answer to question n. 1

3. Do you foresee that any other body in your Parliament/Chamber will be involved in the scrutiny? If so, which one(s), how and at what stage?

See answer to question n. 1

4. Do you take any specific measures to ensure coordination between the various parliamentary bodies involved in scrutiny?

See answer to question n. 1

5. When designing the scrutiny procedure as described above – have you drawn upon experience gained when scrutinizing the Tampere and/or Hague Programmes? If possible, please specify.

See answer to question n. 1

6. Do you think that inter-parliamentary cooperation could contribute to making your scrutiny more efficient? If so, in what form and how?

The Italian Chambers think that JPM and/or JCM especially devoted to the future Stockholm Programme would be extremely useful occasions to share opinions about the subject.

Latvia: Saeima

Chapter 1: Transparency of the Parliamentary Scrutiny Process

1.
 - a) Are documents on EU matters that your Parliament/Chamber receives from the EU Institutions and your Government accessible to the public (for example, drafts of European Parliament reports and resolutions, European Parliament amendments and Council common positions in the codecision procedure, preparatory documents for Council working groups and for Coreper and/or the position of your Government)?

No. The documents received from the EU institution are not made available to the public. Data base of the specialized Saeima EU information system (SERID) is only for internal use.

- b) Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public? If so, please specify at what stage/when and in which language(s)?

No

- c) Does your Parliament/Chamber, in general, receive all the necessary documents for transparent and effective scrutiny of EU matters from your Government? If not, please specify.

European Affairs Committee (further – EAC) receives all documents related to the national positions from the Government. EAC has also access to the Government data base ESDUS, which includes also internal reports, EU Council documents, etc.

2. Are the documents on EU matters produced by your Parliament/Chamber accessible to the public? If so, please specify which documents. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public?

In accordance with Section 185.1 of Saeima Rules of Procedure, the Saeima shall participate in EU affairs through the European Affairs Committee unless the Saeima has ruled otherwise. All opinions and statements from the EAC are available to the public; they are available in the Saeima and Eiroinfo webpage. If the issues are of great importance, there is always an announcement added for the mass media, namely, statement to the press.

3. Is it possible for the public to be informed through your Parliament/Chamber about the state of play of ongoing negotiations on a specific EU issue, and at what stage/when? If so, please specify.

If Saeima in general or EAF directly receives questions related to the EU affairs, (by post, mail, or phone, or calling Euroinfo phone) then answers to these questions are prepared by the EAC, Information centre or by involving other Saeima institutions. The information can be given also about the state of play of ongoing negotiation on specific EU issue.

4. Are the scrutiny deliberations on EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber open to the public? Can the general public attend the meetings of your Committee on European Affairs, specialised committees and plenary debates directly or watch/listen to them on the TV/radio/Internet?

Meetings of EAC usually are open meetings, if not decided otherwise. If there is wish to participate in the meeting, a prior appointment should be made to the EAC secretariat. If the meeting is open, the accredited representatives of the mass media can freely participate in the meeting.

There is no possibility to follow the EAC meeting on the Internet, nevertheless Saeima plenary sessions are retransmitted on the Internet, TV and also on Radio.

5. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively inform the public about the scrutiny deliberations and their outcome through websites, web streaming, press briefings, news letters etc.?

After each EAC meeting, an official statement to the press is published on the most urgent issues, including the opinion from the committees Chairperson and also opinion from committee members. On specific questions interviews to the press are given.

6. Does your Parliament/Chamber have a section/unit which provides information about the EU to the public? If so, please specify the main tasks of this information section/unit.

Yes, there is a unit who deals with information to general public about the EU issues.

Until December 2008 it was done by a unit - the Saeima EU Information Centre (established in November 1997 under the auspices of the Saeima European Affairs Committee). But since January 2009 the Centre was reorganized and merged with the Saeima Petition Office (new title: the Saeima Visitor and Information Centre) and became a part of the Saeima Public Relations Department.

The Centre carries out activities in three major “fields”:

- **Prepares weekly electronic bulletin “Eiroziņas” (Euronews) on EU issues and other publications;**
- **Maintains multifunctional web page www.eiroinfo.lv and the specialized Saeima EU information system (SERID);**
- **Operates hotline/phone in service *Eiroinfo* 6 7211111.**

Publications

“Eiroziņas” mainly focuses on issues concerning Latvia’s membership to the EU and the Saeima involvement in European affairs. It is distributed free of charge to readers in municipalities, line ministries, libraries, etc throughout Latvia.

The Centre prepares on average ten fact sheets annually on various issues. Most of them are published electronically in Latvian and Russian on our webpage.

The Saeima Public Relations Department also prepares press releases after each EAC meeting (most of the meetings are open) and disseminates them to media, as well as informing journalists about forthcoming issues to be examined at the EAC meetings

Internet

On home page www.eiroinfo.lv people can find useful information: news, fact sheets containing practical info (For example, European insurance, taxes, travel information, etc), contact information and useful links as well as treaties and other documents. Home page info is updated every working day.

The database SERID is publicly accessible from the home page. It contains more than 20 000 documents - EU legislation in Latvian, minutes from the EAC meetings, national positions (access reserved just for the Saeima), articles, fact sheets, written answers prepared on *Eiroinfo* 67211111 enquiries.

In May 2008 the Centre launched an internet quiz on the EU with a slogan “entertainment for clever Europeans” – “EU brain factory”. It contains over 1200 questions on different subjects concerning member states, EU institutions and policies.

Hotline

Since January 2003 the Centre is offering a phone in/hotline service *Eiroinfo* 67211111 for citizens to provide quick and impartial responses to questions on European affairs. The service is available Sun-Sat, twenty-four hours a day (operates in cooperation with Lattelecom contact service 1188).

7. Are there any ongoing debates or plans in your Parliament/Chamber on ways to make the handling of EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber more transparent?

Due to economic and financial crisis, there is a serious shortage of resources to develop new information/communications projects and to move towards better access and transparency of EU matters.

Therefore at the moment the only option is to try to maintain and to use the available tools of communication about the EU.

It has to be noted that the Saeima plans to carry on preparing press releases on the EAC meetings, as well as to publish reports on the parliamentary activities at the end of each seasonal session that provides overview of the topics discussed at the committees, including the EAC.

Chapter 2: Parliamentary Scrutiny of the Stockholm Programme

1. How do you foresee that scrutiny will be conducted in your EU Affairs Committee? At what stages will scrutiny be conducted?

EAF will follow the Stockholm programme in accordance with the state of play in the Council meetings through scrutinising national positions. Most probably there will also be joint meeting with the committee of Defence, Internal Affairs and Corruption Prevention Committee, and also discussions and hearing with Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Internal Affairs.

EAF opinion will be binding to the government.

2. Do you foresee that one or more of your specialised committees will be involved in the process? If so, which one(s), how, and at what stages will their scrutiny be conducted?

Defence, Internal Affairs and Corruption Prevention Committee will be involved in the scrutiny process of the Stockholm programme.

3. Do you foresee that any other body in your Parliament/Chamber will be involved in the scrutiny? If so, which one(s), how and at what stage?

No

4. Do you take any specific measures to ensure coordination between the various parliamentary bodies involved in scrutiny?

Saeima participates in the EU affairs through the EAC. This means also that the EAC will have the coordinators role in this scrutiny procedure over Stockholm programme.

5. When designing the scrutiny procedure as described above – have you drawn upon experience gained when scrutinizing the Tampere and/or Hague Programmes? If possible, please specify.

The Tampere and Hague programme also were scrutinised through national positions for the JHA prepared by the government

6. Do you think that inter-parliamentary cooperation could contribute to making your scrutiny more efficient? If so, in what form and how?

Certainly, the experience of other parliaments and practical examples are very useful to making scrutiny process more efficient.

Lithuania: Seimas

Chapter 1: Transparency of the Parliamentary Scrutiny Process

1. a) Are documents on EU matters that your Parliament/Chamber receives from the EU Institutions and your Government accessible to the public (for example, drafts of European Parliament reports and resolutions, European Parliament amendments and Council common positions in the co-decision procedure, preparatory documents for Council working groups and for Coreper and/or the position of your Government)?

Following the Barroso Initiative, the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania receives documents in the Lithuanian language directly from the European Commission (all its legislative proposals and communication documents) that are instantaneously made available on the *Legal Acts of the EU* column of the official website of the Seimas, and are freely available for the public.

Members of the Seimas and civil servants dealing with EU matters can access all the EU documents, positions and reports that are at the disposition of the Government by logging in the LINESIS (information system for Lithuanian Membership of the EU) with their personal user passwords. These documents are mainly related to the work of the Councils of the EU. Additionally, the Government of the Republic of Lithuania provides the Seimas with written positions concerning documents that have been found relevant and very relevant by the Seimas.

Having registered in advance, social–economic partners, other non-governmental organisations and members of the European Parliament elected from Lithuania) have access to the ‘mirror’ version of the LINESIS, whereby they can track public EU documents provided to the Government, some parts of the positions of the Republic of Lithuania (except for the items that reflect negotiation positions of the Republic of Lithuania, files on inter-institutional coordination of the position, as well as positions of other EU Member States), and the timetables for deliberations on EU matters and positions by the Government. The ‘mirror’ version of LINESIS provides for access to the following key information:

- **the title and number of EU legislative proposal;**
- **the opinion concerning the compliance of the EU legislative proposal with the principle of subsidiarity;**
- **the essence of the EU legislative proposal and the course of deliberations;**
- **existing legal regulation in Lithuania;**
- **basic impact assessment according to the methodology for assessment of the impact of draft decisions, approved by the Government;**
- **proposals regarding amendments to national legislation;**
- **where known, the position of the European Parliament regarding the proposal and other additional information hereto;**

- the direct drafter of the position (his/her name and last name, institution, office, telephone number, and e-mail address);
- the head of the unit of the institution responsible for drafting the position (his/her name and last name, institution, office, telephone number, and e-mail address).

The Seimas does not additionally publish or distribute documents related to EU matters received by the Government.

b) Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public? If so, please specify at what stage/when and in which language(s)?

Documents received directly from the European Commission (in the Lithuanian language) are instantly made available on the *Legal Acts of the EU* column of the official website of the Seimas, and are freely available for the public.

In individual cases, e.g. during the preparation for deliberations on relevant or very relevant documents for Lithuania in the Seimas Committee on European Affairs or in a specialised committee and when holding consultations with social-economic partners concerning individual issues, respective EU documents are sent to them.

c) Does your Parliament/Chamber, in general, receive all the necessary documents for transparent and effective scrutiny of EU matters from your Government? If not, please specify.

Yes, it does. Lithuania has chosen a model that secures an active role of the Seimas in deliberating EU matters. Members of the Seimas and civil servants of the Seimas dealing with EU matters have access to the LINESIS system enabling them to look at the EU documents, positions, documents and reports produced by the Councils of the EU, COREPER and working groups, as well as plans and monitoring of transposition of the EU law, etc. The Seimas committees and their members may at any time request the Government to present additional information.

2. Are the documents on EU matters produced by your Parliament/Chamber accessible to the public? If so, please specify which documents. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public?

Yes, they are. Documents adopted at the Seimas plenary sitting are public and are made available on the Seimas' official website and, in determined cases, are published in the *Official Gazette*.

If the deliberations in the Seimas committee meeting are not closed to the public, their decisions regarding EU matters are freely available to the public via the Seimas' official website. Minutes of the meeting of the Seimas Committee on European Affairs are distributed to social-economic partners electronically. After the meetings, press releases and information concerning adopted decisions are published in the Seimas publications, including the *Seimo kronika* (published in the Lithuanian language) or the *Parliamentary mirror* (published in the English language).

3. Is it possible for the public to be informed through your Parliament/Chamber about the state of play of ongoing negotiations on a specific EU issue, and at what stage/when? If so, please specify.

All the information about the sessions of the Seimas or the European Affairs Committee meetings that are related to specific EU matters is placed on the Seimas website as well as on the website of the European Information Office. It is also possible to organise a special conference or a seminar on a pertaining issue. In specific cases, if an enquiry on a separate issue is made, information can be obtained both from Seimas committees by to their field of competence and from the European Information Office.

4. Are the scrutiny deliberations on EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber open to the public? Can the general public attend the meetings of your Committee on European Affairs, specialised committees and plenary debates directly or watch/listen to them on the TV/radio/Internet?

Discussions on EU matters during the Seimas plenary are open to the public and are usually broadcast on the Internet, the radio and, in individual cases, the television.

Deliberations pertaining to a specific EU legislative proposal, i.e. Lithuania's position, in specialised committees are also open to the public. Representatives of various non-governmental organisations, public groups and other interested parties may be invited to attend such committee meetings or a part of the meetings. Meetings of a specialised committee or the parts thereof are closed when deliberating on the position. Confidentiality must be ensured during the preparation for the deliberation and during the process of deliberating on the position (Article 180¹¹ of the Statute of the Seimas).

According to the Statute of the Seimas, meetings of the Committees on European Affairs and Foreign Affairs are generally closed. The Committee Chairman or Committee members may, for duly substantiated reasons, decide by the majority vote to hold an open Committee meeting (Article 180²⁷). With a view to increasing openness of deliberations on EU matters and raising awareness among the public, the Committee on European Affairs has gradually come to hold more open meetings.

5. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively inform the public about the scrutiny deliberations and their outcome through websites, web streaming, press briefings, news letters etc.?

Yes. See questions 2 and 4.

6. Does your Parliament/Chamber have a section/unit which provides information about the EU to the public? If so, please specify the main tasks of this information section/unit.

The European Information Office of the Seimas provides information about the EU and the role of the Seimas in the European integration processes. The Office is open to everyone. It organises conferences, seminars, lectures, and presentations to visitor groups. Visitors can also use the library and search for information on the Internet.

7. Are there any ongoing debates or plans in your Parliament/Chamber on ways to make the handling of EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber more transparent?

Since Lithuania's accession to the EU, closed meetings of the Committee on European Affairs have clearly become less frequent. Growing interest of the media in certain issues significant to the public, such as Passenger Name Record and a non-discrimination directive, has been observed. The Committee on European Affairs of the Seimas has had preliminary informal considerations of possible broadcasting of Committee meetings on the Internet thus aiming at a greater public interest in and awareness of EU matters.

Chapter 2: Parliamentary Scrutiny of the Stockholm Programme

The Lithuanian Seimas deliberates on all very relevant and relevant Commission proposals. There is no difference in the parliamentary scrutiny procedures for the deliberation on legal acts from the 1st pillar and the 3rd pillar. FSJ issues as a part of the JHA Council agenda will be discussed by the Committee on European Affairs on a regular basis.

1. How do you foresee that scrutiny will be conducted in your EU Affairs Committee? At what stages will scrutiny be conducted?

After deliberating on the issue in the specialised committees of the Seimas, in early September this year, the Committee on European Affairs is planning to consider a position submitted by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania on the European Commission Communication: *An Area of Freedom, Security and Justice Serving the Citizen*. This Communication is included in the priorities of the Seimas for 2009 as a very relevant document. Further deliberation on the position of the Republic of Lithuania on this document will be related to the agenda of the deliberation on the issue in the EU Councils. Ministers responsible will present the positions at the meetings of the Committee on European Affairs before attending respective Council meetings and will report afterwards. If necessary, the issue may be repeatedly included in the agenda at the request of the Chairman or members of the Committee.

At a later stage, action plans, individual legislative proposals and other specific measures will be discussed at the Seimas on a regular basis. (See the introductory paragraph).

2. Do you foresee that one or more of your specialised committees will be involved in the process? If so, which one(s), how, and at what stages will their scrutiny be conducted?

At the primary stage, upon the receipt of the initial position of the Republic of Lithuania on the Commission Communication: *An Area of freedom, Security and Justice Serving the Citizen*, the Committee on European Affairs of the Seimas, at its meeting on 10 July 2009, decided to refer the position to the Committee on National Security and Defence, the Committee on Legal Affairs, the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and the Committee on Human Rights requesting them to consider it and submit committee conclusions by 28 August 2009.

