



## THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

# PREPARING FOR COMPLEXITY THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT IN 2025 THE ANSWERS

## REPORT

### ABOUT THE REPORT

The current report presents a synthesis, resulting from a collective brain-storming exercise started in 2011. The aim was to identify structural changes to be initiated in order to prepare the European Parliament for a more complex and challenging environment. This envisaged environment is described in a first report on long term trends compiled in January 2012: 'The European Parliament 2025 - Preparing for Complexity'.

This first report was considered at the 'away-days' of Directors and Director-Generals in September 2011. It provided a base for the various European Parliament Directorates General (DGs) to pose questions on the complexity of the new environment and on preparations to be planned. As a result, a list of 130 questions was established and circulated with the first report.

Answers were gathered throughout the DGs following internal meetings and consultations. The Cabinet of the Secretary-General produced a consolidated text incorporating large parts of the DG contributions as well as results of discussions with experts, international visitors and colleagues from other European institutions.

DRAFT

EN

This document has been presented to the Director-Generals of the European Parliament during the 'away-day' meeting on 25 January 2013.

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# Introduction

The present synthesis is the result of an unprecedented collective brain-storming exercise involving all DGs of the European Parliament. The aim is to identify structural changes to be initiated in order to prepare the European Parliament for a much more complex and challenging environment.

This up-coming environment was described by a first report<sup>1</sup> on long term trends compiled in 2011. This report drew on analyses of mega-trends from academic literature. The methodology followed was to compile central elements of theory from various disciplines (international relations, political sciences, social sciences, technology) concerning key long-term trends identified as relevant in the EP context. Academic works selected were among the most read and most frequently quoted ones. Those sources were completed by recent empirical analyses or opinions from think tanks, research bodies, expert groups or the media.

The report outlined the growing complexity resulting from a more multi-polar world where governance is more and more a multi-level one, involving multiple actors in decision making and implementation. The multiple technologies becoming available are accelerating change in an unprecedented way. All organisations and institutions strive to adjust and adapt to this new context.

This first report was discussed in the away-day of directors and directors general in September 2011. It provided a basis for the different DGs to raise their own questions about the complexity ahead of us and the way to prepare for it. As a result, a list of 130 questions was established and circulated together with the report.

The first report and the resulting questions were presented to the President, the Bureau and the Quaestors of the European Parliament on 27 January 2012. They supported the Secretary General's initiative as well as the first conclusions. They emphasised the need to focus on managerial and operational issues in the follow-up process.

Brain-storming started in the DGs in the second half of 2012.

Answers were gathered throughout in every DG after internal meetings and consultations. A large number of relevant units were able to participate in the process. Answers were compiled in consolidated documents at DG level.

Further consolidation took place in the cabinet of the Secretary General to produce a text deriving the best from DG contributions as well as from discussions with experts, international visitors and colleagues from other European institutions.

The present text also echoes some output from debates held at the Commission (BEPA seminar on long term trends), the European Central Bank or with expert groups such as CEPS.

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<sup>1</sup> *The European Parliament 2025: Preparing for Complexity*, Brussels, European Parliament, January 2012 (PE479.851/BUR)

**The purpose of this synthesis is to generate a debate about different operational options outlined by the DGs.**

If the European Parliament wishes to endorse its role as a **regulatory hub** for the 500 millions inhabitants of the Union and profile itself as the central place for a continent wide democracy, structural changes cannot wait until 2025.

For instance:

1. **Enhanced cooperation at expert level** and at committee level **with main international partners** is imperative in a time of interdependency.
2. **Preparing G8/G20 executive summits** should not be considered out of the scope of the European Parliament, as those summits play an increased role in agenda setting. Cooperation on content with partners such as OECD may help to raise the input of the European Parliament at an early stage.
3. **Monitoring international negotiations** and regional policies followed by the Union through ad-hoc structures should become a standard practice.
4. **Joint long-term strategic planning** with other European institutions should be a way for the Parliament to fully participate in agenda setting at an early stage.
5. **Independent expertise** should be increased and its output **widely shared**.
6. Capacity to deliver an **independent impact assessment** should complement the traditional amending role of Parliament.
7. **Democratic scrutiny** functions should be developed.
8. Members should be able to perform functions in their **constituencies** that will make them useful and legitimate middlemen between citizens and the European level of governance. They should be able to provide expertise, participation and training in line with social demands.
9. In order to meet the increasing demand for participation, interaction and training, Members should benefit from state-of-the art new technologies but also from **larger and more flexible working/meeting space** in the central places of work of the European Parliament.
10. Smart and **swift introduction of new technologies** should free resources to be rapidly redeployed in sectors and functions that have remained underdeveloped. To be decisive, such changes have to be decided collectively, in an orderly process and on the basis of an undisputable cost/benefit analysis.



**Klaus Welle**

# I. Multi-polar context

## 1.1. How should the EU change so as to be an equal partner with the USA, China and India by 2025?

It is clear that no Member State in the Union - even Germany with its outstanding profile in global trade - will have the possibility to become a match for the continental states that will dominate the international system when all economies have fully emerged.

To play as an equal partner in the global economy by 2025, the European Union should logically get public support to develop in the direction of a federation with robust central institutions comparable to those of its main competitors. Those institutions should have a capacity to decide and take action.

In fact, the Union already has many of the features of “continental federation” and even appears to be - in some domains - more integrated than others.

**Table 1:** Level of integration of continent wide political entities

	Brazil	Canada	India	E.U.	U.S.
<b>Free flow of goods</b>	Tax on interstate trade (7% or 12% depending on the destination). To be harmonized as of 2013.	Interprovincial non-tariff trade barriers on a few products (e.g. dairy and agricultural products, alcohol).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Constitutionally, a State is allowed to impose restrictions on the flow of trade</li> <li>Tariffs across states</li> <li>Non-harmonized Standards</li> </ul>	Mutual recognition of national rules	
<b>Free flow of services</b>		Strong regulations on professional services Public procurements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Administrative burden</li> <li>Some regulations on professional Services</li> </ul>	Some regulations on professional services	
<b>Free flow of people</b>		Non-mutual recognition of certain professional qualifications across provinces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Constitutionally, a State is allowed to impose such restrictions on the flow of people</li> <li>Some labour market rigidities hampering labour force mobility</li> </ul>	Schengen area	
<b>Free flow of capital</b>	Free flows across states, but not at the international level.		Free flows across states but controls on FDI re-introduced since 2007.		
<b>Monetary integration</b>				Euro area	
<b>Fiscal integration</b>					
<b>Political integration</b>		Separatist provinces			

A European demos may be emerging as a result of the financial crisis. But it still needs to find its adequate political expression. The strengthening of the European Union cannot progress without this democratic revival and a clear mandate from the European citizens.

**Table 2:** EP-President Martin Schulz's 10 point plan

<b>10 point plan to put the European Union on a new democratic footing</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Democracy needs a public</li> <li>2. Democracy needs debate</li> <li>3. Democracy needs a proper division of powers</li> <li>4. Democracy needs parties</li> <li>5. Democratic elections must decide something</li> <li>6. Democracy needs civil society</li> <li>7. Democracy needs the media</li> <li>8. Democracy needs fundamental rights</li> <li>9. Democracy needs hope</li> <li>10. Democracy needs institutional clarity</li> </ol>

**Source:** Speech by Martin Schulz at the Humboldt University, Berlin, 24 May 2012

In the meantime, the present blind spots concerning central fiscal capacity, issuance of debt, common defence and energy policy remain to be addressed, as they overburden the Europeans with permanent structural risks that reduce the attractiveness of their economies.

In the field of foreign policy and defence, the EU is not likely to become a classic 'Westphalian power'. Nonetheless, the good collaboration between the Member States - particularly the three biggest ones who enjoy a leading status on the international scene - and the European institutions appears to be the minimal condition for asserting a "powerful Europe". The cooperation between European nations should be at minimum supported by more solid, substantial and cost-effective shared instruments.

These reasons explain why there is no doubt that new Treaty changes are ahead of us.

These Treaty changes may be limited, specific or - on the contrary - more far-reaching according to the results of the next European elections and the context prevailing at the time. But they seem to be inevitable. Some sketches have been already provided by the Commission and the President of the European Council.<sup>2</sup> The Parliament should prepare to punch its full weight in those upcoming discussions.

