

Meeting of the Chairpersons of COSAC

Bucharest, Palace of Parliament

20 – 21 January 2019

Draft outline of the 31st Bi-annual Report of COSAC

(as of the 7th of January 2019)

Chapter 1: Prospects for international trade relations of the European Union; the future of relations between the European Union and the United Kingdom in the context of Brexit

The EU is currently the largest trade partner for more than 80 countries worldwide. It strives to conclude new free trade agreements with countries and regions from Africa, Asia, North America and South America, but finds itself at an impasse vis-à-vis other agreements, such as the EU-Canada Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) or the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). In this context, national Parliaments and the European Parliament are called to play a key role in grounding the EU's international trade policies and in seizing new economic opportunities.

This chapter is divided in two sections.

The first section offers an overview of the ways parliaments shape the EU trade policy and contribute to finding the right balance between opening the Single Market to foreign partners and preserving the European environmental and social standards.

The second section aims at summing up the opinions about and interest in resuming the TTIP negotiations and in assessing the EU's future trade relations with the UK.

Chapter 2: The European Education Area as a driving factor for reshaping and strengthening the Single Market

While the European Commission has played a complementary role by drawing the roadmap to the European Education Area by 2025, Member States are solely responsible for their education policies. As technological progress gives a new impetus to the demand of key competences and digital skills, the EU is expected to be the place where young people prepare for diversified and highly qualified future jobs and for innovation-based entrepreneurship.

This chapter is divided in two sections.

The first one focuses on the Member States' capacity to adapt their education policies to the new technological and digital era. Parliaments are called to assess whether these policies are in line with the current and future labour market requirements, while being flexible enough to allow cooperation at the EU scale and likely to foster the free movement of workers within the EU.

The second part of this chapter intends to highlight views, contributions and best practices to develop the European Education Area in order to answer citizens' expectations. It aims at prospecting the future education policies, which are expected to make the EU the world leader in terms of education and skills and to transform the Single Market into an area where the most innovative companies and start-ups meet the best-qualified workforce.

Chapter 3: Economy based on innovation, technological progress and social impact; the role of parliaments in fostering the "New Economy" of the EU

The increasing technological progress requires a consolidated political dialogue to prepare the EU action, to ensure a quick and smooth law-making process, and to provide a transparent and liable implementation of legislation and programmes. Additional efforts are needed in order to avoid legislative gaps or long-lasting adapting periods of the EU legislation to the new technologies and economic models.

This chapter is divided in two sections.

The first one revolves around identifying policies where urgent measures need to be taken in order to fill-in the gap between legislation and technological progress. Parliaments are also called to express opinions on the right balance between the need to ensure the competitiveness of European companies, notably through innovation and technological progress, and the need to protect social standards, and ensure personal fulfilment.

The second one seeks to highlight parliaments' opinions on which level decisions should be taken in terms of new technologies and new economic models; the aim is to find out whether such decisions should be taken at national or European level. In this respect, parliaments are also called to reflect on subsidiarity and proportionality checks.