At later stages, the said specialised committees of the Seimas will deliberate on respective issues related to the Stockholm Programme and carry out parliamentary scrutiny according to their competence.

3. Do you foresee that any other body in your Parliament/Chamber will be involved in the scrutiny? If so, which one(s), how and at what stage?

At later stages, when deliberating on particular EU legislative proposals, the Legal Department of the Office of the Seimas may be requested to present an expert opinion. Specialised commissions of the Seimas may deliberate and submit conclusions on individual issues that fall under their competence, e.g. the Commission for Prevention of Drug and Alcohol Addiction.

4. Do you take any specific measures to ensure coordination between the various parliamentary bodies involved in scrutiny?

It is the competence of the Committee on European Affairs of the Seimas to coordinate the consideration of EU matters in the Seimas, refer the positions on very relevant and relevant documents to specialised committees as prescribed and to deliberate on committee conclusions.

5. When designing the scrutiny procedure as described above – have you drawn upon experience gained when scrutinizing the Tampere and/or Hague Programmes? If possible, please specify.

There is no difference in the parliamentary scrutiny procedures for deliberation on legal acts from the 1st pillar and the 3rd pillar. FSJ issues as a part of the JHA Council agenda will be discussed by the Committee on European Affairs on a regular basis.

6. Do you think that inter-parliamentary cooperation could contribute to making your scrutiny more efficient? If so, in what form and how?

Yes. Considering the role of COSAC in this regard it might be relevant to exchange experience (if any) among national parliaments in a form of debate.

Luxembourg: Chambre des Députés

Chapitre 1: Transparence du processus d'examen parlementaire

1. a) Les documents portant sur les questions européennes que reçoit votre Parlement/Chambre de la part des institutions européennes et de votre Gouvernement sont-ils accessibles au public ? (par exemple les projets de rapports et de résolutions du Parlement européen, les amendements du Parlement européen et les positions communes du Conseil dans le cadre de la procédure de codécision, les documents préparatoires des groupes de travail du Conseil et du COREPER, la position de votre Gouvernement).

Réponse : Les documents reçus de la part des institutions européennes et du Gouvernement sont ouverts au public dans la mesure où ils le sont pour les institutions concernées. Il n'y a pas de publication particulière de ces documents par la Chambre des Députés.

- b) Votre Parlement/Chambre prend-il/elle l'initiative de mettre ces documents à la disposition du public ? Si tel est le cas, veuillez préciser à quelle étape de la procédure ces documents sont rendus publics, quand et dans quelle langue.

Réponse : Non, il n'y a pas d'initiative pour mettre ces documents à la disposition du public.

- c) Votre Parlement/Chambre reçoit-il de votre Gouvernement tous les documents nécessaires pour un examen effectif et transparent des affaires européennes ? Si ce n'est pas le cas, veuillez préciser.

Réponse : En juillet 2008, la Chambre des Députés et le Gouvernement ont signé un aide-mémoire sur la coopération en matière de politique européenne, qui a été annexé en mai 2009 au règlement intérieur de la Chambre des Députés.

Aux termes dudit accord, « Le Gouvernement s'engage à transmettre à la Chambre des Députés dès réception, outre les documents qu'elle reçoit de la part des institutions européennes, les documents, rapports, communications et informations figurant à l'ordre du jour des différentes réunions du Conseil européen et du Conseil. Lorsque le Gouvernement expédie les documents à la Chambre des Députés, il le fait à la date la plus précoce possible et par la voie la plus directe. Lesdits courriers sont à adresser au Service des relations internationales de la Chambre des Députés par courrier ordinaire ou par courrier électronique. » La Chambre des Députés plaide pour une mise à disposition systématique de notes explicatives dans des dossiers d'une importance particulière pour le Luxembourg.

2. Les documents portant sur les questions européennes émis par votre Parlement/Chambre sont-ils accessibles au public ? Si tel est le cas, veuillez préciser quels documents. Votre Parlement/Chambre prend-il/elle l'initiative de mettre ces documents à la disposition du public ?

Réponse : Les documents communiqués par la Commission européenne sont triés par la « cellule européenne » du Service des Relations internationales.

Les documents classés A ne revêtent pas d'intérêt particulier et ne sont pas étudiés davantage, alors que l'examen des documents classés B, qui revêtent un intérêt pour le Luxembourg, est poursuivi. Les listes relatives à ce tri sont analysées par la Commission des Affaires étrangères et européennes, de la Défense, de la Coopération et de l'Immigration et renvoyées ensuite par la Conférence des Présidents aux commissions sectorielles concernées.

Ces listes peuvent être consultées depuis quelques semaines sur le nouveau site Internet de la Chambre des Députés.

3. Le public peut-il être informé par votre Parlement/Chambre de l'état des négociations en cours sur un sujet spécifique relatif à l'UE et à quel moment ? Si tel est le cas, veuillez préciser.

Réponse : Une communication sur les travaux de la Chambre des Députés peut être faite sur le site Internet du Parlement, dans le compte rendu des travaux, qui est diffusé dans les principaux journaux luxembourgeois, et le cas échéant aussi par Chamber TV, la chaîne télévisée parlementaire. (voir aussi question 4)

4. Les débats relatifs à l'examen des affaires européennes qui se tiennent dans votre Parlement/Chambre sont-ils ouverts au public ? Le public peut-il assister aux réunions de votre Commission des affaires européennes, de vos Commissions spéciales et aux débats en séance plénière ? Si tel est le cas, peut-il le faire directement ou par le biais de la TV/Radio/Internet ?

Réponse : La publicité des débats relatifs à l'examen des affaires européennes qui se tiennent au Parlement est variable.

En ce qui concerne les travaux en commission, il ressort de l'article 21 (7) du règlement intérieur de la Chambre des Députés que « Les travaux parlementaires en commission sont non publics, à moins que la commission ou la Chambre n'en décide autrement. »

L'article 21 (8) alinéa 2 précise qu'« Une communication sur les travaux de la commission peut être faite par le responsable de la communication de la Chambre des Députés, suivant les modalités arrêtées par le Bureau et sous la responsabilité du président de la commission. »

A cela s'ajoute que la Chambre des Députés a déjà organisé par le passé des auditions publiques. Ainsi, dans le cadre de la campagne relative au référendum sur le Traité instituant une Constitution pour l'Europe, trois auditions publiques ont été diffusées entre avril et mai 2005 par la chaîne télévisée parlementaire (« Chamber TV ». Ces réunions étaient consacrées aux sujets suivants : la démocratie dans l'Union européenne (démocratie participative, droits de l'homme, droits démocratiques des citoyens et rôle des Parlements nationaux), l'Europe sociale et écologique ainsi que l'engagement de l'Union européenne pour la paix (PESC, PESD, lutte contre la pauvreté, coopération au développement).

De surcroît, en date des 9 novembre 2007, 18 janvier et 22 février 2008, la Commission des Affaires étrangères et européennes, de la Défense, de la Coopération et de l'Immigration a accueilli plusieurs classes de lycées et de lycées techniques ainsi que des étudiants de l'Université du Luxembourg pour discuter sur les défis de l'Europe du XXIème siècle.

En date du 13 mars 2009, une quarantaine d'étudiants de l'Université du Luxembourg ont par ailleurs procédé à un échange de vues avec M. Hans-Gert Pöttering, à l'époque Président du Parlement européen, M. Lucien Weiler, à l'époque Président de la Chambre des Députés, les membres de la Commission des Affaires étrangères et européennes, de la Défense, de la Coopération et de l'Immigration ainsi qu'avec les membres luxembourgeois du Parlement européen.

Toutes ces réunions étaient retransmises en direct par la chaîne télévisée du Parlement.

5. Votre Parlement /Chambre prend-t-il/elle l'initiative d'informer le public à propos des débats relatifs à l'examen des affaires européennes et aux décisions au moyen d'internet, de conférences de presse, de communiqués, etc.?

Réponse : Le site Internet de la Chambre des Députés a été remanié récemment. Un accent particulier est mis sur le volet « Actualités », qui peut viser l'examen des affaires européennes. Des informations supplémentaires peuvent être consultées dans la rubrique « La Chambre et l'UE ».

De surcroît, la délégation auprès de la COSAC a pris l'initiative au courant de la période législative 2004 - 2009 d'informer régulièrement la presse des travaux de la COSAC par le biais de conférences de presse ou par des communiqués de presse.

6. Votre Parlement/Chambre dispose-t-il/elle d'un service qui fournit au public des informations sur l'UE ? Si tel est le cas, veuillez préciser les principales fonctions de ce service.

Réponse : Il n'existe pas de service qui fournit systématiquement des informations sur l'Union européenne au public. Des informations peuvent néanmoins être fournies par le Service des Relations publiques ou par le Service des Relations internationales (cellule européenne).

7. Des débats ou des projets ont-ils cours dans votre Parlement/Chambre sur la façon d'accroître la transparence dans le traitement des questions européennes dans votre Parlement/Chambre ?

Réponse : Un accent particulier sera mis au courant de la période législative sur l'information de la population, notamment par le biais du nouveau site Internet. L'information des écoliers et des étudiants sera également renforcée. Il est en outre envisagé d'organiser un débat annuel sur les affaires européennes.

Chapitre 2 : Examen parlementaire du programme de Stockholm

1. Comment envisagez-vous la conduite de l'examen par la commission chargée des affaires européennes ? A quel moment effectuera-t-elle son examen ?

Réponse : La Chambre des Députés n'a pas mis en place une commission parlementaire chargée exclusivement des affaires européennes. La Commission des Affaires étrangères et européennes, de la Défense, de la Coopération et de l'Immigration suit l'évolution générale des dossiers européens et étudie le tri des dossiers européens proposé par la « cellule européenne » (voir question 2 du premier chapitre du présent questionnaire). Ladite

commission étudiera en détail le volet immigration et asile, qui est dans sa propre compétence, alors que le reste du programme de Stockholm est dans la compétence de la Commission juridique.

Les deux commissions prennent régulièrement connaissance des documents communiqués par la Commission européenne, comme la communication de la Commission au Parlement européen et au Conseil sur « Un espace de liberté, de sécurité et de justice au service des citoyens » (COM (2009) 262), et suivent l'élaboration du programme avec les Ministres compétents, qui sont régulièrement invités en commission.

2. Prévoyez-vous la participation au processus d'une ou plusieurs de vos commissions spécialisées ? Si tel est le cas, la(les)quelle(s), comment et à quel moment sera mené l'examen ?

Réponse : voir question 1.

3. Prévoyez-vous la participation de tout autre organe de votre Parlement/Chambre à cet examen ? Si tel est le cas, le(s)quel(s), comment et à quel moment ?

Réponse : voir question 1.

4. Comment allez-vous assurer la bonne coordination des activités entre les différents organes parlementaires participant à cet examen ?

Réponse : Des réunions jointes des deux commissions parlementaires compétentes sont envisageables.

5. Avez-vous tiré des leçons de l'expérience antérieure de l'examen du programme de Tampere et/ou du programme de La Haye en envisageant les procédures d'examen décrites ci-dessus ? Si tel est le cas, veuillez préciser.

Réponse : La Chambre des Députés entend tirer les leçons de sa pratique au cours de la dernière législature et renforcer ses procédures, en particulier quant au suivi régulier de l'évolution des dossiers. Le programme de Stockholm sera une bonne occasion pour tester cette approche plus cohérente. Le Parlement luxembourgeois en entamera l'examen dès la rentrée parlementaire en septembre au sein des commissions concernées, en relation avec les ministres compétents.

6. Pensez-vous que la coopération interparlementaire puisse contribuer à rendre votre examen plus efficace ? Si tel est le cas, quelle(s) forme(s) de coopération et comment ?

Réponse : L'échange des positions par l'intermédiaire d'IPEX respectivement par l'intermédiaire des représentants des Parlements nationaux auprès des institutions peut être un moyen utile de coopération. Il ne serait par contre pas opportun de multiplier les réunions interparlementaires.

Malta: Kamra tad-Deputati

Chapter 1: Transparency of the Parliamentary Scrutiny Process

1. a) Are documents on EU matters that your Parliament/Chamber receives from the EU Institutions and your Government accessible to the public (for example, drafts of European Parliament reports and resolutions, European Parliament amendments and Council common positions in the codecision procedure, preparatory documents for Council working groups and for Coreper and/or the position of your Government)?

The Explanatory Memoranda provided by Government, the Committee's brief on the Government's position contained therein and relevant documents from the EU institutions are together tabled in the House by the Chairman of the Foreign and European Affairs Committee once scrutiny of that particular document is completed. Once they are tabled in the House they become public documents.

- b) Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public? If so, please specify at what stage/when and in which language(s)?

Documents described in 1(a) above are uploaded to the Parliament's website once they are tabled in the House. Such documents are available in English.

- c) Does your Parliament/Chamber, in general, receive all the necessary documents for transparent and effective scrutiny of EU matters from your Government? If not, please specify.

The scrutiny of EU matters is largely based on matters referred to Parliament by the Government by way of Explanatory Memoranda.

2. Are the documents on EU matters produced by your Parliament/Chamber accessible to the public? If so, please specify which documents. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public?

See answers to Questions 1(a) and (b) above.

3. Is it possible for the public to be informed through your Parliament/Chamber about the state of play of ongoing negotiations on a specific EU issue, and at what stage/when? If so, please specify.

No.

4. Are the scrutiny deliberations on EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber open to the public? Can the general public attend the meetings of your Committee on European Affairs, specialised committees and plenary debates directly or watch/listen to them on the TV/radio/Internet?

When scrutinising proposals by EU institutions referred by Government the debate is generally held *in camera*. Discussions on other EU matters by the Standing Committee on Foreign and European Affairs are generally open to the public and streamed live on the parliamentary website.

5. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively inform the public about the scrutiny deliberations and their outcome through websites, web streaming, press briefings, news letters etc.?

See answers to Questions 1(a) and (b) above.

6. Does your Parliament/Chamber have a section/unit which provides information about the EU to the public? If so, please specify the main tasks of this information section/unit.

No.

7. Are there any ongoing debates or plans in your Parliament/Chamber on ways to make the handling of EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber more transparent?

A Select Committee of the House has been appointed to recommend, inter alia, measures for strengthening the way Parliament operates and to improve communication with the public at large.

Chapter 2: Parliamentary Scrutiny of the Stockholm Programme

1. How do you foresee that scrutiny will be conducted in your EU Affairs Committee? At what stages will scrutiny be conducted?

Scrutiny is not foreseen to vary from the current procedure for scrutinising EU matters, i.e. based on Explanatory Memorandum supplied by Government on the programme and its individual components.

2. Do you foresee that one or more of your specialised committees will be involved in the process? If so, which one(s), how, and at what stages will their scrutiny be conducted?

The Maltese Parliament does not have a specialised committee dealing with judicial matters and home affairs. Scrutiny will most likely be carried out by the relevant Working Group of the Foreign and European Affairs Committee.

3. Do you foresee that any other body in your Parliament/Chamber will be involved in the scrutiny? If so, which one(s), how and at what stage?

4. Do you take any specific measures to ensure coordination between the various parliamentary bodies involved in scrutiny?

5. When designing the scrutiny procedure as described above – have you drawn upon experience gained when scrutinizing the Tampere and/or Hague Programmes? If possible, please specify.

The Parliament did not follow any specific procedures for the scrutiny of the Hague Programme. It is worth noting that when the Tampere Programme was adopted in 1999 Malta was not yet a Member of the EU and it was a new MS when the Hague Programme was adopted in 2004.

6. Do you think that inter-parliamentary cooperation could contribute to making your scrutiny more efficient? If so, in what form and how?

As in most other areas of parliamentary activities, inter-parliamentary cooperation on the scrutiny of the Stockholm Programme can be beneficial to individual parliaments by enabling them to draw upon best practices and experience gained by other parliaments. This is especially true for small parliaments like the Maltese House of Representatives which is small and has relatively less experience in European matters than some other Member States.