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<sup>2</sup> *A Blue Print for a deep and genuine Economic and Monetary Union*, Brussels, European Commission, 28 November 2012; *Report towards a Genuine Economic and Monetary Union*, Brussels, European Council, 5 December 2012



			A blueprint for a deep and genuine EMU Launching a European debate	Secondary law	Treaty change
ALL ALONG THE PROCESS	SHORT TERM	Within the next 18 months	1. Full implementation of <b>European Semester</b> and <b>six-pack</b> and quick agreement on and implementation of <b>two-pack</b>	✓	
			2. <b>Banking Union</b> : Financial regulation and supervision: quick agreement on proposals for a <b>Single Rulebook</b> and <b>Single Supervisory Mechanism</b>	✓	
			3. <b>Banking Union</b> : <b>Single Resolution Mechanism</b>	✓	
			4. Quick decision on the next <b>Multi-annual Financial Framework</b>	✓	
			5. <b>Ex-ante coordination of major reforms</b> and the creation of a <b>Convergence and Competitiveness Instrument (CCI)</b>	✓	
			6. Promoting <b>investment</b> in the <b>Euro Area</b> in line with the Stability and Growth Pact	✓	
			7. <b>External representation</b> of the <b>Euro Area</b>	✓	
	MEDIUM TERM	18 months to 5 years	1. <b>Further reinforcement of budgetary and economic integration</b>	✓	✓
			2. <b>Proper fiscal capacity</b> for the <b>Euro Area</b> building on the CCI	✓	✓
			3. <b>Redemption fund</b>		✓
			4. <b>Eurobills</b>		✓
	LONGER TERM	Beyond 5 years	1. <b>Full Banking Union</b>		✓
			2. <b>Full fiscal and economic union</b>		✓
	Political union: Commensurate progress on democratic legitimacy and accountability			✓	✓

Source: European Commission, Press Release IP-12-1272, 28.11.2012

In this perspective, the need of a democratic surplus in the Union (increased democratic scrutiny on European decisions, increased representativity and debate) also has to be addressed as decisions taken at the European level more and more directly affect the every day life of citizens.

The other reason why the need of a democratic surplus in the Union is felt relates to the success story of enlargement. The EU will likely continue to grow through enlargement. But how can we organize so that this positive evolution does not happen at the expense of a more political Europe which may start to develop from a more integrated centre?

One cannot ignore that, unless new decision mechanisms are designed and accepted, the more stakeholders you involve the more difficult it becomes to assert a common will and to reach common decisions.

Whatever Treaty changes are introduced, whatever federal or con-federal direction is finally taken, the European model of "golden growth" based on peace, economic, social and territorial cohesion - a model being traditionally a source of European soft power - should continue to be promoted and successfully contrasted against other less inclusive and less democratic models.

- *The EP as well as other European institutions should privilege stronger **ties with other continental democracies and market economies**.*
- *The European Parliament should contribute to an **improved legislative and regulatory dialogue with the US** as a way to pave the way to potential comprehensive economic agreements in the future.*

Inside the Union, an enhanced consistency between the Union principles and the derived actions should be attained. This regards human rights violations within the EU (Art. 7 TEU), in the field of external EU policies (trade policy, cross-connected with development policy and/or peacekeeping operations) as well as in immigration and asylum policies. Equal opportunities, environment or data protection should not be considered secondary.

- *The European Parliament should develop an exemplary compliance with the principles of the Union and may develop a **compliance office** as in the US Congress (the compliance office of the US Congress checks how Congress implements US law).*
- *The European Parliament should play a major role in promoting such a model via the full use and even enhancement of its institutional powers, especially those of **scrutiny** of executive decisions.*

For the European Parliament to fully exploit its potential for Parliamentary diplomacy and to benefit from the emerging multi-polar context, several specific challenges should be taken into account:

- *There is a need for the use of non-EU languages. An in-house and external capacity for the key languages (in particular Russian, Arabic and Chinese) should be nurtured and supported. Training of interpreters needs to respond to this need both for new interpreters (cooperation with centres of excellence in interpreter training in these languages) and for enhancing in-house capacity.*
- *A conference interpreter should have knowledge and skills to perform interpreting duties other than conference interpreting stricto sensu, eg. bilateral interpretation in talks or on missions, during election observation missions, etc. Training must ensure that interpreters have the skills needed to work in different environments to follow the development of the Members' work.*
- *Interpretation is crucial in crisis situations and negotiations. DG INTE could contribute to initiatives providing basic training to colleagues working in disaster and war zones by using new technologies and e-learning facilities.*

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ ***Prepare for new Treaty changes.***
- ➔ ***Privilege stronger ties with other continental democracies** and their Legislators on the basis of genuine mutual interest.*
- ➔ ***Improve legislative and regulatory dialogue** with the US.*
- ➔ ***Develop a compliance office** like the one of the US Congress to stimulate the European Parliament to provide exemplary compliance with the principles and values of the Union in all domains.*
- ➔ *Contribute to the democratic surplus of the European Union by developing **democratic scrutiny** on executive decisions taken at European level.*
- ➔ ***Train interpreters for the use of non-EU languages** and to support Parliamentary diplomacy in crisis situations and negotiations.*

### 1.1.1. What economic, social and territorial model does the EU want to share?

Due to the ongoing serious and protracted economic crisis, the EU has reached a critical juncture that will profoundly influence the way it functions and carries out its business from today until 2025 and beyond.

The pressure of necessity may result in a much closer level of integration in all vital areas of EU activities, including external relations. Conversely, the crisis might also fragment the EU economic, social and territorial model.

A precondition for the European Union to project and share its own territorial, social and economic model and to remain legitimate and attractive on the global scene is to maintain the prosperity of all territories belonging to the European Union.

Our overall objective remains to achieve a continuous long-term improvement of quality of life for all citizens as well as for future generations. There is no unique path or master plan to reach such an objective. We wish to see in the European Union many sustainable communities able to manage and use resources efficiently, able to tap into the ecological and social innovation potential of the economy and, in the end, able to ensure prosperity, environmental protection and social cohesion.

In order to achieve those objectives, the European Union as whole has to strive to keep a technologically advanced industrial economy providing high value added and high returns on investments. Constant productivity gains are likely to be the only way to maintain global competitiveness and a level of redistribution compatible with welfare and inclusion. This continuum has been outlined by the Strategy 2020.

#### Targets of the Europe 2020 Strategy:

The **employment rate** of the population aged 20-64 should increase from the current 69% to at least 75%, including through the greater involvement of women, older workers and the better integration of migrants in the work force.

The EU currently has a target of **investing 3% of GDP in R&D**. The target has succeeded in focusing attention on the need for both the public and private sectors to invest in R&D but it focuses on input rather than impact. There is a clear need to improve the conditions for private R&D in the EU and many of the measures proposed in this strategy will do this. It is also clear that by looking at R&D and innovation together we would get a broader range of expenditure which would be more relevant for business operations and for productivity drivers. The Commission proposes to keep the 3% target while developing an indicator which would reflect R&D and innovation intensity.

## Targets of the Europe 2020 Strategy:

**Reduce greenhouse gas emissions** by at least 20% compared to 1990 levels or by 30%, if the conditions are right; increase the share of renewable energy sources in our final energy consumption to 20% and a 20% increase in energy efficiency.

A target on **educational attainment** which tackles the problem of early school leavers by reducing the drop out rate to 10% from the current 15%, whilst increasing the share of the population aged 30-34 having completed tertiary education from 31% to at least 40% in 2020.

The number of Europeans living below the national poverty lines should be reduced by 25%, lifting over 20 million people out of poverty.

- *The public sector - including the European Parliament and other European institutions - has to participate in this constant effort for increased productivity, **cost-efficiency and innovation**.*

Due to the crisis, public investment capacities have been reduced and private investment slowed down. The European budget is, for the time being, the only significant public investment budget remaining to support the creation of new growth factors.

- *All European Institutions should be fully **equipped to jointly initiate, debate and promote** more ambitious common policies in the fields of innovation, labour force and (re)training.*
- *In those domains the European Legislators may develop a more **structured dialogue with entrepreneurs and trade unions** involved in social dialogue at national, regional and sector level. **Further rapprochement and synergies between the European Parliament, the ECOSOC Committee and the Committee of the Regions could be envisaged.***

Outside the Union, the EU should remain true to its core values and promote these also in its interactions with external partners, beginning now and continuing beyond 2025. The EU should ensure that future global governance principles correspond to its core values:

- Cooperation and integration as key tools to guide international relations;
- Adherence to human rights and democratic standards, as fundamental values underpinning all our domestic and international interactions;
- Justice and fairness, which underlie social and global order;
- Transparency and inclusiveness, as the basis for accountability and legitimacy on both domestic and international levels;
- Peaceful conflict resolution and prevention.

In all three spheres — economic, social and territorial — the cooperation model championed globally by the EU should be based on clearly defined rules and norms, all informed by core values. At the same time, the EU should pursue its core economic, security and strategic interests. Pursuing both interests and values in a mutually re-enforcing

way may prove to be major challenge that the EU will face in a multi-polar, rapidly changing world, in 2025 and beyond.

This balancing will require that EU define the boundaries of acceptable compromise, as well as 'red lines' that cannot be crossed. Those red lines have to be followed not only in negotiations and agreements but also in implementation.

- *This means an increased capacity for the European Parliament to exert **democratic scrutiny on the instruments and the implementation of international agreements in every field**, and to be in a full **capacity to suspend** them swiftly in case of massive breach with the principles of the Union.*

#### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Participate in the constant effort to **increase productivity, cost-efficiency and innovation** in the public sector.*
- ➔ *Develop the competences needed to **jointly initiate, debate and promote common policies in the field of innovation and labour force**.*
- ➔ *Develop a more **structured dialogue with entrepreneurs and trade unions** involved in social dialogue at national, regional and sector level.*
- ➔ *Develop further rapprochement and **synergies between the European Parliament, the ECOSOC Committee and the Committee of the Regions**.*
- ➔ *Achieve full fledged **democratic scrutiny on the financial instruments** and the implementation **of international agreements**.*
- ➔ *Be in a full **capacity** to swiftly **suspend international agreements** in case of massive breach with the principles of the Union by third countries.*



### 1.1.2. Which policies best match the EU's resources with its ambitions and values in foreign policy to make the EU stronger on the international stage, while ensuring the same functionality and internal consistency to match its counterparts?

**International trade policy** From today's perspective, trade policy is the most powerful external policy tool available for the Union. It has to remain under full-fledged community method. At the same time the European Parliament has to continue its push for fully developing its new legal and political potential in this domain.

As large industrial over-capacities have been created outside Europe in emerging countries following export lead growth strategies, there is a growing risk for the Union to be subject to commercial dumping and higher trade barriers built by third countries in the coming years. While defending the principle of free trade based on common rules decided upon in the WTO, the European Union should keep its anti-dumping instruments updated and operational, including early warning mechanisms.

- *Members of the European Parliament should be **equipped to assess** in an autonomous fashion the risks of dumping and the potential protectionist measures taken by third countries in order to be able to call upon the Commission to swiftly initiate an adequate action.*

**External dimension of CAP and development policy** Some of the EU's traditionally best-integrated and most-emphasised policies, such as agriculture or regional cohesion and development aid, have earned the European Union a strong position on the global stage: their up-dating and up-grading is important to ensure a lasting influence of the European model of cohesion.

As soon as now, the European Union will also have to strive to assume a more assertive role or even a direct representation in those international organisations and settings in which policies concerning those domains are discussed at the global level (FAO, WTO or the G-20).

**Table 3:** Competences of the European Union according to the 'Lisbon Treaty', and participation of the EU institutions in related international organisations and conventions

Competences	Organisations, Conventions	Status of EU & MS
<b>Foreign, security and defence policies (including general political affairs)</b>	UN General Assembly UN Security Council OSCE NATO NON-Proliferation Treaty Council of Europe G7/8/20	EU observer; MS members 2 permanent MS + 2-3 rotating EU observer, MS members 24 MS MS EU observer, MS members EU participant, some MS
<b>1. Exclusive (Article 3)</b>		
a. Customs union	World Customs Org. (WCO)	Member
b. Competition policy	World Intellectual Property Org. (WIPO)	Observer

Competences	Organisations, Conventions	Status of EU & MS
c. Monetary policy (for eurozone)	IMF Bank for International Settlements (BIS) OECD	ECB part observer, MS members ECB on Board, some MS EU enhanced observer, MS members
d. Fisheries policy and marine biological	Convention on Fishing and Conservation of the Living Resources of the High Seas UN Conference on Highly Migratory Fish Multiple regional fisheries organisations: Mediterranean, NE Atlantic, Western and Central Pacific Organisations for some species: Tuna, Salmon	EU & MS members  EU & MS members  EU Member & some MS  EU, no MS
e. Trade policy	WTO UN Comm. on Internat. Trade Law (UNCITRAL)	EU & MS members EU observer, some MS members
<b>2. Shared (Article 4)</b>		
a. Internal market	International Standards Organization (ISO) Codex Alimentarius Commission	EU operation, MS Members EU & MS members
b. Social policy	International Labour Organization (ILO)	EU observer, MS members
c. Cohesion (regional)	–	–
d. Agriculture and Forestry	FAO International Fund for Agricultural Development Multiple product organisations: Olive oil, Sugar, Cocoa, Coffee, Jute, Tropical Timber, Rubber, Grains, New varieties of plants	EU & MS members EU observer, MS members  EU & some MS members
e. Environment	UN Environmental Programme UN FCCC (climate change) Kyoto Protocol UN Conf. on Environmt. and Develop. Convention on Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) International Tribunal of the Law of the Sea International Seabed Authority Protection Marine Environmt. of N. Atlantic Protection of the Danube River	EU observer, some MS members EU & MS contracting parties " " " " " EU & 12 MS members EU & 6 MS members
f. Consumer protection	–	–
g. Transport	International Civil Aviation Org. (ICAO) Intern. Maritime Organisation (IMO) Eurocontrol	EU observer, MS members EU observer, MS members EU & 21 MS members
h. Trans-European Networks	–	–
i. Energy	International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)	EU observer, MS members



Competences	Organisations, Conventions	Status of EU & MS
	International Energy Agency (IEA) Energy Charter Treaty	EU participates; 17 MS members EU and MS members
j. Freedom, security and justice	International Court of Justice (ICJ) International Criminal Court (ICC) European Convention of Human Rights UN High Commission for Refugees UN Convention Against Illicit Traffic of Drugs UN Convention Against Transnational Crime	– EU observer; MS state parties MS, and in future EU, parties  EU observer; MS members EU & MS contracting parties & MS contracting parties
k. Public health, safety	–	–
l. Research, Technology, Space	Intern. Telecommunications Union (ITU) UNCOPUOS (Peaceful Use of Outer Space) International Fusion Energy Org. (ITER) Science and Technical Center in Ukraine	EU sector memb.; MS members  EU observer; MS members  EAEC member, no MS EAEC & EU member, no MS
m. Development and humanitarian aid	World Bank World Food Programme (WFP) UNDP UNCTAD	MS members EU & many MS donors EU observer; MS members EU observer; MS members
<b>3. Coordination (Article 5)</b>		
a. Economic policies	EBRD OECD	EU & MS members EU enhanced observer; MS members
b. Employment policies	ILO	EU observer; MS members
c. Social policies	ILO	EU observer; MS members
<b>4. Supplementary (Article 6)</b>		
a. Human health	World Health Organization (WHO) UN Population Fund (UNFPA)	EU observer; MS members EU observer; MS members
b. Industry	UN Industrial Develop. Org. (UNIDO) Multiple Organisations for commodities: Nickel, Copper, Lead and Zinc	Partnership; most MS members EU & some MS members
c. Culture	UNESCO	EU observer; MS members
d. Tourism	UN World Tourism Organisation	Most MS members
e. Education, training, youth, sport	UNESCO UNICEF	EU observer; MS members EU observer; MS members

Source: CEPS report, *Upgrading the EU's Role as Global Actor*, Brussels, 2011, p. 23

**CFSP revised** Generally - and as recent cross-cutting EP reports (most notably the 2012 reports on the CFSP and CSDP) have demonstrated - the EU still has some way to go to match foreign policy ambitions with the resources currently devoted to foreign policy. This is true for all external policies, including security and defence, development, international trade and human rights.

The lack of coordination and consistency among various EU thematic actions is still the key obstacle to improving the EU's results in a global arena. To overcome this, the EU should do the following for 2025:

- Focus on harmonising the internal and external dimensions of EU policies to avoid contradictions; build a coherent nexus between them.
- Envision and implement geographic strategies in a holistic manner, ensuring that various EU actions and instruments are coherent and not contradictory.
- Continue developing institutional capacities with adequate staffing and training. This has serious implications for the EU's human resources and knowledge management policies in the future.
- Establish more effective approaches to promoting and defending interests in international fora by defining partners and improving relations with them in order to pursue mutual goals and interests jointly.

**Integrated regional strategies** Consistency between different policies, instruments and agreements in a specific region - Central Asia for instance - should mobilise more than the specialists of foreign affairs and Members of delegations to the relevant countries.

- *The assessment of Union regional strategies should duly involve Members of other relevant committees, in this case Members specialised in human rights, energy, transport or trade issues. Organisational flexibility to create within the administration **ad-hoc task forces to support joint assessment** will be decisive.*

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➡ Develop **independent impact assessment** of the risks of dumping and other protectionist measures taken by third countries.
- ➡ Organise a **rapid reaction capacity** (including, if needed, the use of own legislative initiative) in case of violation of trade agreements or WTO rules by third countries to call upon the Commission to swiftly initiate adequate action.
- ➡ Generalise **ad-hoc task forces to support joint assessment** between different committees of the **integrated regional strategies** implemented by the European Commission and the External Action Service.

### 1.1.3. Are the positions held by the EU in international negotiations compatible with the Treaties?

An external representation of the 25 Members States and Members-States-to-be of the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) may be considered desirable in the IMF and other financial institutions with due respect to the initial weighting of the different Member States that would irrevocably join forces.

Such an external representation of the EMU in IMF and IFI could pave the way for a unified external representation of the EMU in G8 and G20 formats at a later stage as they also mainly discuss financial issues.

In the meantime, a detailed monitoring of European efforts to prepare and implement G8 and G20 summits should take place in the European Parliament as well as in the Council and national Parliaments.