Debate within existing fora such as COSAC, JPMs and JCMs offer the best opportunities to foster this cooperation.

The Netherlands: Tweede Kamer

Chapter 1: Transparency of the Parliamentary Scrutiny Process

1. a) Are documents on EU matters that your Parliament/Chamber receives from the EU Institutions and your Government accessible to the public (for example, drafts of European Parliament reports and resolutions, European Parliament amendments and Council common positions in the codecision procedure, preparatory documents for Council working groups and for Coreper and/or the position of your Government)?

The documents that the Tweede Kamer receives from our Government are accessible to the public; they are published as official documents by the State printing office. Documents received from the EU Institutions are in general not made accessible to the public by the Tweede Kamer, except when it concerns EU-legislative proposals subjected to the subsidiarity check and EU-legislative proposals which need approval of the Tweede Kamer (and the Eerste Kamer) before Governmental approval in the JHA-Council..

- b) Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public? If so, please specify at what stage/when and in which language(s)?

The documents that the Tweede Kamer receives from our Government and EU-legislative proposals subjected to the subsidiarity check are published as official documents by the State printing office as soon as possible after their reception.

- c) Does your Parliament/Chamber, in general, receive all the necessary documents for transparent and effective scrutiny of EU matters from your Government? If not, please specify.

Yes, if MP's and/or (a) parliamentary committee(s) need additional information, Government can be requested to provide that information. The Government has a Constitutional obligation to do so. A special procedure is provided for those EU documents that are classified "restreint" and higher.

2. Are the documents on EU matters produced by your Parliament/Chamber accessible to the public? If so, please specify which documents. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public?

The documents on EU matters produced by the Tweede Kamer are made accessible to the public. It concerns correspondence with Government on EU-matters (e.g. so-called fiches - annotations of Government holding a preliminary position taking on European proposals -, annotated agenda's of Government prior to a Council, reports on parliamentary debates with Government on EU-matters as well as public hearings), and also documents holding official position taking by parliamentary committees on specific EU-proposals.

3. Is it possible for the public to be informed through your Parliament/Chamber about the state of play of ongoing negotiations on a specific EU issue, and at what stage/when? If so, please specify.

Public can inform itself by looking into the official published documents. Public can also actively contact the Tweede Kamer.

4. Are the scrutiny deliberations on EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber open to the public? Can the general public attend the meetings of your Committee on European Affairs, specialised committees and plenary debates directly or watch/listen to them on the TV/radio/Internet?

Yes, committee- and plenary meetings with Government are open to the public; debates are also live-streamed on TV (on the so-called channel "Politiek 24") and the Internet.

5. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively inform the public about the scrutiny deliberations and their outcome through websites, web streaming, press briefings, news letters etc.?

See answer under 4. The agenda of the Tweede Kamer and its committees is also actively made public on TV (teletekst) and the website of the Tweede Kamer (www.tweedekamer.nl).

6. Does your Parliament/Chamber have a section/unit which provides information about the EU to the public? If so, please specify the main tasks of this information section/unit.

Yes, the Tweede Kamer has a specific Information Service to inform the public.

7. Are there any ongoing debates or plans in your Parliament/Chamber on ways to make the handling of EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber more transparent?

Optimising services to inform the public on EU-matters and to make the handling of those matters more transparent are a permanent topic of debate.

Chapter 2: Parliamentary Scrutiny of the Stockholm Programme

1. How do you foresee that scrutiny will be conducted in your EU Affairs Committee? At what stages will scrutiny be conducted?

The select committee on Justice Affairs is the main responsible committee on JHA-matters, so in the Tweede Kamer scrutiny on the Stockholm Programme will be conducted by that committee (in close consultation with the select committee on Home Affairs). The scrutiny process has already started. Government has sent a position-taking document on the Stockholm Programme at May 20 to the Tweede Kamer. September 9, the Justice committee organises a round-table meeting with JHA-experts. October 7, a specific debate on the Stockholm Programme will take place between Government and the Justice committee. Furthermore, upon the request of the Tweede Kamer, Government has promised that the Tweede Kamer will be informed on the progress and realization of the Stockholm Programme on an annual basis.

2. Do you foresee that one or more of your specialised committees will be involved in the process? If so, which one(s), how, and at what stages will their scrutiny be conducted?

Possibly, but not likely, the committee on Home Affairs will be involved. Being an overall coordinating committee, the EU Affairs committee is also involved in a general way.

3. Do you foresee that any other body in your Parliament/Chamber will be involved in the scrutiny? If so, which one(s), how and at what stage?

Not foreseen at this stage.

4. Do you take any specific measures to ensure coordination between the various parliamentary bodies involved in scrutiny?

Possible measures will be taken according to the already existing parliamentary working methods of the Tweede Kamer. There is no need for specific measures in the case of the Stockholm Programme.

5. When designing the scrutiny procedure as described above – have you drawn upon experience gained when scrutinizing the Tampere and/or Hague Programmes? If possible, please specify.

Yes, but the scrutiny procedure on the Stockholm Programme is designed for this specific occasion.

6. Do you think that inter-parliamentary cooperation could contribute to making your scrutiny more efficient? If so, in what form and how?

An inter-parliamentary exchange of information about the scrutiny process in the sister-parliaments can be useful.

The Netherlands: Eerste Kamer

Chapter 1: Transparency of the Parliamentary Scrutiny Process

1. a) Are documents on EU matters that your Parliament/Chamber receives from the EU Institutions and your Government accessible to the public (for example, drafts of European Parliament reports and resolutions, European Parliament amendments and Council common positions in the codecision procedure, preparatory documents for Council working groups and for Coreper and/or the position of your Government)?

The documents that we receive from the EU institutions and the government are made accessible to the public on the European website of the Senate, www.europapoort.nl. It depends on the intensity and stage of the scrutiny process of the Senate whether a document is actually published on the website.

- b) Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public? If so, please specify at what stage/when and in which language(s)?

Yes, these documents are actively made available to the public as soon as the documents are received. There is a mix of English and Dutch documents on the website. If a document exists in Dutch we put in on the website in Dutch, if it is only available in English, we place the English version on the website.

- c) Does your Parliament/Chamber, in general, receive all the necessary documents for transparent and effective scrutiny of EU matters from your Government? If not, please specify.

According to the Dutch Constitution, the government has to provide parliament with all the information requested by members of parliament. Therefore, if the Senate needs a document that can not be found on a website or is not pro-actively sent to parliament, the Senate requests the government to send the document to parliament.

2. Are the documents on EU matters produced by your Parliament/Chamber accessible to the public? If so, please specify which documents. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public?

The documents on EU affairs produced by the Senate are also actively made accessible for the public on the website. We do have the option of making certain documents only accessible to a specific group of website-users. We only rarely use that option, for example for staff reports/advice on certain European proposals or draft letters to the government (as soon as the letter is approved by the select committee of the Senate, the letter is made public).

3. Is it possible for the public to be informed through your Parliament/Chamber about the state of play of ongoing negotiations on a specific EU issue, and at what stage/when? If so, please specify.

Yes. If a certain proposal is under scrutiny by the Senate, a dedicated electronic dossier is made on www.europapoort.nl. In this dossier we collect all the documents from the different

legislative actors, such as the government, the European Commission, the Council, the European Parliament, the House of Representatives and of course the Senate. We also track the state of play of the negotiations on the proposal in the dossier. Therefore, the dossier provides a historical account from the moment that the European Commission presents the proposal until the moment that the proposal is officially adopted and the decision is published.

4. Are the scrutiny deliberations on EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber open to the public? Can the general public attend the meetings of your Committee on European Affairs, specialised committees and plenary debates directly or watch/listen to them on the TV/radio/Internet?

Plenary debates in the Senate are open to the public. Anyone can watch the debates in the Senate in person or tune in to the debates via the internet. We are currently looking into broadcasting the debates. The meetings of the committees are not open to the public. Our members would like the meeting to be in public, but unfortunately we are not yet able to actually open them to the public due to practical, logistical and security problems. We are therefore also looking into the option of broadcasting these via the internet.

5. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively inform the public about the scrutiny deliberations and their outcome through websites, web streaming, press briefings, news letters etc.?

See answers above plus newsletters and press releases.

6. Does your Parliament/Chamber have a section/unit which provides information about the EU to the public? If so, please specify the main tasks of this information section/unit.

Yes, we have two information specialists who, amongst other things, keep the website up to date.

7. Are there any ongoing debates or plans in your Parliament/Chamber on ways to make the handling of EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber more transparent?

See answers above. Plus the transparency of the handling of EU affairs in the Senate is already rather high due to our dedicated European website.

Chapter 2: Parliamentary Scrutiny of the Stockholm Programme

1. How do you foresee that scrutiny will be conducted in your EU Affairs Committee? At what stages will scrutiny be conducted?

The scrutiny of the Stockholm programme will be conducted by the standing committee on the JHA-council of the Senate. The scrutiny has already started on the Stockholm-programme. The committee has decided to scrutinise all stages of the programme.

2. Do you foresee that one or more of your specialised committees will be involved in the process? If so, which one(s), how, and at what stages will their scrutiny be conducted?

The scrutiny will be conducted by the committee responsible for the content of the programme, being the standing committee on the JHA-council of the Senate. If required, this committee has

the option to contact another committee for advice. The members of the standing committee on the JHA-council of the Senate are, however, experts on JHA-matters.

The standing committee on the JHA-council of the Senate is also working together with the responsible committee of the House of Representatives for the scrutiny of the programme. For example, a round table meeting is foreseen to discuss the programme with third parties.

3. Do you foresee that any other body in your Parliament/Chamber will be involved in the scrutiny? If so, which one(s), how and at what stage?

See answers on question above (nr. 2). Of course the scrutiny could result in a plenary debate.

4. Do you take any specific measures to ensure coordination between the various parliamentary bodies involved in scrutiny?

Not necessary.

5. When designing the scrutiny procedure as described above – have you drawn upon experience gained when scrutinizing the Tampere and/or Hague Programmes? If possible, please specify.

Yes, given the positive experiences with the scrutiny process of the previous programmes, the scrutiny of the Stockholm Programme will be conducted in a similar fashion.

6. Do you think that inter-parliamentary cooperation could contribute to making your scrutiny more efficient? If so, in what form and how?

Yes, a regular exchange of information on the views of the different parliaments, as well as on the state of play of the scrutiny procedure in different countries – through email contacts at the level of staffs – may prove to be very helpful.

Poland: Sejm

Chapter 1: Transparency of the Parliamentary Scrutiny Process

1. a) Are documents on EU matters that your Parliament/Chamber receives from the EU Institutions and your Government accessible to the public (for example, drafts of European Parliament reports and resolutions, European Parliament amendments and Council common positions in the codecision procedure, preparatory documents for Council working groups and for Coreper and/or the position of your Government)?

The documents from the EU Institutions are available to the public. Whereas the draft positions of the Council of Ministers and information on the positions the Council of Ministers intends to take during the considerations of the proposals in the Council of the European Union or working groups, are not available accessible.

- b) Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public? If so, please specify at what stage/when and in which language(s)?

The Sejm actively makes such documents to be at public's disposal. Documents are available on the parliamentary website:

<http://orka.sejm.gov.pl/SOL.nsf/pracekom6?OpenAgent&SUE> and in the special data base (created in 2004 after Polish accession to the EU) where anyone can find all information on what has happened or is happening with the proposed legislative acts sent to the EUAC (<http://parl.sejm.gov.pl/SUE6.nsf/GlownyWWW?OpenFrameSet>).

- c) Does your Parliament/Chamber, in general, receive all the necessary documents for transparent and effective scrutiny of EU matters from your Government? If not, please specify.

The Sejm receives all the necessary documents for transparent and effective scrutiny of EU matters from the Council of Ministers and from the European Commission.

2. Are the documents on EU matters produced by your Parliament/Chamber accessible to the public? If so, please specify which documents. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public?

The EUAC introduces the documents on the website. These are opinions of the EUAC and information about EUAC's legislative procedure that took place during committee meetings. Those documents are systematically placed on the EUAC and parliament's website.

3. Is it possible for the public to be informed through your Parliament/Chamber about the state of play of ongoing negotiations on a specific EU issue, and at what stage/when? If so, please specify.

Yes, it is possible. On the parliamentary website anyone can find bulletins, opinions and information about EUAC'S legislative procedure that took place during committee meetings.

4. Are the scrutiny deliberations on EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber open to the public? Can the general public attend the meetings of your Committee on European Affairs, specialised committees and plenary debates directly or watch/listen to them on the TV/radio/Internet?

The EUAC's sittings, meetings of the specialised committees and plenary debates are opened to the public. The specialised committee's meetings (including the EUAC) are not available in TV, radio or Internet. The plenary debates are obtainable in media.

5. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively inform the public about the scrutiny deliberations and their outcome through websites, web streaming, press briefings, news letters etc.?

The Sejm actively informs the public about the scrutiny deliberations and their outcomes. On the parliamentary website newsletters (bulletins) from the EUAC's sittings and all the documents that the EUAC worked out during discussion, are available.

6. Does your Parliament/Chamber have a section/unit which provides information about the EU to the public? If so, please specify the main tasks of this information section/unit.

The Chancellery of the Sejm has established the European Information and Documentation Centre (OIDE) in order to facilitate access to needed sources and documentation concerning all aspects of the functioning of the European Union, its structures, the main lines of its activities, the debate on the future of Europe and the European constitution, the progress of the implementation of the EU law in the legislative proceedings of the Sejm, [parliamentary debates on the EU](#), the works of the [EU Affairs Committee of the Sejm](#) as well as the activities of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland [on the international scene](#) as regards the European matters.

7. Are there any ongoing debates or plans in your Parliament/Chamber on ways to make the handling of EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber more transparent?

Plans regarding ways to make the handling of EU matters in the Sejm more transparent, are still in progress.

Chapter 2: Parliamentary Scrutiny of the Stockholm Programme

1. How do you foresee that scrutiny will be conducted in your EU Affairs Committee? At what stages will scrutiny be conducted?

According to the Act on Cooperation of 11th of March 2004 [of the Council of Ministers with the Sejm and the Senate in Matters Related to the Republic of Poland's Membership in the European Union](#) The European Union Affairs Committee is planning to scrutinise the document. The EAUC also requested government to present its position toward this document.

2. Do you foresee that one or more of your specialised committees will be involved in the process? If so, which one(s), how, and at what stages will their scrutiny be conducted?

Primarily, the Programme will be scrutinised by the EU Affairs Committee. However if a need arises other committees (depending on the subject) will be informed and might be asked for their opinion towards general or specific issues.

3. Do you foresee that any other body in your Parliament/Chamber will be involved in the scrutiny? If so, which one(s), how and at what stage?

Primarily, the Programme will be scrutinised by the EU Affairs Committee. However if a need arises other committees (depending on the subject) will be informed and might be asked for their opinion towards general or specific issues.

4. Do you take any specific measures to ensure coordination between the various parliamentary bodies involved in scrutiny?

Primarily, the Programme will be scrutinised by the EU Affairs Committee. However if a need arises other committees (depending on the subject) will be informed and might be asked for their opinion towards general or specific issues. The coordination will be ensured by ordinary applied procedures.

5. When designing the scrutiny procedure as described above – have you drawn upon experience gained when scrutinizing the Tampere and/or Hague Programmes? If possible, please specify.

No, the procedure from the Act on Cooperation of 11th March 2004 were not used for the scrutiny of the Tampere and the Hague Programmes.

6. Do you think that inter-parliamentary cooperation could contribute to making your scrutiny more efficient? If so, in what form and how?

In our opinion the inter-parliamentary co-operation will have added value to the scrutiny process in the national parliaments through exchange of experiences and best practices both on substantial and procedural level. As the Stockholm Programme is multi disciplinary document even the exchange of national parliament's positions on various stages could be considered.

Poland: Senat

Chapter 1: Transparency of the Parliamentary Scrutiny Process

1. a) Are documents on EU matters that your Parliament/Chamber receives from the EU Institutions and your Government accessible to the public (for example, drafts of European Parliament reports and resolutions, European Parliament amendments and Council common positions in the codecision procedure, preparatory documents for Council working groups and for Coreper and/or the position of your Government)?

All the EU documents received by the Senate from the EU institutions are accessible to the public. As regards documents prepared by Government, decision to make them accessible is up to the executive.

- b) Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public? If so, please specify at what stage/when and in which language(s)?

The Senate website includes a section with information and materials provided by the Senate Chancellery' Permanent Representative to the EU. This section includes:

- *reports from the EP sessions*
- *information on Joint Parliamentary Meetings and joint committee sittings which take place in the EP*
- *updates on the European Parliament's most important resolutions and current developments in the EP.*

All the materials are available in Polish.

- c) Does your Parliament/Chamber, in general, receive all the necessary documents for transparent and effective scrutiny of EU matters from your Government? If not, please specify.

Under the current law the Senate receives EU legislative proposals, related Government's positions, updates on decision-making process. Non-legislative documents are provided on request. When requested by the EU Affairs Committee, Government is obliged to submit all necessary information related to Poland's EU membership.

2. Are the documents on EU matters produced by your Parliament/Chamber accessible to the public? If so, please specify which documents. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public?

The Senate website offers information on the EU Affairs Committee sitting agenda, stenographic records of the committee sittings and all EU Affairs Committee opinions and resolutions.

3. Is it possible for the public to be informed through your Parliament/Chamber about the state of play of ongoing negotiations on a specific EU issue, and at what stage/when? If so, please specify.

Informing about the state of play of ongoing negotiations on a specific EU issue falls within the competence of Government.

4. Are the scrutiny deliberations on EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber open to the public? Can the general public attend the meetings of your Committee on European Affairs, specialised committees and plenary debates directly or watch/listen to them on the TV/radio/Internet?

Yes. Both committee sittings and the Senate plenary debates are open to the general public providing all safety regulations are complied with. Senate plenary debates are covered on TV and via internet.

5. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively inform the public about the scrutiny deliberations and their outcome through websites, web streaming, press briefings, news letters etc.?

Senate plenary debates on EU-related matters are transmitted live on the Senate website, for example regular debates on the Commission's annual policy strategy, on the legislative and work programme, as well as on Government's bi-annual information on Poland's involvement in EU activities.

Via the Senate website the general public has also an access to stenographic records of Senate plenary debates and EU Affairs Committee sittings.

6. Does your Parliament/Chamber have a section/unit which provides information about the EU to the public? If so, please specify the main tasks of this information section/unit.

No.

7. Are there any ongoing debates or plans in your Parliament/Chamber on ways to make the handling of EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber more transparent?

At the moment an EU Affairs Committee page is being worked upon to offer a better access to a wide range of information on the Committee's activities (e.g. with a system of interconnected links to documents).

Chapter 2: Parliamentary Scrutiny of the Stockholm Programme

1. How do you foresee that scrutiny will be conducted in your EU Affairs Committee? At what stages will scrutiny be conducted?

The detailed scrutiny procedure of the European Union Affairs Committee, based on two provisions: the Cooperation Act (Act of 11th March 2004 on Co-operation of the Council of Ministers with the Sejm and the Senate in Matters Related to the Republic of Poland's Membership in the European Union) and the Senate's Regulations of 23rd November 1990, assumes that each individual legislative proposal (including the future legislative proposals of policy areas covered by the Stockholm Programme) is controlled at several stages:

- *in the prelegislative phase, as the EU Affairs Committee scrutinises also green papers forwarded directly from the European Commission;*
- *at an early stage of intergovernmental negotiations - while analysing and issuing opinions on the Commission's legislative proposals and government's positions;*

- *in the implementation phase, when the scrutiny belongs to the remit of specialised committees (the EU Affairs Committee might be asked for opinion).*

2. Do you foresee that one or more of your specialised committees will be involved in the process? If so, which one(s), how, and at what stages will their scrutiny be conducted?

Yes. In the prelegislative phase, the EU Affairs Committee will forward the green and white papers to the Senate specialised committees. Additionally, according to the Senate's Regulations of 23rd November 1990, before issuing an opinion on the government's position, the EU Affairs Committee can seek an opinion on any subject on its sitting agenda from Senate specialised committee - in case of areas covered by the Stockholm Programme it might be the National Defence Committee, the Human Rights, the Rule of Law and Petitions Committee or the Emigration Affairs and Contacts with Poles Abroad Committee. Finally, the specialised committees are involved in the implementation phase.

3. Do you foresee that any other body in your Parliament/Chamber will be involved in the scrutiny? If so, which one(s), how and at what stage?

Yes. As mentioned above, in the implementation phase the scrutiny falls within the competence of specialised committees which are supported by the Legal Office of the Chancellery of Senate.

4. Do you take any specific measures to ensure coordination between the various parliamentary bodies involved in scrutiny?

No.

5. When designing the scrutiny procedure as described above – have you drawn upon experience gained when scrutinizing the Tampere and/or Hague Programmes? If possible, please specify.

No.

6. Do you think that inter-parliamentary cooperation could contribute to making your scrutiny more efficient? If so, in what form and how?

With regard to the scrutiny procedure of the legislative proposals in policy areas covered by the Stockholm Programme a precise and efficient information exchange between the national parliaments would be of paramount importance.

The IPEX network may prove a highly valuable tool in this respect, providing that the input is made not exclusively in national languages but also in English or French. The IPEX network has worked out some instruments which enable the exchange of information, e.g. a set of symbols in order to indicate that a particular parliament has a specific information it wishes to exchange with other parliaments, and is still working on new developments.

Furthermore, the meetings of the parliamentary committees on European Affairs with their counterparts from other member countries could be an important form of inter-parliamentary cooperation. For example, Poland takes part in the biannual meetings of the Parliamentary Committees on European Affairs of Weimar Triangle countries (with France, and Germany), the Visegrad Group countries (with Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia) and the national parliaments of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

Besides meetings, frequent consultations on current matters of the Stockholm Programme could be carried out.

New forms of the inter-parliamentary cooperation are worth considering. It might turn out to be even more important after coming into force of the Lisbon Treaty as the national parliaments will be given new powers: the early warning mechanism which will enable them to exert a direct influence on the legislative process and the right to monitor activities in the area of freedom, security and justice.

Portugal: Assembleia da República

Chapter 1: Transparency of the Parliamentary Scrutiny Process

1. a) *Are documents on EU matters that your Parliament/Chamber receives from the EU Institutions and your Government accessible to the public (for example, drafts of European Parliament reports and resolutions, European Parliament amendments and Council common positions in the codecision procedure, preparatory documents for Council working groups and for Coreper and/or the position of your Government)?*

The documents on European matters received by the Assembly of the Republic are only made available to the public when the institutions that produce them publish them on the internet, or on reference websites (e.g. Pre-lex, Eur-lex, IPEX).

Documents that are sent on paper by the European Parliament and are received by the European Affairs Committee are forwarded to the Library, where they can be consulted by the general public.

- b) *Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public? If so, please specify at what stage/when and in which language(s)?*

- The European Affairs Committee website features a list of “useful links”. This includes links to the European Commission website and IPEX;

- The Library also has a European information website with links to the main European document databases. However, this website can only be accessed through the intranet and not the internet, meaning that outside users are compelled to go to the Parliament;

- At the present time, a database showing the progress of the scrutiny of European documentation in Parliament is under test. This database will be accessible by the general public and will contain all the European documentation received by the Assembly of the Republic (except for Government positions, when these are of a confidential nature);

- Since this documentation is available through links to the source websites (a situation that will continue to exist when the European initiatives database has been concluded), the documents will be accessible in all available languages.

- c) *Does your Parliament/Chamber, in general, receive all the necessary documents for transparent and effective scrutiny of EU matters from your Government? If not, please specify*

According to the terms of Article 5(1) of the Law dealing with “the Monitoring, assessment and pronouncement by the Assembly of the Republic within the scope of the process of constructing the European Union” (Law 43/2006 of 25 August), where it specifically states: “*The Government shall keep the Assembly of the Republic informed in good time about the subjects and positions that are to be discussed at European institutions, as well as about proposals that are under discussion and negotiations that are underway, and shall send the Assembly all the relevant documentation as soon as it is presented or submitted to the Council, particularly including (...)*” Furthermore, Article 5(2) adds: “*Members of the*

Assembly of the Republic may request such Community documentation as may be available”.

On the other hand, Article 2 of Law 43/2006, states that whenever the Government requires an opinion from the Assembly of the Republic about matters that fall within the sphere of the Assembly of the Republic’s reserved legislative responsibility that are pending decisions at European Union bodies, “(...) *shall inform the Assembly of the Republic (...) in good time to provide the Assembly with information containing a summary of the draft or proposal, an analysis of its implications and, if one has already been set out, the position which the Government wishes to adopt*”.

In both cases, and after only 3 years since this Law came into force, no systematic applications of the terms of this Law have been seen, which means that it is too early to assess this matter.

Finally, the Assembly of the Republic receives, albeit indirectly through the Government, the documents made available by the Council Secretariat through the U32PA base, after a pre-selection based on a list of acronyms of the documents that it intends to receive and which are extremely useful for the scrutiny activity.

2. *Are the documents on EU matters produced by your Parliament/Chamber accessible to the public? If so, please specify which documents. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public?*

The activity developed by the Assembly of the Republic in the scrutiny of EU matters ends with the preparation of opinions (from the parliamentary committees that take part in the scrutiny and the European Affairs Committee). In some cases, this also involves the holding of hearings and/or audiences. Sometimes, the process finishes with the preparation of a Draft Resolution and the intervention of the Plenary Assembly.

All these items are available from the Assembly of the Republic’s website:

- Scrutiny **opinions** are available from an area of the European Affairs Committee website called “Concluded Scrutiny Processes”. They are also published in the Journal of the Assembly of the Republic, which is also available online;
- The reports (or audio/video recordings, when available) of any **hearings** and/or **audiences** held in the context of a scrutiny process are also available from the European Affairs Committee website;
- The progress of **Draft Resolutions** can be accessed from the domestic legislation progress database;
- **Plenary Assembly debates** are public events and an audio/video recording is published on the Parliament website. The corresponding transcripts are published in the online Journal of the Assembly of the Republic;
- The different items of a scrutiny process are also published in the corresponding pages of IPEX.

To sum up: The items that make up an EU scrutiny process are publicly available. However, it is not possible to find them together with the scrutinized documentation. It is necessary to search through different areas of the Assembly's website to find everything. The database currently being developed (it is already at the testing stage) will, from next October onwards, enable all the documents and diligence actions relating to a scrutiny process to be brought together in one place on the internet website, with links to the databases of European institutions and to IPEX.

3. *Is it possible for the public to be informed through your Parliament/Chamber about the state of play of ongoing negotiations on a specific EU issue, and at what stage/when? If so, please specify.*

This information is not available in a systematic, autonomous way. At the moment, the only way for the public to access this type of data is through opinions and scrutiny reports or through the content of the European Affairs Committee hearings with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Secretary of state for EU affairs and/or the Plenary Assembly debates with the Government. In any of these cases, these data are always sporadic and/or accidental.

4. *Are the scrutiny deliberations on EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber open to the public? Can the general public attend the meetings of your Committee on European Affairs, specialised committees and plenary debates directly or watch/listen to them on the TV/radio/Internet?*

In accordance with Article 110 of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly of the Republic, all meetings of the plenary assembly and of the parliamentary committees are public. Under exceptional circumstances, committees can meet behind closed doors, if the specific nature of the matters being debated so justify. The European Affairs Committee Regulations (Article 17) contain an identical rule.

The complete versions of all minutes, opinions and reports prepared by the European Affairs Committee are published on the internet. It is worth adding that the Committee usually asks for hearings to be recorded on an audio/video support. In these cases, it is possible to watch/listen to them on TV (sometimes live, sometimes after a delay) and on the internet (through the Parliament Channel website). Plenary assembly meetings are always broadcast live, through the Parliament Channel.

Parliament Channel broadcasts can also be shown on other channels (live, after a delay, fully or in part). Radio stations can also broadcast debates in their entirety, or just excerpts from them.

5. *Does your Parliament/Chamber actively inform the public about the scrutiny deliberations and their outcome through websites, web streaming, press briefings, news letters etc?*

None of the abovementioned practices is institutionalized at the Assembly of the Republic.

6. *Does your Parliament/Chamber have a section/unit which provides information about the EU to the public? If so, please specify the main tasks of this information section/unit.*

There is no unit specifically dedicated to providing information about the European Union. Citizens that want to get information about the EU or about scrutiny activities must contact the European Affairs Committee services or the Library directly (European documentation services), according to the specific case. Information can also be ordered from the Public Relations and Citizens' Information Centre, which will steer the public towards the competent services.

7. *Are there any ongoing debates or plans in your Parliament/Chamber on ways to make the handling of EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber more transparent?*

In 2007, a Parliamentary reform was passed, whose objectives, amongst others, were: the transformation of the Assembly of the Republic into a *Parliament that is accountable to and close to the citizens, a more transparent Parliament that sets an example, and a Parliament that plays a more active role in the construction of Europe and the world*. Means for accomplishing these goals have been established during the present Parliamentary Term, especially with respect to the reformulation of the Parliament website, the publicity obligations referred to in Question 4, and the obligation to collaborate with the means of social communication, amongst others. Hence, at the moment, the Assembly of the Republic is still at the stage of executing the reform goals rather than at the debate stage.

At the European level, the European Affairs Committee has actively participated in the pursuit of the reform goals, as far as transparency is concerned, by constantly updating its internet website. As far as scrutiny is concerned, as mentioned in Question 2, it will soon make a database available for the exclusive purpose of monitoring the progress of scrutiny processes relating to European affairs.

Chapter 2: Parliamentary Scrutiny of the Stockholm Programme

1. *How do you foresee that scrutiny will be conducted in your EU Affairs Committee? At what stages will scrutiny be conducted?*

Bearing in mind that the scrutiny system developed by the Portuguese parliament is document based (although there are some exceptions, where it can also be procedural), we foresee that monitoring of the Stockholm Programme will be developed from the moment that the European Commission (EC) issues notification of the respective initiatives.

There are three occasions where the EU Affairs Committee could intervene:

- a) At the time that the EC transmits the initiatives, in the case that these are to be given priority. In this case, the EU Affairs Committee will expressly ask for the collaboration of the specialized parliamentary committee with regards to the matter, carrying out joint diligence and scrutiny processes (e.g. hearings, audiences, contacts with the Government);
- b) If matters that fall within the Assembly of the Republic's reserved legislative responsibility are included (which is, in this case, a probability), the Government will ask the Assembly of the Republic to give its judgement beforehand. In this case, the EU Affairs Committee will intervene from the moment that the abovementioned Government request for judgement is received by the Assembly of the Republic;

- c) If the initiatives are not considered priority, and do not include matters that fall within the Assembly of the Republic's reserved legislative responsibility, the EU Affairs Committee will only intervene if the specialist committee asks it to, in view of the matter in question.

At the time when the answers to this questionnaire were being prepared, the Committee on Constitutional Affairs, Rights, Freedoms and Guarantees had already carried out the scrutiny of COM (2009) 262 "COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL - An area of freedom, security and justice serving the citizen" (Stockholm Programme - Justice and Home Affairs 2010-2015) and the opinion of the abovementioned Committee had already been examined by the EU Affairs Committee, at its meeting on 21 July. Both committees stressed the importance of the initiative and concluded that the subsequent measures of this communication shall be subject to parliamentary scrutiny.

2. *Do you foresee that one or more of your specialised committees will be involved in the process? If so, which one(s), how, and at what stages will their scrutiny be conducted?*

The collaboration of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs, Rights, Freedoms and Guarantees is foreseen, as described in the reply to the previous question.