- *The European Parliament as the Parliament of the EMU<sup>3</sup> should have full democratic scrutiny on delegations, mandates, decisions and implementation. Such a change would necessitate a political agreement between EMU Members and Members-to-be and very likely the creation of **specialised committee or sub-committee on economic and monetary affairs** supported by the adequate units in the administration.*
- *The European Parliament needs to enhance its role in international negotiations, ensuring that EU action meets the core treaty objectives. The EP could attain this goal through a number of steps, including:*
  - *Strengthening **inter-institutional cooperation** in order to ensure that the EP is able to fulfil the role assigned to it by the Lisbon Treaty provisions. This will entail inter-institutional discussions on how existing mechanisms of cooperation could be advanced and what new methods would facilitate information exchanges and an inter-service culture of transparency and consultation.*
  - *Setting-up an **ad-hoc committee** whenever a major negotiation is started, as envisaged by the Treaties. This would mean the EP will be properly consulted and informed in a timely and complete manner on the progress of international negotiations carried out by the Commission.*
  - *Strengthening **cooperation within the European Parliament** to ensure that different entities involved in monitoring negotiations (most notably, the committees and the delegations) act in a coordinated manner. In order for this to happen, the EP should develop a methodology of sharing best practices within the institution and should provide relevant training to its staff. Organisational flexibility will be decisive. One will certainly need to create within the Secretariat **ad-hoc task forces to support joint assessment.***

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<sup>3</sup> Martin Schulz, *Speech to the European Council*, Brussels, 13 December 2012

- *Sharpening the EP's direct cooperation with external actors and third countries. This would strengthen the Parliament's ability to scrutinise negotiations and implement international agreements.*

Some trade agreements have also been shown to have an impact on agricultural and fisheries markets and to undermine preceding Fisheries Partnership Agreements (FPAs) or agreements under negotiation with other countries. They have at times led to conflict between geopolitical considerations, development and democracy promotion, human rights and environmental issues. The EU is present in a large number of international organisations and is party to many bilateral and multilateral agreements, but the role played by the different EU Institutions varies considerably according to the nature and scope of the agreement.

- *The position of the EP in negotiations on bilateral Fisheries Partnership Agreements (FPA) or within multilateral organisations (RFMOs) needs to be drastically improved, including prioritising an EU-wide approach over the conflicting specific interests of Member States, in order to fully comply with the provisions of the Treaty, which has already strengthened the role of the EP in this matter, as the consent of the EP is compulsory for the conclusion of any FPA. **The current negotiating practice, which de facto downgrades the EP to a mere rubber-stamping entity, is unacceptable in the future.***

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Achieve full **democratic scrutiny** on decisions and implementation of decisions concerning the external representation of the EMU, even if a unique representation of the EMU in the IMF is not immediately realised.*
- ➔ *Create a **specialised committee or sub-committee on economic and monetary affairs** supported by relevant units in the administration.*
- ➔ *Strengthen inter-institutional cooperation with EEAS.*
- ➔ *Establish an **ad-hoc committee ahead of major negotiations**, as envisaged by the Treaties.*
- ➔ *Develop within the Secretariat **ad-hoc task forces to support joint assessment by different Committees** will be decisive.*
- ➔ *Sharpen the **EP's direct cooperation with key external actors** involved in negotiations with the EU even if this means reorganising the present distribution of delegations and their scope.*
- ➔ ***Refuse the current negotiating practice for fishery agreements** which de facto downgrades the EP to a mere rubber-stamping entity.*

#### 1.1.4. What could be the consequences if the EP did not give consent as foreseen by the Lisbon Treaty for the conclusion of international agreements?

In legal terms, the EU's consent to international agreements cannot be concluded without the EP's consent (TFEU Art. 218 (6) a).

Parliament's decision not to consent to an agreement sends a strong political message — that the representatives directly elected by the citizens of the European Union do not support the outcome of negotiations — to the Council, the Commission and negotiating parties outside the EU.

In the event that the EP withholds its consent, the agreement cannot be concluded by the Council, even if it has already been signed.

However, in such a case, nothing prevents the negotiator from making, at a later stage, and in particular in case of a change of circumstances, a new proposal to conclude the agreement, which will be transmitted to the EP for a new decision.

The EP has withheld its consent on three occasions, one concerning the SWIFT Agreement with the USA, one concerning the Fisheries and Cooperation Agreement with Morocco and one concerning the ACTA Agreement.<sup>4</sup>

Another consequence of the withholding of consent is the immediate termination of the provisional application of the envisaged agreement.

- *The legal (and real) possibility of rejection by the EP felt by other European and international actors involved in the negotiations should serve to ensure respect for Parliament as equal institution. But the European Parliament could lose influence over time if it were to be seen as the institution that says 'NO'.<sup>3</sup> In sum, Parliament's right not to consent to the conclusion of an agreement enhances its visibility. But such a power should be applied judiciously.*

Two recent cases clearly demonstrate the significantly different legal consequences of a potential refusal of EP consent between bilateral agreements on one hand and plurilateral and multilateral agreements on the other. In the SWIFT case, the agreement was a bilateral one that required the EU's consent to enter into force. Parliament's refusal of consent resulted in the drafting of a new agreement responding to the EP's concerns, consequently securing a large majority in Parliament. ACTA, on the other hand, was a plurilateral treaty, where the EU's support is not legally necessary for the treaty to enter into force. The EP's refusal to consent may mean that the EU could lose influence and remain outside the international regulatory framework for the enforcement of intellectual property rights.

- *In order to avoid from the outset a situation where the EP refuses to give its consent to the conclusion of a particular international agreement, it should be in the interest of both Commission*

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<sup>4</sup> In the Japan case, for example, the Parliament sent a powerful message in its resolution (2012/2651(RSP)) of 13 June 2012, which asked the Council not to authorise the opening of trade negotiations until the EP had stated its position on the proposed negotiating mandate (Rule 90(2) Rules of Procedure).

and Council to strengthen EP involvement early in the negotiation process and providing relevant information during negotiations. At present, the EP is fully informed about the definition of negotiating directives (Points 23 to 27 of the Framework Agreement between the EP and the EC), but **a (full)participation of MEPs in EU coordination meetings** could be a viable strategy.

- In some cases, provisional application of agreements may be granted before the EP consents to the agreement. However, **the use of 'provisional application' should be limited**, and each case should be duly justified. In the field of international agreements, a genuine and open **kind of conciliation process** should be organized with the Council acting as co-legislator. If it fails, such agreements should be considered politically impossible to be signed or ratified by individual Member States.

#### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ Parliament's **right not to consent** should be applied judiciously.
- ➔ It should be in the interest of both Commission and Council to strengthen **EP involvement early in the negotiation process** and provide relevant information during negotiation to a relevant ad-hoc committee in charge of following negotiations.
- ➔ **The parliament should sustain the principle that the use of 'provisional application agreements' should be limited** and each case should be duly justified.
- ➔ When a major disagreement occurs on an international agreement between the two legislators of international agreements, **a genuine and open kind of conciliation process** should be organized with the Council before Parliament formally refuses consent.



### 1.1.5. How can the EP set up economic governance structures and increase legitimacy with 27 or more Member States, whilst strengthening the Euro area?

The European Parliament has played an important albeit politically still insufficient role in re-solving the current euro crisis. Most decisions have been taken by the Council or at the level of Member States. Any new Treaty reinforcing the EU should provide a real role for the EP in determining fiscal and economic cooperation and integration between the Members and the Members-to-be of the EMU. Until such a treaty change, Parliament should exercise its powers strategically in the ongoing struggle to save the euro and reform the EU's economic union.

It should be noted that this question is part of the current debate on strengthening the Euro and balancing out the asymmetry between economic and monetary union. The EP can play a role national parliaments cannot play as it represents the supranational democratic axis of the institutional architecture at European level.

The Parliament could examine how to establish a more effective dialogue with the national parliaments in the field relating to economic governance. Article 9 of Protocol 2 provides a basis to the organisation for cooperation between the EP and the national Parliaments.

#### **Protocol No 2, Article 9<sup>5</sup>**

The Commission shall submit each year to the European Council, the European Parliament, the Council and national Parliaments a report on the application of Article 5 of the Treaty on European Union. This annual report shall also be forwarded to the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions.

Dialogue could also take place in relation to structures established outside the Treaties, for example the European Stability Mechanism (ESM) and the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union (TSCG).

In terms of structures internal to the European Parliament and concerning only Euro area issues, it should be noted that there is no legal basis for excluding MEPs from non-euro Member States from voting on euro issues at the plenary. It would however legally be possible to establish eurozone-specific bodies at Parliament level with a solely advisory role.

- *The EP should inter alia insist on **a more decisive role in the review of national budgets** introduced by the Six Pack as well as **bailout agreements as delivered by the Troikas** in countries under adjustment, with the view to represent the long term interest of citizens, entrepreneurs and workers and to defend the principles of the Union.*

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<sup>5</sup> Official Journal of the EU, C326/55, 26 Oct. 2012

- *In the formulation of economic policy preferences (Broad Economic Policy Guidelines, Employment Guidelines, Annual Growth Survey), a stronger role based on a firm legal basis should be assigned to the European Parliament.*

One possibility would be that the formulation of the economic policy preferences (Integrated Guidelines - at the start of a 'super' European Semester) be aligned with the legislature of the European Parliament and the rest of the institutional cycle. A formulation of the guidelines at the beginning of the legislature would set the broad economic agenda with the backing of a majority of the EP. In order to provide sufficient resources for the implementation of this economic policy agenda. The **multi-annual fiscal framework** could then be aligned with the priorities of this agenda and the validity of these new Integrated Guidelines.

The ESM Treaty and the Fiscal Compact Treaty should be made compatible and be merged as soon as possible in the European Treaties. Their implementation should be governed by Community Method.

- *The European Parliament should consider its duty to constantly recall the principle of community method in order to **avoid a detrimental duplication of institutions** and procedures in the field of Economic Governance.*

The three unions - banking Union, economic Union and fiscal Union - outlined by the Four Presidents' Report on a Genuine Economic and Monetary Union<sup>6</sup> - should be accompanied by the adequate level of democratic accountability towards the European legislators and significant steps forwards in the political Union.