3. *Do you foresee that any other body in your Parliament/Chamber will be involved in the scrutiny? If so, which one(s), how and at what stage?*

The participation of the Plenary Assembly, during the final scrutiny stage, to approve the final report/opinion or an Assembly of the Republic draft resolution is always possible. It is usually the EU Affairs Committee that decides on the political necessity and opportunity of taking the initiative to the Plenary Assembly. There are two EC initiatives that are taken to the Plenary Assembly, annually, as a legal requirement: the Legislative and Working Programme of the European Commission, and the Annual Political Strategy of the European Commission. Likewise, there are two other situations where (except in cases of special urgency) it is a legal requirement for the initiative to be analysed by the Plenary Assembly:

- a) In cases where scrutiny is based on a Government issued request for preliminary pronouncement, because the matter pending decision at the European institutions falls within the Assembly of the Republic's reserved legislative responsibility;
- b) In cases where, after a European legislative proposal has been scrutinised, the commissions involved in the scrutiny process consider that the principle of subsidiarity has not been respected.

4. *Do you take any specific measures to ensure coordination between the various parliamentary bodies involved in scrutiny?*

The EU Affairs Committee usually plays the role of a pivot in the scrutiny process. The definite steps that are to be developed during each of the processes (which may include joint enquiries, formal requests for an opinion) depend on the matter under analysis.

5. *When designing the scrutiny procedure as described above – have you drawn upon experience gained when scrutinizing the Tampere and/or Hague Programmes? If possible, please specify.*

No. At the time that the Tampere and Hague Programmes were launched, the Portuguese parliament had yet to institutionalize the systematic scrutiny of European affairs, and used to follow a system of informal influence.

6. *Do you think that inter-parliamentary cooperation could contribute to making your scrutiny more efficient? If so, in what form and how?*

Inter-parliamentary cooperation could contribute to making scrutiny more efficient, since exchange of information always has an added value when considering the scrutiny of European initiatives.

In this context, we suggest:

- The scheduling of topics included in the Stockholm Programme at the inter-parliamentary meetings to be held both by the national Parliament of the member state holding the Presidency, and by the European Parliament;
- The selection of some of the Programme's initiatives for the purposes of testing subsidiarity in the context of COSAC;
- The exchange of information about the results of scrutiny processes from each National Parliament, especially through the publication of the respective results on IPEX.

Romania: Camera Deputaților and Senatul

Chapter 1: Transparency of the Parliamentary Scrutiny Process

1. a) Are documents on EU matters that your Parliament/Chamber receives from the EU Institutions and your Government accessible to the public (for example, drafts of European Parliament reports and resolutions, European Parliament amendments and Council common positions in the codecision procedure, preparatory documents for Council working groups and for Coreper and/or the position of your Government)?

Documents from Commission are posted on the web pages of both Chambers.

Agendas and synthesis of the European Parliament works are posted on the Chamber of Deputies – former European Affairs Directorate (Department for Parliamentary Studies and Community Law, in the new organisational chart) web page.

The web page of the Senate's European Affairs Division hosts a list of events at EU level with Romanian participation.

Proposals by the European Commission and reasoned opinions of the national parliaments on subsidiary are posted on the IPEX website. The European Affairs section of the Romanian Senate site comprises the IPEX section and the direct links to the European institutions sites offering to the public the information on the legislative and non-legislative acts of the European institutions. Additionally, the European Affairs section provides short briefings on the inter-parliamentary consultations organized under the EU presidency. European Parliament reports and resolutions, or amendments are available at the Library and the EAC Secretariat in hard copy format.

- b) Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public? If so, please specify at what stage/when and in which language(s)?

The EAC meetings are opened to the press, the EAC members inform their electors in the constituency on EU matters and documents of interest, the EAC participation (MPs or staff) in events organised by other institutions, student visits and stages in the EAC Secretariat. Recently has been created a Department for Parliamentary Studies and European Law in the Chamber of Deputies. The European Law Directorate and the European Affairs Division of the Senate have competencies to better disseminate EU information.

- c) Does your Parliament/Chamber, in general, receive all the necessary documents for transparent and effective scrutiny of EU matters from your Government? If not, please specify.

Yes, on request, in preparation of scrutiny, consultations on European topics on EU presidency agenda, or hearings. National mandates and other relevant documents on the Government's positions are amongst documentation received.

2. Are the documents on EU matters produced by your Parliament/Chamber accessible to the public? If so, please specify which documents. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public?

Not yet. See also point 5

3. Is it possible for the public to be informed through your Parliament/Chamber about the state of play of ongoing negotiations on a specific EU issue, and at what stage/when? If so, please specify.

There is no regular access to the information on the state of play of ongoing negotiations. However, the newsletter which is to be issued by the European Law Directorate (see also point 5) may contain information about the negotiations on a specific EU issue.

4. Are the scrutiny deliberations on EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber open to the public? Can the general public attend the meetings of your Committee on European Affairs, specialised committees and plenary debates directly or watch/listen to them on the TV/radio/Internet?

Participation to the EAC meetings is open at request, to a number of persons adapted to the capacity of the meeting room. There is no TV/radio/internet live broadcasting of EAC debates.

EAC may require the plenary of both Chambers to decide on certain high profile EU proposals. Such debates are open to public and broadcasted on the Parliament's TV channel.

5. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively inform the public about the scrutiny deliberations and their outcome through websites, web streaming, press briefings, news letters etc.?

The release of a newsletter, with information on the current European Union proposals, including those under scrutiny in the Romanian Parliament, is one of the attributes of the new established European Law Directorate. Newsletters will be posted on the web page of the Chamber of Deputies. The first issue of the newsletter is planned for September 2009.

A briefing on the scrutiny deliberations will be delivered by the EAC starting with the next parliamentary session.

Press briefings are being occasionally used.

6. Does your Parliament/Chamber have a section/unit which provides information about the EU to the public? If so, please specify the main tasks of this information section/unit.

Neither of the Chambers have a specialised body to provide specific EU information, but both have public relation units which inform citizens, on request. When questions concern EU matters they will be referred to the competent structure.

7. Are there any ongoing debates or plans in your Parliament/Chamber on ways to make the handling of EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber more transparent?

More debates on the European matters will be planned for the parliamentary sittings of the Chamber of Deputies and of the Senate giving so more transparency to the EU matters due to the greater impact for the citizens when a debate is held in the Chambers as a whole rather than in Committees. For instance, on a proposal of the European Affairs Committee and of the Foreign Affairs Committee, the Standing Bureau of the Chamber of Deputies decided to hold a parliamentary meeting on the second part of September 2009 dedicated to the main priorities of the Swedish Presidency of the EU: climate change and economic and financial crisis.

One of the tasks of the new Department for Parliamentary Studies and European Law is precisely the dissemination to the public of EU information. The Department has a Unit in charge of creating an EU specialized data base. The European Affairs Division of the Senate also has information dissemination competencies.

Chapter 2: Parliamentary Scrutiny of the Stockholm Programme

1. How do you foresee that scrutiny will be conducted in your EU Affairs Committee? At what stages will scrutiny be conducted?

The Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council, COM (2009) 262 – “An area of freedom, security and justice serving the citizen” is planned to be examined by the EAC in October 2009. As a rule, the EAC would try to examine a proposal as early as possible with a view to being able to have a say in all stages, including the negotiations in the working groups / formations of the Council.

2. Do you foresee that one or more of your specialised committees will be involved in the process? If so, which one(s), how, and at what stages will their scrutiny be conducted?

The specialised committees to take part in adopting an opinion on COM (2009) 262 are:

Chamber of Deputies

- Legal Committee on Nominations, Discipline, Immunities and Validations
- Committee on Foreign Affairs
- Committee on Defense, Public Order and National Security
- Committee on Human Rights, Cults and Minorities
- Committee on Equal Chances
- Committee on Education, Science Young People and Sport

Senate

- Legal Committee on Nominations, Discipline, Immunities and Validations
- Committee on Foreign Affairs
- Committee on Defense
- Committee on Human Rights, Cults and Minorities
- Committee on Equal Chances

In the first stage all points of view should be send to the Secretariat for European Affairs Committee, at least one week before the date of the committee’s debate.

Standing committees will be thereafter consulted whenever necessary.

All relevant proposals emanating from the mentioned initiative will follow the regular scrutiny procedure.

Transposition and / or implementation will mainly be dealt with by the specialised committees following the regular procedure for passing national legislation.

Watching over the state of play / follow up of concrete measures including the action plans will be the task of the EAC as it can bring together all main actors to meet either in a debate forum or thematic working groups.

The EAC is already a step ahead in involving the Parliament in a specific topic pertaining to the Stockholm Programme: on April 27, the Standing Bureaus of the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate have approved establishing the Parliamentary Group for fighting the trafficking in human beings. The “Group” has been created as a sub-committee of the EAC, with a view to bringing in valuable initiatives developed at EU level or National Parliaments in member states. The establishment of the “Group” in the Romanian Parliament has been inspired by an initiative of Mr. Anthony STEEN, Chairman of All Party Parliamentary Group for Trafficking of Women and Children Delegation, in the UK Parliament.

3. Do you foresee that any other body in your Parliament/Chamber will be involved in the scrutiny? If so, which one(s), how and at what stage?

The newly created Department for Parliamentary Studies and European Law of the Chamber of Deputies and the European Affairs Division of the Senate will provide some expertise consisting of background notes, impact assessments, etc. in assistance of the debates to be finalised as an opinion of the EAC. The permanent representative of the Chamber of Deputies to the European Parliament will be asked to provide / update information on the course of action of each initiative / proposal.

4. Do you take any specific measures to ensure coordination between the various parliamentary bodies involved in scrutiny?

The coordination will be ensured by the EAC Secretariat. A staff member in all above mentioned bodies will act as contact person. The authors of analysis and points of view may be invited to attend at the meeting to make further clarifications. A joint decision on establishing the tasks will be consensually adopted at the beginning of the autumn parliamentary session.

5. When designing the scrutiny procedure as described above – have you drawn upon experience gained when scrutinizing the Tampere and/or Hague Programmes? If possible, please specify.

Yes. Similar topical matters having been already examined allow building upon a foundation. Otherwise, the scrutiny of the activities related to the Space of freedom, security and justice has the same status and takes place in the same way as the scrutiny of proposals and initiatives in other fields.

6. Do you think that inter-parliamentary cooperation could contribute to making your scrutiny more efficient? If so, in what form and how?

The mechanism of interparliamentary cooperation in the EU, set up starting with the 2004 „Hague Guidelines”, adopted by the Speakers Conference and the COSAC’s own contributions, can and should become instrumental in making the scrutiny more efficient.

Exchanging information on a formal or even an ad-hoc basis either with National Parliaments and the European Parliament may provide useful advice.

Meetings and study trips can be organised by National Parliaments on bilateral or multilateral basis, depending on the availability of funding.

The European Parliament could organize a series of joint meetings with National Parliaments with a view to share possible mutual concerns and get contributions to draft amendments.

We already use information on scrutiny in the web pages of other Parliaments and IPEX.

Slovakia: Národná rada

Chapter 1: Transparency of the Parliamentary Scrutiny Process

1. a) Are documents on EU matters that your Parliament/Chamber receives from the EU Institutions and your Government accessible to the public (for example, drafts of European Parliament reports and resolutions, European Parliament amendments and Council common positions in the codecision procedure, preparatory documents for Council working groups and for Coreper and/or the position of your Government)?

No

- b) Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public? If so, please specify at what stage/when and in which language(s)?

We have the internal database of EU documents + domestic (related) documents and we plan to make it available to public except of national positions to drafts of EU legislation at different stages of legislative process.

- c) Does your Parliament/Chamber, in general, receive all the necessary documents for transparent and effective scrutiny of EU matters from your Government? If not, please specify.

We consider the documents we receive as relevant and adequate. The only problem is sometimes timing (they are sometimes sent later then needed for the purpose of committee work). Based on request we usually receive all demanded supplementary information from the ministries or permanent representation in Brussels. Apart from this source of information we dispose of access to the Council internal database of documents, the so called extranet, where we can search for any relevant document, if available.

2. Are the documents on EU matters produced by your Parliament/Chamber accessible to the public? If so, please specify which documents. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public?

Yes. All resolutions adopted by the committee and minutes of the meetings are accessible to the public.

3. Is it possible for the public to be informed through your Parliament/Chamber about the state of play of ongoing negotiations on a specific EU issue, and at what stage/when? If so, please specify.

Not yet (see answer 1 b)

4. Are the scrutiny deliberations on EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber open to the public? Can the general public attend the meetings of your Committee on European Affairs, specialised committees and plenary debates directly or watch/listen to them on the TV/radio/Internet?

Yes, they are public, unless the Committee on EU affairs decides otherwise. Meetings of other specialised committees as well as plenary meetings concerning the EU matters are public, unless regulated otherwise by the Rules of Procedures. The plenary sessions are also broadcasted on the internet.

5. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively inform the public about the scrutiny deliberations and their outcome through websites, web streaming, press briefings, news letters etc.?

In June 2009 the Committee on EU affairs started to hold press briefings after each committee session (so far 3 press briefings). The above mentioned intranet database will be made available partially to the public.

6. Does your Parliament/Chamber have a section/unit which provides information about the EU to the public? If so, please specify the main tasks of this information section/unit.

There does not exist a special section for this purpose. The unit responsible for communication with media and public shall provide any information concerning the EU if so requested, or the request shall be forwarded to the Department for European Affairs, which shall handle it.

7. Are there any ongoing debates or plans in your Parliament/Chamber on ways to make the handling of EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber more transparent?

Apart from making the mentioned database accessible to the public, there are no special plans for the future concerning the transparency.

Chapter 2: Parliamentary Scrutiny of the Stockholm Programme

1. How do you foresee that scrutiny will be conducted in your EU Affairs Committee? At what stages will scrutiny be conducted?

We do not expect a special scrutiny procedure regarding the scrutiny of the Stockholm programme. The Committee on EU Affairs will examine it within the frame of standard scrutiny procedure, i.e. before it will be adopted by the JHA Council in the end of November/beginning of December; it will hear responsible ministers (Minister for Interior and Minister for Justice) in order to approve the mandate (position) to this programme. The committee shall approve the mandate also for the prime minister before the European Council in December. Afterwards, all action plans, individual legislative proposals and specific measures will be scrutinised through the standard scrutiny procedure.

2. Do you foresee that one or more of your specialised committees will be involved in the process? If so, which one(s), how, and at what stages will their scrutiny be conducted?

We expect that the Stockholm programme will be determined by the Committee on EU Affairs as priority; therefore the relevant sectoral committees (Constitutional and Legal Affairs Committee, Committee on Defence and Security, Committee on Human Rights, Minorities and Status of the Women), will be involved in the scrutiny at different stages

of introduction of the programme, but especially in the phase of individual legislative proposals.

3. Do you foresee that any other body in your Parliament/Chamber will be involved in the scrutiny? If so, which one(s), how and at what stage?

No but there is always possibility for the plenary to deal with this kind of issues.

4. Do you take any specific measures to ensure coordination between the various parliamentary bodies involved in scrutiny?

No

5. When designing the scrutiny procedure as described above – have you drawn upon experience gained when scrutinizing the Tampere and/or Hague Programmes? If possible, please specify.

No in case of Tampere Programme, which was launched before the Slovak Republic joined the EU. The Hague Programme was scrutinised the same way we expect the Stockholm programme will be scrutinised in the future.

6. Do you think that inter-parliamentary cooperation could contribute to making your scrutiny more efficient? If so, in what form and how?

Yes, through the exchange of information on the progress of scrutiny of the Stockholm programme.

Slovenia: Državni zbor

CHAPTER 1: Transparency of the Parliamentary Scrutiny Process

1. a) Are documents on EU matters that your Parliament/Chamber receives from the EU Institutions and your Government accessible to the public (for example, drafts of European Parliament reports and resolutions, European Parliament amendments and Council common positions in the codecision procedure, preparatory documents for Council working groups and for Coreper and/or the position of your Government)?

Documents received by the National Assembly (particularly by the Committee on EU Affairs and the Committee on Foreign Policy) from the Government may be assigned various designations of confidentiality. For example, the Government's positions for General Affairs & External Relations Council (when dealing with external relations questions) and European Council are always confidential. Positions for other configurations of the Council of the EU and draft acts are usually not designated as confidential, yet they are nevertheless discussed at closed meetings of the committee in accordance with Article 7 of the Act on Cooperation between the National Assembly and the Government concerning EU Affairs (Act). These documents are accessible not to the public at large since at the moment they are not published on the website of the National Assembly. However, the media representatives can obtain them in printed form from the the Public Relations Office. At the same time, according to Article 7 of the Act the committee shall inform the public of the decisions taken after the meeting what is done either by the press release published on the website of the National Assembly and sent to the media or by the press conference of the Chair of the committee.

Likewise, documents received from EU institutions, e.g. the Commission, are not designated as confidential but are used for personal / professional purposes only and are thus not accessible to the public - unless they have been already made available on the website of the relevant EU institution.

b) Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public? If so, please specify at what stage/when and in which language(s)?

Documents received from the Government and designated as confidential are not accessible to the general public. After them being discussed by the members of the Committee, as already mentioned above, the expert services prepare press releases that are available on the National Assembly's website (confidential matters excluded) and sent to the media. The English translation of taken positions related to the EU legislative proposals - with no designation of confidentiality - is published only on the IPEX website.

Occasionally, the Government revokes the designation of confidentiality and the document may become accessible to the general public and the media, including the Internet.

c) Does your Parliament/Chamber, in general, receive all the necessary documents for transparent and effective scrutiny of EU matters from your Government? If not, please specify.

The National Assembly receives all documents which - given their subject matter - would normally fall within its competence and which imply e.g. amendments to the legislation.

2. Are the documents on EU matters produced by your Parliament/Chamber accessible to the public? If so, please specify which documents. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public?

Documents prepared by the Committee on EU Affairs are normally discussed at open Committee meetings and are thus available to the public. Meetings dealing with topical EU issues are in fact intended to bring the EU closer to the citizens.

3. Is it possible for the public to be informed through your Parliament/Chamber about the state of play of ongoing negotiations on a specific EU issue, and at what stage/when? If so, please specify.

The Committee on EU Affairs discusses Government's documents at closed meetings. It also discusses Slovenia's negotiating positions which the Government will present within EU institutions and are therefore not accessible to the public. After the meeting, the Chair of the Committee may give a statement but does not specify the subject matter of individual agenda items. Normally, the Committee services prepare a release for the website with the information that a Committee meeting has been held and the relevant agenda.

4. Are the scrutiny deliberations on EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber open to the public? Can the general public attend the meetings of your Committee on European Affairs, specialised committees and plenary debates directly or watch/listen to them on the TV/radio/Internet?

In accordance with Article 7 of the Act, the meetings of the Committee on EU Affairs are usually closed to the public. The same goes for the work of other committees and the plenary when dealing with EU matters. In rare cases, when open for the public, the plenary sessions and working bodies' meetings may be viewed on the Internet or the special parliamentary TV channel. Live TV broadcast of plenary sessions is also provided.

5. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively inform the public about the scrutiny deliberations and their outcome through websites, web streaming, press briefings, news letters etc.?

All activities of the parliament are regularly published on the Internet, and the Public Relations Office issues press releases and organises public statements. Most events are announced in advance. Regarding deliberations on EU matters, they are made public either by press releases sent to the media and published on the website of the National Assembly or occasionally by press conferences of the Chairperson.

6. Does your Parliament/Chamber have a section/unit which provides information about the EU to the public? If so, please specify the main tasks of this information section/unit.

The Public Relations Office is in charge of the National Assembly's public relations. As regards publishing EU affairs, it collaborates with the service of the Committee on EU Affairs which also provides the contents of releases. The Public Relations Office usually forwards such releases to the media.

7. Are there any ongoing debates or plans in your Parliament/Chamber on ways to make the handling of EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber more transparent?

In June 2007, a group of five deputies submitted a formal proposal to amend or delete Article 7 of the Act on Cooperation between the National Assembly and the Government regarding EU Affairs, which provides that all meetings of the Committee on EU Affairs are closed to the public. The Government issued a negative written opinion regarding such proposal.

In February 2009, a similar proposal was presented by another deputy, but the Government again rejected the motion. The purpose of the proposed amendment was to reduce democratic deficit and improve public information regarding EU affairs. The meetings would still be closed to the public when documents designated as "confidential" would be discussed. At the moment, the Act has not been amended so far, but this point is still under discussion.

CHAPTER 2: Parliamentary Scrutiny of the Stockholm Programme

1. How do you foresee that scrutiny will be conducted in your EU Affairs Committee? At what stages will scrutiny be conducted?

The scrutiny will be conducted at the stage when the Government will put forward the proposal to the National Assembly to be scrutinised. Nevertheless, the Committee on EU Affairs has the right according to the Rules of Procedure of the National Assembly to invite the Government to prepare certain proposal which is in its interest to be presented before the Committee on EU Affairs.

The type of scrutiny, however, depends on political will of the members of the Committee on EU Affairs, especially the Chair within the scope of the Rules of Procedure of the National Assembly. However, it has to be emphasised again, that in Slovenia, there is a government-led system of scrutinizing of EU affairs, and particularly in the domain of police and customs cooperation, criminal and civil law cooperation as well as asylum, migration and visa policies.

Following the examples of the previous practise, f. ex. reviewing the Hague Programme, under the initiative of the Chairpersons of the Committee on EU Affairs and the Committee on Domestic Policy, Public Administration and Justice, a joint meeting of both committees might be held to conduct the programme in details.

2. Do you foresee that one or more of your specialised committees will be involved in the process? If so, which one(s), how, and at what stages will their scrutiny be conducted?

The Committee on Domestic Policy, Public Administration and Justice is the working body responsible in this particular process and active in discussing these matters. The Legislative and Legal Service might be asked to prepare special opinion either for the working committee or the responsible committee, i. e. the Committee on EU Affairs.

3. Do you foresee that any other body in your Parliament/Chamber will be involved in the scrutiny? If so, which one(s), how and at what stage?

Taking into account that protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, notably the rights to privacy and non-discrimination, are included in the programme, the Commission for Petitions, Human Rights and Equal Opportunities might discuss it as well.

4. Do you take any specific measures to ensure coordination between the various parliamentary bodies involved in scrutiny?

The Speaker of the House allocates the EU act or matter to the competent body (i.e. the Committee on EU Affairs) and the working body/-ies responsible in the National Assembly.

According to the Rules of Procedure of the National Assembly the final position or opinion is adopted by the Committee on EU Affairs.

Under initiative of the Chairpersons or the members of the Committees the joint meetings might also be held.

5. When designing the scrutiny procedure as described above – have you drawn upon experience gained when scrutinizing the Tampere and/or Hague Programmes? If possible, please specify.

Experiences gained by scrutinizing the Hague Programme are a good basis for the scrutiny procedure. We tried to follow particularly its implementation and legal documents based on this programme. However, due to a plenty of the other work there is still a possibility to improve our practice with the Stockholm Programme and its implementation in the following years.

6. Do you think that inter-parliamentary cooperation could contribute to making your scrutiny more efficient? If so, in what form and how?

In general, it is recognised that the inter-parliamentary cooperation would enhance the scrutiny procedure. Unfortunately, there were not many cases of such cooperation. The National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia has always looked for comparative experiences in EU member states, specially in the domain of police and customs cooperation, criminal and civil law cooperation as well as asylum, migration and visa policies, which are of interest to every citizen in Europe.

The Swedish Presidency might bring forward some new forms of co-operation to make the scrutiny of these matters more efficient and transparent.

Slovenia: Državni svet

Chapter 1: Transparency of the Parliamentary Scrutiny Process

1. a) Are documents on EU matters that your Parliament/Chamber receives from the EU Institutions and your Government accessible to the public (for example, drafts of European Parliament reports and resolutions, European Parliament amendments and Council common positions in the codecision procedure, preparatory documents for Council working groups and for Coreper and/or the position of your Government)?

Yes, the documents on EU matters that the National Council deals with are generally accessible to the public when they are put on the agenda for the sessions of the National Council or the sessions of its working bodies.

- b) Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public? If so, please specify at what stage/when and in which language(s)?

The National Council makes the document available to the public when it puts them on the agenda for the sessions of the National Council or its working bodies. After the document is dealt with also the opinion on it and the record about the session is made public.

- c) Does your Parliament/Chamber, in general, receive all the necessary documents for transparent and effective scrutiny of EU matters from your Government? If not, please specify.

Yes it does. After the Government submits the EU matters to the National Assembly its president sends it to the National Council to debate, there the competent working body of National Council deals with it and summons the debate and conclusions in the public opinion.

2. Are the documents on EU matters produced by your Parliament/Chamber accessible to the public? If so, please specify which documents. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public?

Yes they are. After dealing with the EU matters the conclusions are made public by publication of the opinions and reports of the sessions of the National council and its working bodies.

3. Is it possible for the public to be informed through your Parliament/Chamber about the state of play of ongoing negotiations on a specific EU issue, and at what stage/when? If so, please specify.

Yes. The National Council ensures that the public is informed of its work by providing the media with prompt information which is made available through press releases, news of forthcoming events, press conferences, and online access to news of forthcoming sessions of the National Council and its working bodies. Relevant material is made available and there are other forms of cooperation with the media and the public, as well as a range of publication-related activities.

4. Are the scrutiny deliberations on EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber open to the public? Can the general public attend the meetings of your Committee on European Affairs, specialised committees and plenary debates directly or watch/listen to them on the TV/radio/Internet?

The work of the National Council and its working bodies is open to the public. Public access may only be restricted or removed if the National Council or a working body so decides. The public nature of the National Council's work is also ensured through media coverage; all material is made available to the media (except for material of a confidential nature) relating to sessions of the National Council and its working bodies. The public is also notified of work and events at the National Council through press conferences, reports, statements, website and the National Council Gazette. Press conferences may be called by the President on behalf of the National Council, and by committee chairmen and heads of interest groups on behalf of that committee or interest group.

5. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively inform the public about the scrutiny deliberations and their outcome through websites, web streaming, press briefings, news letters etc.?

Yes. The matters that will be dealt with and that has been dealt with are made available through press releases, news of forthcoming events, press conferences, and online access to news of forthcoming sessions of the National Council and its working bodies. Relevant material is made available and there are other forms of cooperation with the media and the public, as well as a range of publication-related activities.

6. Does your Parliament/Chamber have a section/unit which provides information about the EU to the public? If so, please specify the main tasks of this information section/unit.

It does not have a special section which provides information about the EU to the public, all the relevant information about the work of National Council and its working bodies are made public by the Information and Public Relations Advisor of the National Council.

7. Are there any ongoing debates or plans in your Parliament/Chamber on ways to make the handling of EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber more transparent?

At the moment there is no concrete actions planed to make the handling of the EU matters in our Chamber more transparent, but the National Council is aware of the importance of the transparency and is trying to improve the accessibility of the relevant information.

Chapter 2: Parliamentary Scrutiny of the Stockholm Programme

1. How do you foresee that scrutiny will be conducted in your EU Affairs Committee? At what stages will scrutiny be conducted?

The scrutiny will be conducted in an ordinary procedure in the Commission for International Relations and European Affairs and Commission for State Organization.

2. Do you foresee that one or more of your specialized committees will be involved in the process? If so, which one(s), how, and at what stages will their scrutiny be conducted?

Yes, the Commission for International Relations and European Affairs and Commission for State Organization will be involved in the process.

3. Do you foresee that any other body in your Parliament/Chamber will be involved in the scrutiny? If so, which one(s), how and at what stage?

No, at the moment only the Commission for International Relations and European Affairs and Commission for State Organization are predicted to be involved in the scrutiny.

4. Do you take any specific measures to ensure coordination between the various parliamentary bodies involved in scrutiny?

No, there are no special measures to ensure coordination between the various parliamentary bodies in the scrutiny.

5. When designing the scrutiny procedure as described above – have you drawn upon experience gained when scrutinizing the Tampere and/or Hague Programmes? If possible, please specify.

Yes, we have taken into account the gained experience from scrutinizing Tampere and Haag program and predicted the same kind of procedure.

6. Do you think that inter-parliamentary cooperation could contribute to making your scrutiny more efficient? If so, in what form and how?

In our opinion the inter-parliamentary cooperation can contribute substantially to the efficiency of the scrutiny, by sharing gained experience and opinions and making joint actions towards reaching the most effective procedures.

Spain: Cortes Generales

Chapter 1: Transparency of the Parliamentary Scrutiny Process

1. a) Are documents on EU matters that your Parliament/Chamber receives from the EU Institutions and your Government accessible to the public (for example, drafts of European Parliament reports and resolutions, European Parliament amendments and Council common positions in the codecision procedure, preparatory documents for Council working groups and for Coreper and/or the position of your Government)?

No, the Spanish Cortes does not make the mentioned documents available to the public, as these documents are produced by a third party.

- b) Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public? If so, please specify at what stage/when and in which language(s)?

No, the Spanish Cortes does not make these documents available to the public.

- c) Does your Parliament/Chamber, in general, receive all the necessary documents for transparent and effective scrutiny of EU matters from your Government? If not, please specify.

2. Are the documents on EU matters produced by your Parliament/Chamber accessible to the public? If so, please specify which documents. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public?

All resolutions approved by the Joint EU Commission are duly published in the Official Journal of the Cortes, as well as the debates related to these resolutions.

The Official Journal of the Cortes is available free of charge on the websites of the Congress of Deputies and of the Senate.

3. Is it possible for the public to be informed through your Parliament/Chamber about the state of play of ongoing negotiations on a specific EU issue, and at what stage/when? If so, please specify.

Please be aware that the National Government is empowered by the Constitution to conduct all international and European negotiations and that the Cortes does not take part in these negotiations.

4. Are the scrutiny deliberations on EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber open to the public? Can the general public attend the meetings of your Committee on European Affairs, specialised committees and plenary debates directly or watch/listen to them on the TV/radio/Internet?

According to the Rules of Procedure applicable to the Joint EU Committee, "Committee meetings shall not be public. However, they may be attended by duly accredited representatives of the media, except when they are secret". Committee meetings shall be

secret when so decided by the overall majority of their members, in the initiative of the Chair, the Government, two parliamentary groups or one-fifth of their members. It is extremely rare for the Joint Committee to hold secret sessions.

5. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively inform the public about the scrutiny deliberations and their outcome through websites, web streaming, press briefings, news letters etc.?

All proceedings of the Joint Committee are made available to the public through the Official Journal, as well as through webstreaming. Both can be accessed through the Congress website (www.congreso.es).

6. Does your Parliament/Chamber have a section/unit which provides information about the EU to the public? If so, please specify the main tasks of this information section/unit.

The public information unit has not identified any specific demand to Parliament from the public on the subject.

7. Are there any ongoing debates or plans in your Parliament/Chamber on ways to make the handling of EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber more transparent?

There are no ongoing debates on the matter.

Chapter 2: Parliamentary Scrutiny of the Stockholm Programme

Please bear in mind that the Cortes has no plans, at the present moment, to scrutinise the Stockholm Program.

1. How do you foresee that scrutiny will be conducted in your EU Affairs Committee? At what stages will scrutiny be conducted?
2. Do you foresee that one or more of your specialised committees will be involved in the process? If so, which one(s), how, and at what stages will their scrutiny be conducted?
3. Do you foresee that any other body in your Parliament/Chamber will be involved in the scrutiny? If so, which one(s), how and at what stage?
4. Do you take any specific measures to ensure coordination between the various parliamentary bodies involved in scrutiny?
5. When designing the scrutiny procedure as described above – have you drawn upon experience gained when scrutinizing the Tampere and/or Hague Programmes? If possible, please specify.
6. Do you think that inter-parliamentary cooperation could contribute to making your scrutiny more efficient? If so, in what form and how?