- *With the ECB evolving into a much more powerful institution in the EU, strengthened **democratic control and scrutiny** by the European Parliament is paramount, at least with regard to its future banking supervision tasks. Increased informational rights, thus increasing transparency, should be a first step, possibly followed by giving the European Parliament a right to consent to the appointment of the relevant members of the Executive Board dealing with supervision.*

With eight more EU countries due to join the Euro area (Treaty obligation), the gap between the euro and non-euro area will be narrowed over time. Strengthening the Euro area should thus coincide with a strengthening of the 'EU25'. Considering this, it is advisable that Members to be of the Euro area that have also committed to the Fiscal Compact should participate in EP discussions regarding Euro area matters, avoiding parallel structures.

- *In the European Parliament, a **sub-committee dealing with Economic and Monetary affairs** representing adequately the Members and the Members to be of the EMU could be envisaged.*

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<sup>6</sup> Herman Van Rompuy, Towards a Genuine Economic and Monetary Union, Council of the European Union, 5.12.2012



One of the most powerful instruments to strengthen economic governance structures in the EU and revitalise its economy remains the full completion of the Single Market that does not require Treaty changes or new structures to achieve significant results such as:

- the levelling of the playing field by combating the shadow economy and tax avoidance that generate economic circuits escaping regulation and putting a significant financial burden on society;
- communication efforts to combat sentiments of protectionism in areas where substantial progress has already been achieved;
- the smart development of new areas bringing growth and jobs, such as the Digital Single Market, through more advanced use of priorities and synergies;
- the experimenting with new modes of governance ("ubiquitous governance") deriving benefits from the possibilities of technological progress.

### Economic and Monetary Union

The policy options taken in the near future to safeguard stability of the euro will affect the nature of the economic governance framework, in particular the division of labour between national and European levels of governance. Here one can identify two scenarios: a full respect of the non-bail-out clause and the use of market discipline as part of economic governance (and thereby a limited extension of policy areas subjects to federal decision-making) or a system where national fiscal and economic policies are more closely scrutinized and regulated at the EU level (and thereby more policy areas subject to federal decision-making).

Possible future fiscal and economic policy developments at EMU level	Possible EP future role in EMU fiscal and economic policies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fiscal policies: Should the Euro area core integrate more profoundly, reinforcing its interdependency, policy makers might set up a system of limited joint bond issuance and establish a redemption fund.</li> <li>- Taxation policies: Coordination of the tax policies will be stronger when convergence towards a common corporate tax base are achieved in order to ensure consistency of national tax systems (in reinforced cooperation); further steps could be achieved in VAT harmonization.</li> <li>- Employment &amp; social policies: The EU will have to face in common demographic change, which implies retirement age harmonization and further steps for sustainability of pensions; should the EU budget increase, it could take on some of the functions of an EU-wide economic stabilization and contribute to the synchronisation of economic cycles across the EU.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>The EP (in particular a specific component made up of MEPs from the euro area MS) could give its <b>consent to the appointment of the head of the ESM</b>. The head of the ESM should regularly report to the EP about the fund's activities and operations.</i></li> <li>- <i>If a "<b>Finance Minister/Commissioner</b>" were to be established at the EU level with more powers to intervene, he should be answerable to the EP (with a specific role of national parliaments). He would also represent the EU in the global governance structures in the field of economic and financial affairs (G8/20, IMF, WB, etc).</i></li> <li>- <i>Enhanced Economic Dialogue (modelled on Monetary Dialogues with the ECB, but with a strong component of political accountability) with the other EU financial institutions and, if applicable, with Member States (invite a Commission representative when an Economic Dialogue is conducted with a Member State).</i></li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Industrial Policy: This is the lever of growth. The EU budget is limited to providing leverage for important structural investments. So far as the EU envisions structural reforms promotion through arrangements of bi-lateral contractual nature (Commission-MS), it could be further integrated, with commensurate resources from the EU budget.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>As the European Council and Euro Area Summit have become de facto executive organs for the macro-economic governance at the EU/Euro area level, the EP could establish a Political Dialogue (with an accountability component) at the plenary level with the president of the European Council.</i></li> <li>- <i>Enhance Economic Dialogues with Member States under macro-economic imbalances or under adjustment programmes.</i></li> <li>- <i>Commission to inform the EP on results of review mission in Member States under enhanced surveillance (already included in the 2-pack).</i></li> <li>- <i>Commission informal consultation of competent Committee when amending the scoreboard used for the identification of macro-economic imbalances.</i></li> <li>- <i>Aim for regular timetable under the Semester Cycle for Economic Dialogues with the Commission, the Council and the Eurogroup (modelled on Monetary Dialogues with the ECB, but with a strong component of political accountability), based on an inter-institutional agreement/exchange of letters.</i></li> <li>- <i>Have EP representatives as observers in Council committees, such as the Economic Policy Committee and in the Economic and Financial Committee.</i></li> <li>- <i>The right of the EP to propose legislation could be enhanced (the Commission could make a commitment to support EP legislative INI reports under certain conditions.)</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Possible developments of monetary policy at EMU level</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monetary policy: Role of the ECB increases de facto with the absence of common EU funds. The ECB role in safeguarding the stability of the euro has increased as part of the sovereign debt crisis (e.g. various bond purchasing programmes and new Outright Monetary Transactions (OMTs)) programme: even if future secondary market operations would be undertaken only to safeguard monetary policy transmission and once concerned Member States fulfil minimum conditions, the ECB will have a de facto say on the "conditionality" assessment).</li> <li>• Financial Market Supervision: Separate EU entity(ies) for direct supervision of banks, security markets and insurance markets. A single European Resolution Authority and European Resolution fund for credit institutions.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Possible EP future role in EMU monetary policies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Binding EP opinion on the appointment of the President of the ECB, Vice-Presidents and Board members (if the EP rejects the candidate, a new candidate needs to be nominated).</i></li> <li>- <i>Separate entity for the new Financial Supervisory Authority and binding EP consent on the appointment of the Chair (if the EP rejects the candidate, a new candidate needs to be nominated).</i></li> <li>- <i>The external auditors for the Financial Supervisory Authority should be appointed by the EP; the findings should be reported to the EP.</i></li> <li>- <i>Ask the ECB to give a "follow-up response" to EP INI-Reports on the ECB Annual Report.</i></li> <li>- <i>Establish a specific committee or subcommittee dealing with Economic and Monetary Affairs dedicated to supervising the "supervisors" (e.g. a parliamentary supervisory board of the ECB made up of MEPs from the euro area MS dealing with matters that concern the euro). This "supervisory board" would inter alia be responsible as part of a competent Committee to draw up the annual report of the EP on the</i></li> </ul>

	<p>ECB, it could also be bound by certain confidentiality clause.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Similar to the Monetary Dialogue and Economic Dialogue, "Financial Stability Dialogues" should take place quarterly (Single Banking Supervisor, ESAs, ESRB).</li> <li>- The Chair of the new Financial Supervisory Authority should report regularly to the EP (and national parliaments).</li> <li>- In case of misconduct by the ECB (in its supervisory tasks) or the Financial Supervisory Authority, the EP could set up a special investigative committee.</li> </ul>
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### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ Insist on **a more decisive role in the review of national budgets** introduced by the Six Pack as well as **bailout agreements** as delivered by the Troikas in countries under adjustment, with the view to represent the long term interest of citizens, entrepreneurs and workers and to defend the principles of the Union.
- ➔ Assign a stronger role (based on a firm legal basis) in the formulation of economic policy preferences (Broad Economic Policy Guidelines, Employment Guidelines, Annual Growth Survey), even if a Treaty change is necessary.
- ➔ Consider the European Parliament's duty to constantly recall the principle of community method to **avoid a detrimental duplication of institutions** and procedures in the field of Economic Governance.
- ➔ Strengthened **democratic control and scrutiny** by the European Parliament is paramount, at least with regard to **future banking supervision tasks**. **Increased informational rights**, increasing transparency, should be a first step, possibly followed by giving Parliament a right to consent to the appointment of relevant Members of the ECB's Executive Board dealing with supervision.
- ➔ **A sub-committee dealing with Economic and Monetary affairs** representing adequately the members and the members to be of the EMU could be envisaged in the EP.
- ➔ Give **consent to the appointment of the head of the ESM**. The head of the ESM should report to the EP about the fund's activities and operations.
- ➔ Enhanced **Economic Dialogue** (modelled on Monetary Dialogues with the ECB, but with a strong component of political accountability) with the other **EU Financial institutions**.

- ➔ *Commission to inform EP on results of review missions in Member States under enhanced surveillance (already included in the 2-pack).*
- ➔ *Commission informal consultation of competent Committees when amending the scoreboard used for the identification of macro-economic imbalances.*
- ➔ *Aim for regular timetable under the Semester Cycle for Economic Dialogues with the Commission, the Council and the Eurogroup (modelled on Monetary Dialogues with the ECB, but with a strong component of political accountability). Based on an inter-institutional agreement/exchange of letters.*
- ➔ *Plead for a separate entity within the ECB for the new Financial Supervisory Authority and for binding EP consent on the appointment of its Chair (if the EP rejects the candidate, a new candidate needs to be nominated).*
- ➔ *Appoint the external auditors for the Financial Supervisory Authority, whose findings should be reported to the EP.*
- ➔ *Ask the ECB to give a "follow-up response" to EP INI-Reports on the ECB Annual Report.*
- ➔ *Establish within the specific **committee or subcommittee** dealing with Economic and Monetary Affairs, a specific group dedicated to supervising the "supervisors" (e.g. a parliamentary supervisory board of the ECB made up of MEPs from the euro area MS dealing with matters that concern the euro). This "supervisory board" would inter alia be responsible as part of the competent Committee to draw up the annual report of the EP on the ECB. It could also be bound by certain confidentiality clause).*
- ➔ *In case of misconduct by the ECB in its supervisory tasks, the EP could set up a special **investigative committee**.*

### 1.1.6. How can the EU use legislative and budgetary instruments to achieve the *Europe 2020 Strategy*?

- The '*Europe 2020 Strategy*' is one of the fields in which an independent **detailed impact assessment by the European Parliament** may be needed.

Given the current economic context, a significant increase of the EU budget for the period 2014-2020 (Multiannual Financial Framework) is not to be expected. The crucial question will therefore be how more can be achieved with less. An analysis of the European value added of existing policies and the appropriateness of the EU budget to support those policies - such as the funds allocated to the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and Cohesion Policy, e.g., which currently represent the biggest share of the EU budget - appears to be necessary. Whereas Agriculture, Fisheries, Research, Transport and Tourism have the potential on their own to make a multi-faceted contribution to the EU 2020 objectives. For areas such as environment, climate change, digital agenda and health, considering the relatively small budget allocated to them, a "mainstreaming" of these aspects across different EU funding instruments is essential and will probably gain importance in the future.

#### Flagship initiatives of the Europe 2020 Strategy

1. "Innovation Union"
2. "Youth on the move"
3. "A Digital Agenda for Europe"
4. "Resource efficient Europe"
5. "An industrial policy for the globalisation era"
6. "An Agenda for new skills and jobs"
7. "European Platform against Poverty"

Across the board, the national and regional bodies responsible for the implementation of the Cohesion Policy should be encouraged to use EU funds for activities supporting the implementation of Flagship Initiatives. This could be attained through "soft" as well as "hard" measures, the latter including legal requirements for spending EU funding.

To improve political ownership of Europe 2020 by Member States and EU citizens and, at the same time, improve the synergy with national budgets, the Council and the European Parliament should increase synergies with national parliaments in the framework set up by the Six Pack and the European Semester. Expenditures with strong EU value added,

like R&D or the creation of public goods providing for economies of scale such as investment in infrastructure, should be moved forward at every level.

On the revenue side, new own resources should be secured and the GNI contribution should be reduced accordingly. The European Parliament should continue to encourage the Commission to propose new own resources (Financial transaction tax, EU VAT, etc.). New financial instruments like project bonds could also provide more freedom to finance EU-level projects.

As a coordinated approach with all EU institutions and Member States is needed to achieve the enormous challenge posed by the Europe 2020 strategy, Parliament should increase its coordination efforts and role by insisting that all stakeholders (the European Commission, the Council and the Member States) deliver what they agreed to at the outset.

#### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➡ *The Europe 2020 strategy is one of the fields in which a **detailed independent impact assessment by the European Parliament** may be needed.*
- ➡ *The European Parliament should **document the European added value of new own resources**.*
- ➡ *The European Parliament as the budgetary authority could support a more contractual relation between Member States and the European Commission developed by an approach to growth initiatives based on **independent** impact assessment of action plans proposed and adequate scrutiny of their implementation.*

## 1.2. How can we develop our bilateral relations with major world players?

Current practices and structures generally recognise that there is no 'one size fits all' policy that can be applied to the 'world players' listed. Apart from being 'big', these countries have very little in common in terms of their political structures, including the standing of their parliaments. The common approach the EU should adopt in engaging with these powers is to demonstrate interest in developing relationships and apply the principle of reciprocity in the engagement.

- *The way the European Parliament projects its values and defends its interests and positions there is of major importance. Both **the integration of parliamentary dimension into EU delegations** worldwide as well as the possible implementation and/or extension of its own network via **EPLOs** should be carefully studied. Given that the principle objective of the EP Liaison Office (EPLO) in Washington is on the one hand to help structure legislative cooperation with the US Congress, and on the other to underline the increasing role and powers of the European Parliament in international relations, there is no doubt that, if the **EPLO's experience is a success**, this could serve as an example for further worldwide representation. This would also help the promotion of democratic values and common understanding.*
- *Political groups could be encouraged to act together more closely with their **political parties and foundations** (see the role of the German political think-tanks in the Arab Spring) with their respective counterparts in the major powers.*

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ ***Study the integration of parliamentary dimension into EU delegations.***
- ➔ ***Derive from EPLOs' success.***
- ➔ *Political groups to push their respective **political parties and foundations**, which are subsidised by the EP, to develop a more structured interaction with their respective counterparts in the major powers.*

### 1.2.1. What are the distinct features of Europe's international bilateral relations, and which organisational forms could develop and reinforce functioning?

Seen from the perspective of major world players, the EU's bilateral relations present a number of surprising features. In a world in which international relations are — despite the emergence of non-state actors — still dominated by a Westphalian paradigm of sovereign nation-states, the EU's lack of 'state status' makes a difference. The second feature distinguishing the EU is that the Union does not replace, substitute for or inherit the obligations of any of its constitutive Member State, with the significant but limited exception of its role in the World Trade Organisation (in which EU Member States are members of the organisation but not allowed to intervene individually, as the European Commission is the EU's sole negotiator). The third feature is the evolving nature of the EU, which involves frequent changes in territorial borders (enlargements) and the institutional setting (changes in the treaties). The fourth feature, further adding to the complexity, is the differentiated degree of integration between Member States according to policies. The EU does yet not coincide with the Euro area or with the Schengen area. As a consequence, the European Union is not yet fully identified as the central political entity defending the its interests of 500 millions citizens in the world. Brussels is not yet fully seen as the central policy hub for European foreign policy. The European Union is not yet seen as having full strategic autonomy. Are none of these features likely to change in the future?

- *Should the European Institutions not start to think and to plan as if the Union had already achieved the status of a global player in order to be able to be identified as one? **Joint long term planning** between the institutions may be developed along that line and the **cost of non-Europe** in selected fields of international policy duly assessed at Parliament's initiative.*

#### Budgetary amendment to the Article 25 01 10 on the European Strategy and Policy Analysis System (ESPAS) preparatory action — Interinstitutional system identifying long-term trends facing the Union

The aim of such a [the ESPAS] preparatory action will be to:

- Create a [the] **European Strategy and Policy Analysis System** (ESPAS) with all EU institutions included by 2014 on the basis of an eventual proposal from the European Commission (Article 49 of the financial regulation). (...)
- Such a system will be inter-institutional in nature focusing on global long term trends, both external and internal, relating to the European Union.



- Such a system should be designed to provide regular input to the EU institutions to nourish long-term and medium-term strategic thinking, including reaching out to academics and other stakeholders to provide a broad perspective.
- Such input would include a detailed appraisal of long-term global trends and submission of the report to the incoming presidents of the EU institutions looking at challenges options for the period 2014-2019.
- Further, reports could include documents for the EU institutions for debate on forward looking topics, helping foster and deepen cooperation between the EU institutions.
- Such a system should develop links with other countries undertaking global trends work in order to benefit from their expertise as well as providing its own expertise to other countries trying to get a grip on strategic trends and changes.
- Building and maintaining an open website as a global repository for all relevant information to facilitate access to citizens, linking the site to other working websites on long-term trends across the globe.

Despite the present complexity there is already a substantial global interest in both the European Union and its Parliament. In global terms, the EU is very big; in some areas governed by a common policy (mostly trade), the EU is a first-class player: When it comes to trade in goods, the EU represents 15 % of world exports and 16.5 % of imports. The respective figures for other major world players are: United States 8.4 and 12.7 %, China 10.3 and 9 %, India 1.4 and 2.3 %, Brazil 1.3 and 1.2 %, Indonesia 1 and 0.9 % (source: WTO, last available figures, April 2012). In other areas, the EU would be big, but it is not perceived as such because it lacks a mature common policy. In terms of defence, the United States spent EUR 548 billion on its armed forces last year. The EU 27 Members States combined spent EUR 217 billion which is more than China, Russia and India combined.

European Union policy always also carries a normative dimension. This also applies to EU diplomacy. EU diplomacy is likely to continue to promote the rule of law, the respect of minorities, human rights and democratic standards. This task could become more difficult if counterpart players were to defend the economic and social success of authoritarian models and (ideologically) controlled societies.