Sweden: Riksdag

Chapter 1: Transparency of the Parliamentary Scrutiny Process

1. a) Are documents on EU matters that your Parliament/Chamber receives from the EU Institutions and your Government accessible to the public (for example, drafts of European Parliament reports and resolutions, European Parliament amendments and Council common positions in the co-decision procedure, preparatory documents for Council working groups and for Coreper and/or the position of your Government)?

All documents on EU matters received from the Government Offices are in principle public documents. If such a document contains information which is considered secret in accordance with Swedish Secrecy Act, the documents will be treated as wholly or partially secret, i.e. not accessible to the general public. The Riksdag decides whether the Secrecy Act is applicable. Examples of public documents:

- **Explanatory memoranda containing, among other things, an assessment of the subsidiarity and proportionality principle and a preliminary position of the Government regarding a Commission initiative or a Council document (presented within five weeks of adoption);**
- **Annotated agendas presented before the Council meetings;**
- **Memoranda on certain EU matters can contain Council common positions or positions of the Government and;**
- **Reports, drafted by the Government Offices, from Council meetings.**
- **Documents from the EU institutions distributed via the Government Offices**

Documents received directly from the EU Institutions, such as Commission initiatives or annual reports from any of the EU Institutions, received by the secretariat of the Chamber, are public and always accessible in their entirety.

- b) Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public? If so, please specify at what stage/when and in which language(s)?

Explanatory memoranda from the Government Offices are published on the Riksdag's website (henceforth *website*) when they are referred to one of the 15 committees.

Some documents which the Government Offices produce and submit to the specialised committees before deliberations are made available on the website after the meetings.

All documents which the Government Offices produce and submit to the Committee on EU Affairs are made available on the website before the meetings of the Committee provided they do not contain any secret information. Documents always made available include annotated agendas, and explanatory memoranda on items to be treated at the upcoming session.

Whenever possible, documents are made available in Swedish. Many documents originating from the institutions are, however, available only in English.

c) Does your Parliament/Chamber, in general, receive all the necessary documents for transparent and effective scrutiny of EU matters from your Government? If not, please specify.

Yes, in general. Sometimes there is a discussion on whether a certain document - often still under negotiation – is needed for scrutiny by the Riksdag. A solution is normally reached. Either the document in question is submitted to the Riksdag (and often considered wholly or partially secret) or the relevant information is made available to the Riksdag in another form.

When documents are not available in Swedish, the English version is normally used. It is a strong wish of the members to receive all relevant documents in Swedish. An unofficial Swedish translation of a document a committee is to examine more closely may be provided if requested by the members.

2. Are the documents on EU matters produced by your Parliament/Chamber accessible to the public? If so, please specify which documents. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public?

All written statements and reports from the specialised committees are published on the website. Sometimes a related press release is published.

After a meeting of the Chamber, the proceedings can be read in a preliminary record on the website the next day. After two to four weeks, the final, approved record is published.

Records from meetings in specialised committees as well as records and stenographic notes of the consultations with the ministers in the Committee on EU Affairs are published on the website when they are approved.

Also, written statements or summaries of written statements and records from meetings in specialised committees are translated into English and published on the IPEX website.

3. Is it possible for the public to be informed through your Parliament/Chamber about the state of play of ongoing negotiations on a specific EU issue, and at what stage/when? If so, please specify.

Records from deliberations with Government representatives in the specialised committees are in general immediately approved and available to the public. These records normally show the Government's position as well as the position of the committee including dissenting opinions. These deliberations can occur at any stage in the process. Stenographic records of the meetings of the Committee on EU Affairs are approved two weeks after the meeting and published on the website. The discussion reflected in the stenographic record often provides a good picture of the negotiations going on in the Council and between the institutions.

4. Are the scrutiny deliberations on EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber open to the public? Can the general public attend the meetings of your Committee on European Affairs, specialised committees and plenary debates directly or watch/listen to them on the TV/radio/Internet?

All debates or deliberations in the Chamber are open to the public and broadcast on the Internet and sometimes on national TV. The Prime Minister reports back to the

Riksdag, in the Chamber, on the outcome of the issues dealt with in the European Council. Specially arranged debates on EU matters also take place in the Chamber, for example an annual debate on the Commission's annual policy strategy.

The committees arrange public hearings and these hearings can sometimes be on EU matters. The public hearings are broadcast on the Internet, and sometimes on national TV.

Deliberations with Government representatives in specialised committees and consultations with Government representatives in the Committee on EU Affairs are as a rule not open to the public. However, when it comes to deliberations on EU matters in specialised committees and consultations in the Committee on EU Affairs, it has been possible since 2007 for the committees to decide in certain cases to have these deliberations in public. In practice no such decision has yet been taken by any of the specialised committees.

The Prime Minister consults the Committee on EU Affairs on the issues to be dealt with in the European Council. These consultations are normally open to the public and broadcast on the Internet and sometimes on national TV.

5. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively inform the public about the scrutiny deliberations and their outcome through websites, web streaming, press briefings, news letters etc.?

Information about upcoming activities in the committees or in the chamber is available on the website. Other information to the public includes:

- **Announcements in the larger newspapers before certain debates in the Chamber, for example when the Prime Minister reports back to the Riksdag about the outcome of the European Council, or before public hearings in the committees.**
- **Decisions in brief or short summaries of parliamentary decisions are presented in both printed and electronic form a few minutes after the vote in the Chamber. Sometimes these are also translated into English.**
- **All webcasts are available in an archive on the website.**
- **Press releases are published before and after all consultations in the Committee on EU Affairs. The press releases after the meetings are translated into English.**
- **The committees can also decide to hold press briefings on specific matters.**

6. Does your Parliament/Chamber have a section/unit which provides information about the EU to the public? If so, please specify the main tasks of this information section/unit.
The Riksdag's Communications Division is responsible for promoting increased openness and access to information and for providing factual background material about the Riksdag, its work and the EU. The EU Information Centre is a department in the Communications Division.

The EU Information Centre is entrusted by the Riksdag to provide the public with politically impartial information about the EU and Swedish membership of the EU. The EU Information Centre aims to meet the information needs of the public and to be accessible from anywhere in Sweden. The information the EU Information Centre provides should also be adapted to a Swedish perspective.

The EU Information Centre has four areas of activity: inquiry service, web information, printed information and courses and training programmes for information providers.

7. Are there any ongoing debates or plans in your Parliament/Chamber on ways to make the handling of EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber more transparent?

There is no formal inquiry specifically focussed on this question, but an evaluation of the recent reform of the work with EU matters in the Riksdag has just started. One purpose of the reform – which came into force in 2007 – was to increase openness on the handling of EU matters in the Riksdag. The above-mentioned possibility to hold deliberations between the government and the committees in public was introduced. Furthermore, more debates related to EU matters are to be held in the Chamber. One example is the annual debate in plenary on the APS.

Chapter 2: Parliamentary Scrutiny of the Stockholm Programme

1. How do you foresee that scrutiny will be conducted in your EU Affairs Committee? At what stages will scrutiny be conducted?

Consultations will be held prior to each Council meeting (and, if applicable, European Council) at which any aspect of the Stockholm Programme or any measure stemming from it is taken up. The consultations will be based on documentation submitted by the Government and conducted by the relevant minister who will report the issue and the position proposed by the Government. The Committee on EU Affairs will consider the proposed position and decide on a mandate for the negotiations. The mandate is not legally binding for the Government but, based on parliamentary principles, the minister is expected to follow it. If he or she fails to do so without good reason, the Riksdag may take action to criticise or, ultimately, in the form of a vote of no confidence.

2. Do you foresee that one or more of your specialised committees will be involved in the process? If so, which one(s), how, and at what stages will their scrutiny be conducted?
- The communication on the future Programme has, following a decision by the Speaker, been referred by the Chamber to the Committee on Justice. The Committee will examine the document at two meetings, late in August and at the beginning of September. There is no right to submit private members' motions in relation to this document. The Committee on the Constitution, the Committee on Civil Affairs and the Committee on Social Insurance have been given the opportunity to submit a written statement of opinion on the parts of the Stockholm Programme that concern their areas of responsibility.**

The Committee on Justice will report to the Chamber on its examination of the document in a statement, including the written statements of opinion from the other committees referred to above. All members of parliament will have the opportunity of taking part in the debate in the Chamber. It is possible for the Chamber to vote on alternative formulations in the statement. It is, however, not possible for the statement to contain any proposals for an announcement.

A summary of the statement will be translated into English and published on the

IPEX website.

Furthermore, the specialised committees have the right to request formal deliberations with Government representatives – normally the particular minister responsible - on all the various legislative and other measures that will stem from the Stockholm Programme within their areas of responsibility. Such deliberations can be repeated at different stages of the negotiations. They result in the Committee taking a position which is noted in the record of the Committee. The position of the Committee is not binding for the Government but will be noted as an important element in the EU Committee when the matter is taken up before a Council meeting.

Later on, after the Stockholm Programme has been decided upon, the legislative proposals that emanate from the programme will also be considered by one of the 15 parliamentary committees before a decision is taken in the Chamber.

3. Do you foresee that any other body in your Parliament/Chamber will be involved in the scrutiny? If so, which one(s), how and at what stage?
Please see above. In addition to this, the Secretariat of the Chamber was involved in preparation for the Speaker’s decision when the Chamber referred the communication to the Committee on Justice. A debate is foreseen when the committee statement is presented to the Chamber. Finally, the Secretariat of the Chamber will distribute the committee statement to the Government Offices and the EU Commission.
4. Do you take any specific measures to ensure coordination between the various parliamentary bodies involved in scrutiny?
No measures that are specific for the Stockholm Programme. However, members and alternates of the Committee on EU Affairs are always also members of one or more specialised committees and will attempt to serve on the Committee on EU Affairs when matters from “their” specialised committee are on the agenda. This facilitates that action in the Committee on EU Affairs and in the specialised Committees is well coordinated, as does the fact that members of staff from the Secretariat of the Committee on EU Affairs attend meetings of specialised committees and vice versa.
5. When designing the scrutiny procedure as described above – have you drawn upon experience gained when scrutinizing the Tampere and/or Hague Programmes? If possible, please specify.
The scrutiny procedure in the Riksdag has changed since the previous Programmes were adopted; most importantly the role and responsibilities of the specialised committees have been emphasised. No experience can therefore be drawn from previous scrutiny. However, if certain parts of the Stockholm Programme result in legislative proposals, such as framework decisions or the like, these proposals will be considered in due course by one of the specialised committees. Without the Lisbon Treaty the procedure will be of the same kind as when legislative proposals resulting from the Tampere and Hague Programmes were considered.
6. Do you think that inter-parliamentary cooperation could contribute to making your scrutiny more efficient? If so, in what form and how?

- **Exchange of information between national parliaments through the IPEX website as early on as possible.**
- **Personal contacts such as political discussions in interparliamentary meetings and exchange of information between national representatives in Brussels could also give added value.**

The Committee on Justice will host an interparliamentary meeting on 11-12 October at the Riksdag. The theme of the meeting is “a balanced approach to legal security and combating organised crime, with special focus on trafficking for sexual purposes”. The balance between legal security and combating organised crime is one of the issues in the Stockholm Programme. The Committee on Justice finds it useful to consider the subject from a parliamentary point of view together with representatives from other national parliaments.

To follow up the EU Speakers Conference in February, the Swedish Riksdag together with the European Parliament have decided to hold a Joint Parliamentary Meeting in Brussels on the Stockholm Programme. Members of the European Parliament as well as national parliaments will then be able to exchange views on the subject.

Preparing these two meetings has been an opportunity for the Riksdag to become acquainted with the Stockholm Programme already at an early stage. The experiences will be useful in the coming scrutiny process.

//This response is prepared by officials and must not be understood as in any way representing an official view of the Riksdag.//

United Kingdom: House of Commons

Chapter 1: Transparency of the Parliamentary Scrutiny Process

1. a) Are documents on EU matters that your Parliament/Chamber receives from the EU Institutions and your Government accessible to the public (for example, drafts of European Parliament reports and resolutions, European Parliament amendments and Council common positions in the codecision procedure, preparatory documents for Council working groups and for Coreper and/or the position of your Government)?
 - b) Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public? If so, please specify at what stage/when and in which language(s)?
 - c) Does your Parliament/Chamber, in general, receive all the necessary documents for transparent and effective scrutiny of EU matters from your Government? If not, please specify.

All documents sent to the House of Commons by the EU institutions are available to the public on request from the European Scrutiny Committee or the Library of the House.

The Government deposits in the House of Commons the documents specified in the Standing Order of the House (SO No 143). For example Commission Communications or legislative proposals or European Court of Auditors' reports. It provides the European Scrutiny Committee with an Explanatory Memorandum (EM) on all deposited documents. The EM summarises the document and explains the Government's views on it. Further information may be provided by the Government, either on its own initiative or at the request of the Committee, in a Supplementary EM, by letter or in oral evidence.

All EMs and Supplementary EMs are available to the public on the Government's website and copies are available on request from the European Scrutiny Committee. The Committee makes all letters from Ministers publicly available on its web-site. Oral evidence is given in public and anyone may be present in the Committee room to hear it.

Transcripts of debates in the European Committees on documents which have been referred to them by the European Scrutiny Committee are published the following day and are available on the parliamentary website.

All the documents mentioned above are made publicly available in English.

With one exception, the European Scrutiny receives all the documents necessary for the proper scrutiny of EU matters by the House of Commons. The exception is the draft of Council and European Council Conclusions. The Government considers itself prohibited from making the drafts of Conclusions publicly available because they are marked LIMITE.

2. Are the documents on EU matters produced by your Parliament/Chamber accessible to the public? If so, please specify which documents. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public?

See answer to 1(b) above.

3. Is it possible for the public to be informed through your Parliament/Chamber about the state of play of ongoing negotiations on a specific EU issue, and at what stage/when? If so, please specify.

Departmental Ministers provide parliament with statements giving accounts of Council proceedings. These provide an indication of where discussion on a particular item stands.

If a member of the public asked the European Scrutiny Committee about the negotiations on an EU issue, the staff would provide as much information as was available to the Committee. The staff would also advise the enquirer to ask the responsible Government Department about the negotiations and would provide contact details.

4. Are the scrutiny deliberations on EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber open to the public? Can the general public attend the meetings of your Committee on European Affairs, specialised committees and plenary debates directly or watch/listen to them on the TV/radio/Internet?

All scrutiny of EU matters on the Floor of the House of Commons, in Westminster Hall and in the three European Committees is open to the public. Meetings of the European Scrutiny Committee and other select committees of the House are open to the public when taking oral evidence but not when deliberating.

5. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively inform the public about the scrutiny deliberations and their outcome through websites, web streaming, press briefings, news letters etc.?

The European Scrutiny Committee scrutinises every deposited EU document and publishes weekly reports on the outcome of its scrutiny. Hard copies of the reports may be purchased. All the reports are available on the Committee's website and may be downloaded without charge. The Committee issues Press Notices about forthcoming evidence sessions and about reports of special interest.

6. Does your Parliament/Chamber have a section/unit which provides information about the EU to the public? If so, please specify the main tasks of this information section/unit.

The House of Commons does not have a unit dedicated to providing the public with information about the EU.

The European Scrutiny Committee has produced a guide to "The European Scrutiny System in the House of Commons" and another on "European institutions and legislation". Both documents are available on the Committee's web-site and hard copies are provided on request at no charge. In addition, the Library of the House of Commons produces information sheets on selected EU subjects from time to time and they are available to the public at no charge.

7. Are there any ongoing debates or plans in your Parliament/Chamber on ways to make the handling of EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber more transparent?

Only as part of routine reviews of ways to improve the process of handling Community matters more effectively.

Chapter 2: Parliamentary Scrutiny of the Stockholm Programme

1. How do you foresee that scrutiny will be conducted in your EU Affairs Committee? At what stages will scrutiny be conducted?

On 8 July 2009, the European Scrutiny Committee considered both the Commission's Communication on the implementation of the Hague Programme (10953/09) and its Communication contributing to the development of the Stockholm Programme (11060/09).

The European Scrutiny Committee has asked the Government for written progress reports on the negotiations. In the light of the progress reports, the Committee may decide to ask the Minister to give oral evidence to it before the JHA Council's meeting at the end of November 2009.

2. Do you foresee that one or more of your specialised committees will be involved in the process? If so, which one(s), how, and at what stages will their scrutiny be conducted?

The Home Affairs Committee of the House (which is concerned with immigration, asylum, crime and terrorism) may decide to take evidence from the Government or anyone else about aspects of the Stockholm Programme either before it is approved or before the Action Plan is agreed. Similarly, the Justice Committee might wish to take evidence on aspects of the proposals.

3. Do you foresee that any other body in your Parliament/Chamber will be involved in the scrutiny? If so, which one(s), how and at what stage?

The European Scrutiny Committee has recommended that the Communication on the Stockholm Programme should be debated in the European Committee of the House in October. Any Member of the House may attend and speak in the debate, which will be open to the public. For up to an hour and a half, the Minister will answer Members' questions about the Commission's proposals, the progress of the negotiations and the Government's views on the contents of the Programme. There will then be a debate about the document.

The Foreign Affairs Committee (FAC) of the House will take oral evidence from the Foreign Secretary shortly before the meeting of the European Council in December. It is probable that the FAC will ask the Foreign Secretary questions about the position the Government will take at the European Council's discussion of the Stockholm Programme.

After the meeting of the European Council, the Prime Minister will appear before the House to make a statement about the outcome of the European Council's meeting and to answer Members' questions about any aspect of it, including the Stockholm Programme

4. Do you take any specific measures to ensure coordination between the various parliamentary bodies involved in scrutiny?

Each select committee of the House controls its own agenda and their EU work is not coordinated by the European Scrutiny Committee or anyone else. The European Scrutiny Committee does have the power to request an opinion on a European document from departmental select committees; it uses this power sparingly.

5. When designing the scrutiny procedure as described above – have you drawn upon experience gained when scrutinizing the Tampere and/or Hague Programmes? If possible, please specify.

In considering the Commission's Communications on 8 July, the European Scrutiny Committee was able to draw on its experience of scrutinising the Tampere and Hague Programmes and the subsequent legislation to give effect to them. It will continue to draw on that experience throughout its scrutiny of the Stockholm Programme.

6. Do you think that inter-parliamentary cooperation could contribute to making your scrutiny more efficient? If so, in what form and how?

Inter-parliamentary cooperation has a role to play, however, the focus of the European Scrutiny Committee's scrutiny remains the actions of UK Ministers in the Council.

United Kingdom: House of Lords

Chapter 1: Transparency of the Parliamentary Scrutiny Process

1. a) Are documents on EU matters that your Parliament/Chamber receives from the EU Institutions and your Government accessible to the public (for example, drafts of European Parliament reports and resolutions, European Parliament amendments and Council common positions in the codecision procedure, preparatory documents for Council working groups and for Coreper and/or the position of your Government)?

The Government deposits a large number of European documents for parliamentary scrutiny. These are already in the public domain and are not published by us.

Every European document deposited by the Government for scrutiny is accompanied by an explanatory memorandum from the Government. The Government itself makes these available to all online. Parliament does not publish them.

We do receive other documents directly from the Institutions (for example, parliamentary reports). Again, these are almost always publicly available already. In general we do not reproduce these. However, where extensive reference is made to such a document in a report, we may well include it as an annex.

- b) Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public? If so, please specify at what stage/when and in which language(s)?

See above. In short, we rarely make these documents available ourselves as they are usually already in the public domain.

- c) Does your Parliament/Chamber, in general, receive all the necessary documents for transparent and effective scrutiny of EU matters from your Government? If not, please specify.

Our recent report on codecision and national parliamentary scrutiny looked at this in detail. The report can be read on the Committee's webpage: http://www.parliament.uk/parliamentary_committees/lords_eu_select_committee.cfm.

The report concluded that there are occasions where Parliament is not provided with the right documents to enable us to scrutinise legislative proposals effectively.

A particular category of document which the report regretted that we do not receive is those marked LIMITE. The report concluded that there is nothing in the Council's rules of procedure to prevent these being provided to national parliaments.

2. Are the documents on EU matters produced by your Parliament/Chamber accessible to the public? If so, please specify which documents. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public?

Reports from the Committee are published in hard copy and made available free of charge on the internet.

Correspondence between the Committee and Government Ministers is placed on the website and published periodically in hard copy.

Most of our reports are accompanied by press notices. On occasion the Committee has held press conferences to coincide with the publication of a report.

3. Is it possible for the public to be informed through your Parliament/Chamber about the state of play of ongoing negotiations on a specific EU issue, and at what stage/when? If so, please specify.

Our scrutiny correspondence and reports include information on the progress of negotiations. However, the Lords is not in a position to, and does not, inform the public systematically about the progress of negotiations.

4. Are the scrutiny deliberations on EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber open to the public? Can the general public attend the meetings of your Committee on European Affairs, specialised committees and plenary debates directly or watch/listen to them on the TV/radio/Internet?

Meetings of the Committee where formal evidence is taken are open to the public and audio webcast. Some meetings are also video webcast.

Deliberative meetings of the Committee, where members discuss dossiers with each other and their staff, are not open to the public.

Plenary debates on Committee reports are open to the public and video webcast.

5. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively inform the public about the scrutiny deliberations and their outcome through websites, web streaming, press briefings, news letters etc.?

The agenda of the House, including public sessions of committees and debates in Plenary on committee reports, is published in advance in hard copy (in a number of formats) and on the internet. The Committee's monthly newsletter draws attention to reports that will be published. On occasion it also draws attention to future debates or evidence sessions.

The Committee's fortnightly publication, Progress of Scrutiny, tracks Committee actions on individual dossiers.

6. Does your Parliament/Chamber have a section/unit which provides information about the EU to the public? If so, please specify the main tasks of this information section/unit.

No.

7. Are there any ongoing debates or plans in your Parliament/Chamber on ways to make the handling of EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber more transparent?

This is a matter which the EU Select Committee keeps under constant review. There are no formal proposals at present.

Chapter 2: Parliamentary Scrutiny of the Stockholm Programme

1. How do you foresee that scrutiny will be conducted in your EU Affairs Committee? At what stages will scrutiny be conducted?

The House of Lords European Union Committee invited the Swedish Ambassador to the UK to give oral evidence on the Swedish Presidency. Questions on the Stockholm Programme were put to him.

2. Do you foresee that one or more of your specialised committees will be involved in the process? If so, which one(s), how, and at what stages will their scrutiny be conducted?

The EU Committee has a number of sub-committees. One of these specialises in justice and another in home affairs. They are scrutinising the Commission Communication (Council document 11060/09).

The Home Affairs Sub-Committee will be inviting a Home Office Minister to give evidence on the home affairs aspects of the Programme as set out in the Commission Communication.

When the Programme gives rise to specific legislative proposals, these too will be scrutinised by the Sub-Committee into whose remit the proposal falls.

3. Do you foresee that any other body in your Parliament/Chamber will be involved in the scrutiny? If so, which one(s), how and at what stage?

At the legislative stage no other body will be involved in the Lords. See the response from the House of Commons for details of their approach.

4. Do you take any specific measures to ensure coordination between the various parliamentary bodies involved in scrutiny?

The two sub-committees mentioned above are in constant contact, and liaise closely with the House of Commons Committee.

5. When designing the scrutiny procedure as described above – have you drawn upon experience gained when scrutinizing the Tampere and/or Hague Programmes? If possible, please specify.

The scrutiny procedure is the same as that operated for all EU legislative proposals.

When the Hague Programme was published, the same two Sub-Committees prepared a joint report:

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200405/ldselect/ldeucom/84/84.pdf>

In addition, some of the specific proposals in both the Tampere and Hague Programmes have been the subject of full inquiries.

6. Do you think that inter-parliamentary cooperation could contribute to making your scrutiny more efficient? If so, in what form and how?

We already liaise with the European Parliament and other national parliaments, chiefly through our Liaison Officer in Brussels. The views of other parliaments are of great value to us – and we hope ours are to them.

We are keen to ensure that there is always value added by interparliamentary cooperation. This is particularly so where meetings of members or staff are arranged as these are expensive.

European Parliament

Chapter 1: Transparency of the Parliamentary Scrutiny Process

1. a) Are documents on EU matters that your Parliament/Chamber receives from the EU Institutions and your Government accessible to the public (for example, drafts of European Parliament reports and resolutions, European Parliament amendments and Council common positions in the codecision procedure, preparatory documents for Council working groups and for Coreper and/or the position of your Government)?

Upon receiving the Commission's proposal, the President of the EP names the parliamentary committee in charge of the file, as well as any other committees whose opinions might be relevant. All formal documents drawn up in the course of committee debates are made public. The Parliament does not officially receive preliminary working group or Council documents.

Concerning the inter-institutional setting from the specific External Policy point of view, it can be noted that in addition to the 1999 (revised 2005) "Framework Agreement on Relations between the EP and the Commission", two other are relevant to DG EXPO Committees: namely, "Framework Agreement on Relations between the EP and the Commission" dated 6 May 1999 (and revised and updated on 12th May 2005), the "Inter-institutional Agreement between the EP and the Council concerning access by the EP to sensitive information of the Council in the field of security and defence" of 20th November 2002 and the "Inter-institutional Agreement between the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission on budgetary discipline and sound financial management" of 17 May 2006 including the procedures for the scrutiny of CFSP and preparation of the adoption of the annual CFSP budget.

The exchange of documents between national parliaments/governments and the EXPO Committees has rarely happened outside the meetings held together with the national parliaments.

- b) Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public? If so, please specify at what stage/when and in which language(s)?

The European Parliament has its own public register of documents and has been issuing annual reports on the access of documents through it since 2001. In 2007 a new feature was added to the EP website in addition to the public register, giving the public direct access to parliamentary committee documents by procedure, committee or document type. Moreover, the EP Legislative Observatory (Oeil) provides access to summaries of every stage of the decision-making procedures in which the EP is*

* The provisions of the Regulation 1049/2001 contain limitations of public access to documents whose disclosure could significantly undermine public security, monetary stability, defense and military matters or EU foreign policy interests, individual privacy and certain aspects of commercial secrecy that have to be balanced against private or public interest.

involved and links to the documents drawn up by Community institutions and bodies within the context of a given procedure.

c) Does your Parliament/Chamber, in general, receive all the necessary documents for transparent and effective scrutiny of EU matters from your Government? If not, please specify.

Not applicable.

2. Are the documents on EU matters produced by your Parliament/Chamber accessible to the public? If so, please specify which documents. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively make such documents available to the public?

See 1a and 1b.

3. Is it possible for the public to be informed through your Parliament/Chamber about the state of play of ongoing negotiations on a specific EU issue, and at what stage/when? If so, please specify.

There is regular coverage both by the EP's own media services and by the media themselves on ongoing negotiations between the three institutions. The documents mentioned under question 1 are available.

4. Are the scrutiny deliberations on EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber open to the public? Can the general public attend the meetings of your Committee on European Affairs, specialised committees and plenary debates directly or watch/listen to them on the TV/radio/Internet?

Not directly applicable. EP committee meetings are generally public. They are in camera only in exceptional cases. There are also instances of TV or radio coverage, depending on the interest of certain files.

5. Does your Parliament/Chamber actively inform the public about the scrutiny deliberations and their outcome through websites, web streaming, press briefings, news letters etc.?

Not directly applicable. However, the EP has introduced web streaming of committee and delegation meetings and plenary part-sessions. It is envisaged to cover most of those on the Internet.

6. Does your Parliament/Chamber have a section/unit which provides information about the EU to the public? If so, please specify the main tasks of this information section/unit.

The EP has a Directorate-General for Communication, including external information offices, charged with the information of the general public and the analysis of the media coverage of the EP.

7. Are there any ongoing debates or plans in your Parliament/Chamber on ways to make the handling of EU matters in your Parliament/Chamber more transparent?

The improvement of the transparency of the Parliament's activities is permanently re-examined and discussed. At this moment no major projects concerning the subject of better transparency are going on.

However, Parliament still has to agree with the Council on the Commission's proposal for a revised Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council regarding public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents (COM(2008)0229 fin). The draft resolution tabled in the Cashman report was referred back to the responsible committee before the elections under Rule 168(2).^{} An agreement is expected for November or December 2009.*

In its opinion the Committee on Constitutional Affairs criticised that the Commission had ignored the proposals made by the Parliament in the resolution of 4 April 2006 concerning the possibilities for the Parliament to exercise its right for democratic scrutiny. The Committee reiterated its expectation that the Parliament must have access to sensitive documents in order to fully discharge its duties.

Consolidation in one interinstitutional site of the preparatory documents diffused by all the institutions associated in a legislative procedure should be important.

A pilot project collecting the relevant documents/informations in the Justice and Home affairs (TRANS-JAI) was launched in 2004 and should be operational at the beginning of the next year. In the meantime the Management board of the OPOCE has decided a re-shuffle of its site EUR-LEX by developing a specific space for all the legislative preparatory documents.

Last week LIBE has adopted two budgetary amendments to support with adequate financial and human resources a pilot phase covering all the EU legislative domains.

It is worth noting that this project should also made available the metadata of the documents/informations diffused by the EU institutions in compliance with the principles outlined in the Directive 2003/98/EC on the re-use of public sector information (OJ L 345 32.12.2003).

By so doing it will be possible to the external users (such as, for instance, the national parliaments) to fine tune the correspondent data in their own database.

Such an initiative could be, very useful if and when the Lisbon Treaty will be ratified and with it its new rules dealing with the legislative transparency.

Chapter 2: Parliamentary Scrutiny of the Stockholm Programme

1. How do you foresee that scrutiny will be conducted in your EU Affairs Committee? At what stages will scrutiny be conducted?

According to the Treaties the European Parliament is directly associated to the definition of the freedom security and justice area (FSJA) related policies.

Therefore, in case of the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty particular attention should be given to the evaluation system foreseen by the art. 70 of the TFUE where European and national parliaments will be keeping informed on the impact of the EU policies in the FSJA domain.

^{*} see A6-0077/2009 and T6-0114/2009

2. Do you foresee that one or more of your specialised committees will be involved in the process? If so, which one(s), how, and at what stages will their scrutiny be conducted?

In the EP the main committees responsible are LIBE and JURI the latter being also competent for the control of the transposition of the EU law in all the other domains.

3. Do you foresee that any other body in your Parliament/Chamber will be involved in the scrutiny? If so, which one(s), how and at what stage?

Following the content of the specific strategies/measures concerned other committees could be associated such as PETI (Citizenship), FEMM (discrimination / trafficking), EMPL (discrimination /integration policies), AFET/DROI (external dimension of the FSJA / illegal migration) DEVE (migratory flows).

4. Do you take any specific measures to ensure coordination between the various parliamentary bodies involved in scrutiny?

This issue has been raised before the Conference of Committee Chairs who will soon debate on it.

5. When designing the scrutiny procedure as described above – have you drawn upon experience gained when scrutinizing the Tampere and/or Hague Programmes? If possible, please specify.

NOT RELEVANT FOR THE EP

6. Do you think that inter-parliamentary cooperation could contribute to making your scrutiny more efficient? If so, in what form and how?

A close and focused dialogue with the national parliament's rapporteurs when the EP position is taking shape in the responsible committees could be extremely useful. The ways of possible interventions during the EP committee meetings could also be envisaged.

Moreover and on a broader perspective a closer relation in the definition and evaluation of the foreseeable/real impact of FSJA policies should be established and built on the new articles of the TFUE (art. 70 cited above, as well art. 85 and 88 dealing respectively with the control of Europol and Eurojust).

Periodic debates at parliamentary level should also be regularly organised on the evolution of the FSJA and of its main strategy (see the proposal of the European Council of annual evaluation of the migration policies).

Regular contact between the Chairmen of the relevant committees at European and national level should also be strengthened (see the experience of the COHAC) and a virtual working space could be built on Internet to build a "fond documentaire" allowing a non discriminatory and online exchange of the relevant informations/documents for these policies.