- *Here the developing **European parliamentary diplomacy** can have a strong dimension. The European Parliament should be able to have a **rapid deployment capacity** to support the civil society and emerging political forces in countries opting for democracy. The support by Members of the European Parliament to democratic forces, the report of fact-finding missions or election observation missions should be swiftly channelled to the field by every means possible, including social media, in the language understandable by the majority.*
- *The EP is a House that has univocally stood in defence of fundamental rights such as democracy, freedom of expression and movement, gender equality, cultural dimension and the promotion of human rights, with broad political consensus on these core values. The Parliament's Sakharov*

*Prize honours people and organisations fighting for human rights and fundamental freedoms throughout the world, symbolising the European Parliament's support for those who put their lives and freedoms on the line by refusing to stay silent. It is one of the European Parliament's tools of diplomacy for promoting democracy worldwide. This recognition provides added strength and protection for the winners of the Sakharov Prize. It gives them a voice and amplifies it, year after year, for as long as their struggle may continue. This legacy should be maintained and fully reinvigorated by **stronger structures supporting the Sakharov Prize network**.*

- *The coercive part of normative diplomacy has been so far a gradual sanction mechanism in which the European Parliament is normally fully associated. But the European Parliament should be able to carry out an **independent impact assessment of sanctions** taken against third countries.*

At this stage, the European Union is unable to deliver military coercive action on its own beyond a certain level. According to a recent report of the European Parliament, the EU cannot be described as an autonomous strategic actor<sup>7</sup>. Military diplomacy with third countries remains a national issue and competence. The lack of strategic autonomy may be another blind spot of the European Union to address in the future.

- *The European Parliament has **to upgrade its expertise** in that field should the issue of European Defence gain in momentum. The European Parliament should be able to carry out an **independent impact assessment of the cost of non-Europe in the field of common procurement, common command, common training and limitations existing to pooling and sharing**. This independent expertise, building on cooperation with existing structures such as the European Defence Agency and the European Institute for Security Studies, could feed the developing parliamentary dimension of the CFSP.*

Given the EU's position as a major trading block in the global economy, it is only logical that its bilateral relations focus naturally on trade, market access and assistance to partners in order for them to improve their capacity to derive benefits from access to the Union's market. If the Doha Round were to fail, trade diplomacy could play an even more important role with a likely global scramble for free trade comprehensive agreements. The possibility to merge those agreement in a new multilateral framework (Doha +) should also be considered an important objective of the Union.

- *The Parliament should be able in the future to **assess the impact of potential free trade agreements** with third countries in order to check that they correspond to mutual interests and lead to an increased reciprocity.*

In the future, the dialogue with third countries about immigration could play a more significant role. The EU's interest is to attract talents and adequately manage clandestine immigration in co-operation with countries of origin. Convergence is already taking place between Member States in that field, as they tend to use a more and more common

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<sup>7</sup> EP Resolution of 14 December 2011 *on the Impact of the financial crisis on the defence sector in the EU Member States* (2011/2177(INI))

approach when discussing those critical issues with third countries. Those discussions should respect the principles of the Union.

- *The European Parliament should be **fully equipped** to follow the specific development of the immigration dimension of agreements with third countries, a dimension that cuts across foreign affairs, human rights, justice and home affairs, as well as social affairs*

In the future, a structured cooperation in the field of energy may be a strong priority for the Union. Energy partnerships will aim at providers interested in a lasting relation with the Union and, if possible, friendly and stable one. The basis for these relations should be long term contracts. Investments to facilitate provision of energy to the Union by those providers should be considered a strategic priority as the security of energy supply certainly remains one of weakest point of the Union. A similar approach may develop in the field of raw materials in a context in which other global players tend to increase their grip on scarce resources.

- *The European Parliament should be **fully equipped** to follow the specific development of an integrated energy strategy as outlined in the Commissions Document on Energy Roadmap 2050. This expertise will have to cut across the fields of foreign affairs, trade, energy and environment.*

EU is a green superpower with substantial agriculture exports and huge potential in the green economy. The European diplomacy has so far developed a climate change policy agenda in line with the principle of the Kyoto Protocol. Further development may occur with sustainability as a common feature.

## Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ Establish **joint long term planning** between the institution.
- ➔ Independent assessment of the **cost of non-Europe** in different fields of international relations.
- ➔ Develop **European parliamentary diplomacy**. The European Parliament should be able to have a **rapid deployment capacity** to support the civil society and emerging political forces in countries opting for democracy. For the support of the Members of the European Parliament to democratic forces, the report of fact-finding missions or election observation missions should be swiftly channelled to the field by every means possible, including social media, in the language understandable by the majority. There may be a need for inter -DG country-specific ad-hoc temporary task forces in this field.
- ➔ The European Parliament has **to upgrade its expertise** on European Defence. The European Parliament should be able to carry out an **independent impact assessment of the cost of non-Europe in the field of common procurement, common command, common training and limitations existing to pooling and sharing**. This independent expertise, building on Cooperation with existing structures such as the European Defence Agency and the European Institute for Security Studies, could feed the developing parliamentary dimension of the CFSP.
- ➔ The Parliament should be able in the future to **assess the impact of potential free trade agreements** with third countries in order to check that they correspond to mutual interests and lead to an increased reciprocity. Ad-hoc task forces to support joint assessment may be needed.
- ➔ The European Parliament should be **fully equipped to follow the specific development of the immigration dimension of agreements with third countries**, a dimension that cuts across foreign affairs, human rights, justice and home affairs, social affairs.
- ➔ The European Parliament should be **fully equipped** to follow the specific development of **an integrated energy strategy** as outlined in the Commission's Document on Energy Roadmap 2050. This expertise cuts across the fields of foreign affairs, trade, energy and environment. Ad-hoc task forces to support joint assessment may be needed.

### 1.2.2. How can the EU develop the cultural dimension of its external actions?

Both cultural policy and the projection of cultural policies towards third countries are to date essentially in the competence of the EU Member States and their regions. Since the EU has but a few competences in the cultural field, the cultural aspects of its external relations can so far only be developed in a complementary — and thus limited — manner.

- *The European Parliament as legislator should strive to enlarge as far as possible its current rather small room for manoeuvre. It was the EP that insisted on completing the initiatives of the year of intercultural dialogue in 2008 with an external dimension. If a similar initiative were to be taken again, the EP should build on its experience and promote decentralised cultural projects, possibly in cooperation with national parliaments and joint assemblies.*

Regarding the cultural dimension of the external action of the EU, *Erasmus Mundus* could develop into a powerful source of attraction and academic cooperation. It could thus contribute to the influence of the EU, while encouraging the development of a common sense of identity among young Europeans.

The creation of an *EU university*, connected to research infrastructures such as "EIT", as a centre of academic excellence, could be a helpful building block of a common European identity. Additionally, the EU could consider supporting the creation of European schools around the world, where European and non-European youth could receive an education based on common European values and that should allow students to move freely from one school to another, and thus across the world.

- *As a contribution to this cause, the Parliament could revise its policies **towards interns from third countries**, especially those at the doctoral or postdoctoral level as well as trainees already employed in other counterpart parliamentary assemblies.*

The European Union has indeed the duty to promote its own history, common values and its own institutional model of consensus building, especially as the European culture is also made possible by a societal model, enshrined in the Treaties, in which equality between men and women, secular and religious schools of thought, majority and minorities is maintained. The major world players surprisingly belong to a group that does not seem to be targeted by any culturally oriented external programmes that would fill in their knowledge gap about the Union.

- *Parliament's initiatives such as the **Parlamentarium** or the **future House of European History** could be used as benchmarks for such efforts. The artistic freedom and the value of innovation are also demonstrated at Parliament's level by many exhibitions. Some of those initiatives would be worth being shared and duplicated.*

Generally, culture has been seen as a particular challenge in the EU's relations with its immediate, specifically southern Mediterranean neighbours. The EU should work to bridge cultural misunderstandings and foster mutual knowledge with our mainly Muslim

neighbours there. This could be accomplished through a revised mobility policy allowing for more exchanges (of students and professionals). Concessions should be granted on visas, and adequate funding allocated to more ambitious programmes. The EU Delegations could also be given additional funding to promote activities that highlight the distinctive features of European culture (diversity, tolerance, compromise).

- *A **parliamentary dimension in EU Delegations** could be instrumental to support this move.*

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Revise its policies towards **interns from third countries**, especially those at the doctoral or postdoctoral level as well as trainees already employed in other counterpart parliamentary assemblies.*
- ➔ *Fully develop initiatives such as the **Parlamentarium or the future House of European History**. The artistic freedom and the value of innovation are also demonstrated at Parliament's level by an active institutional exhibition policy. Some of those initiatives would be worth being shared and duplicated.*
- ➔ *Push forward a **parliamentary dimension in EU Delegations**.*

### 1.2.3. How can the EU develop further the international monetary system and address macroeconomic imbalances in the world economy?

The current situation demonstrates that a successful coalition of forces is currently able to block the needed reforms of the international financial system. This situation does not serve the interest of the Europeans, although they are perceived as contributing to this blockage in the rest of the world.

The Member States of the European Union have expressed their wish for a more balanced monetary system. This common position should be recalled.

- *The common objective of an overall reform of the Bretton Woods Institutions should be better communicated to third countries. The European Parliament may make this point more systematically when dealing with third countries.*

**International Financial Institutions.** The rebalancing of the International Financial Institutions may start with those institutions that play a more active role in fulfilling the global development agenda.

The European Union should insist on a clear process ensuring full democratic accountability for decisions taken by the **International Financial Institutions**: their plans or decisions should have the explicit back-up of the relevant governments and parliaments - including the European Parliament when they impact Members of the Union - as many of the decisions taken by the IFI may affect both national budget and legal frameworks. A reform and a reweighting in decision mechanisms of the International Financial Institutions should go together with increased democratic scrutiny on their plans and actions.

A further strengthening of the IMF could be contemplated in order to provide for adequate financial resources and instruments to deal with macroeconomic shocks on the global level, making the accumulation of foreign reserves on national or regional levels less compulsory.

- *The European Parliament representing the people of the Union and the people of the Eurozone within the Union should develop its capacity to exert its right of **democratic scrutiny** on the actions of International Financial Institutions, independently from Member States, when their actions impact the Single market or the stability of the Eurozone. This is clearly the case with bailout agreements implemented by the IMF in the framework of the Troika.*

**External Representation of the Eurozone.** The Euro should progressively gain a stronger international dimension, enabling it to play a role similar to that currently occupied by the US dollar. The influence of the European Union or the Euro area should be strengthened by a single membership in international financial institutions (see also CEPS study on 'External Representation of the Euro Area'<sup>8</sup>) as well as by more robust central institutions for the Eurozone, that may include a central bank able to decide and supervise the financial sector, a common Redemption Fund, central resolution and deposit guarantee mechanism, a full-

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<sup>8</sup> Alessandro Giovannini, Daniel Gros, Paul Ivan, Piotr Maciej Kaczyński, Diego Valiante, *External representation of the Euro Area*, Policy Department A, DG IPOL, European Parliament, Brussels, 01 June 2012



fledged European monetary fund under community method, a European Treasury or, at least, a central fiscal capacity able to borrow, as well as a more significant European budget.

The members of the Union should make their long term monetary strategy explicit with clear political guide-lines beyond the obvious objective of price stability. Exchange rates should be ensured to function as an adjustment instrument for the prevention of macroeconomic imbalances. The EU could therefore support China in its efforts to make the Renminbi a freely convertible currency. Furthermore, the role of the Special Drawing Rights (SDR) as 'global currency' could be strengthened.

**WTO.** A second set of actions involves rethinking our economies in order to secure market access for our products and reduce the gap between ourselves and emerging countries that has been created by globalisation and, in some cases, has resulted from monetary, social and environmental dumping. Revisiting the World Trade Organisation and the global trading system would be wise, even if the current situation is unlikely to encourage such reforms (as has been demonstrated by the stalemate in the Doha Development Agenda talks).

- *Comprehensive trade agreements should - in the meantime - channel the principles of fairness, reciprocity and balance. The European Parliament should use the full potential given by the Lisbon Treaty to secure those principles.*

**G20.** With the euro area currently gaining experience with its new internal procedures to tackle macroeconomic imbalances, a similar scoreboard approach and an alert mechanism on the global level - for instance in the G 20 framework - would be a first step to increase (peer) pressure on national stakeholders to reduce imbalances.

- *The European Parliament should be fully equipped to participate in the process.*

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Exert **democratic scrutiny on the action of International Financial Institutions**, independently from Member States, when their actions impact the Single market or the stability of Eurozone. This is clearly the case with **bailout agreements** implemented by the IMF in the framework of **Troikas**.*
- ➔ *Comprehensive trade agreements should - in the meantime - incorporate the principles of fairness, reciprocity and balance. The European Parliament should use the full potential given by the Lisbon Treaty to secure those principles by its **right not to consent**.*
- ➔ *The European Parliament should be fully equipped to be informed about comprehensive trade agreement negotiations.*
- ➔ *The European Parliament should establish temporary ad-hoc structures to gather information and provide the EP's feedback to the negotiators of comprehensive trade agreements.*



#### 1.2.4. Could the structure of the EP Liaison Office in Washington DC be an example for other external and information offices?

- *The EP Liaison Office (EPLO) in Washington DC was established on 1 January 2010 to maintain regular contacts with US lawmakers and build a transatlantic network of legislators and legislative staffers working together on legislative and policy issues. The creation of EPLO reflected the specific nature of this transatlantic relation, one between two partners that share common values, have well established democratic systems and enjoy similar levels of economic development. The US Congress, the powerful parliament of a continent wide democracy, has also served as a reference for the European Parliament<sup>9</sup>.*
- *More EPLOs could be opened in countries that are strategic partners of the EU, such as the BRICS countries, as this could also help the promotion of democratic values and common understanding, even if the scarcity of resources prohibits the duplication of liaison offices at this stage in direct contact with the Parliaments of main democratic partners' (Brazil, India, South Africa and potentially Russia).*
- *However, this option needs to be carefully studied under several aspects:*
  - *First, it could create the impression of an overlap with EU delegations. Our partners might have difficulties understanding the need for two different 'EU representations'.*
  - *Secondly, the countries where such an office would be opened would need established democratic values and structures, as the mission of an EPLO is to exchange views and practices with a democratic parliament.*
  - *Thirdly, the achievements of and experience with the EPLO in Washington DC should be assessed, taking into account especially the period that EP officials serve abroad, with two to four years most likely being necessary for officials to build a network in a third country, although shorter periods can be interesting from an educational point of view.*
- *An alternative solution to the opening of new EPLOs would be the **secondment of EP officials** to the EU Delegations in selected countries (as suggested in the Saryusz Wolski report on the BRICS<sup>10</sup>). Such secondment schemes would of course require careful preparation and clear objectives.*
- *Intensified and **regular contacts at expert level**, e.g. at committee level, might serve as a suitable substitute solution for a while.*

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<sup>9</sup> European Parliament, *Building continent-wide democracy - US Congress & European Parliament - Functions and Expenditures*, (PE504.929), Brussels, December 2012

<sup>10</sup> J. Saryusz-Wolski Report on the EU foreign policy towards the BRICS and other emerging powers: objectives and strategies, (2011/2111(INI)), AFET Committee

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ ***More EPLOs** could be opened in countries that are strategic partners of the EU, such as the BRICS countries, as this could also help the promotion of democratic values and common understanding, even if the scarcity of resources prohibits the duplication of liaison offices at this stage in direct contact with the Parliaments of main democratic partners (Brazil, India, South Africa and potentially Russia).*
- ➔ *An **alternative solution to the opening of new EPLOs** would be the **secondment of EP officials to the EU Delegations** in selected countries (as suggested in the Saryusz Wolski report on the BRICS). Also such secondment schemes would of course require careful preparation and clear objectives, with the convergence of regulatory frameworks on both sides as one such possible objective.*
- ➔ *Intensified and **regular contacts at expert level**, e.g. at committee level, might serve as a suitable substitute solution for a while.*

### 1.2.5 What might be the implications for premises and facilities if the external and information offices develop new outreach and monitoring roles?

- *In developing this question, a differentiation needs to be made between the classic EPIOs and a possible future range of EPLOs outside the European Union, based on the experience made with the now existing Washington EPLO. A political balance should be found between the possible need for a closer cooperation with national Parliaments inside the EU, based on the new parliamentary interaction and cooperation possibilities due to the Lisbon Treaty, and Parliament's wish to extend its outreach to major global players also on an inter-parliamentary basis.*
- *A model similar to the US EPLO could possibly be envisaged for a further development of EPIOs, e.g. for a **better monitoring of the legislative work and societal debate** through the **secondments of staff from different DGs following issues of their competences**. Developing such new tasks would require an adjustment of EPIOs' working facilities and a change in their mission statement. More resources could be devoted to reaching out beyond the EU, if information offices inside of the EU were to be restructured with the view of changing their focus to increase their **productivity** and **cost-efficiency** through new technologies in information and telecommunication (NTIC).*
- *Were extra EU liaison offices to be set up and to develop a deeper outreach, **a detailed performance audit of the EPLO** in Washington should be the first basis for any development plan that would have as a priority to derive the best from **NTIC**.*
- *The legal statute of the European Parliament should be clarified in order for it to be fully able to rent or buy premises abroad in an autonomous fashion.*
- *To maximize interaction between the three places of work of the European Parliament, the, EPIOs and the EPLO(s) as well as with Members' offices in constituencies, **state-of-the-art inter-connected meeting rooms** should be considered a priority in those different places. A detailed assessment of quality and quantity needed should be organized. Optimal location of EP and Members' premises should also be considered in order to reduce travel time and costs.*

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Further develop EPIOs with the objective of a **better monitoring of the legislative work and societal debate** through the **secondments of staff from different DGs following issues of their competences**.*
- ➔ *Developing such new tasks would require **an adjustment of EPIOs' working facilities** and a change in their mission statement.*
- ➔ *More Resources could be devoted to reaching out beyond the EU, if information offices inside of the EU were to be restructured with the view of changing their focus, increasing their **productivity** and **cost-efficiency** through NTIC.*
- ➔ ***A detailed performance audit of the EPLO** in Washington as the first basis for any development based on this successful model.*
- ➔ *Clarify legal statute of the European Parliament in order for it to be fully **able to rent or buy premises abroad** in an autonomous fashion.*
- ➔ *Maximize interaction between the three places of work of the European Parliament, the, EPIOs and the EPLO(s) as well as with Members' offices in constituencies, with **state-of-the-art inter-connected meeting rooms**.*

### 1.2.6. Is the EP's current set of standing delegations and assemblies with permanent secretariats able to take into account the rapidly changing world economy?

- *Given the constantly changing — and improving — relations between the EU and third countries and regional blocs, particularly those codified by new association and trade agreements, the EP needs to be involved in implementing and following up on bilateral agreements, notably for programmes and projects with EU budgetary implications. This role can be fulfilled through the EP's participation in **joint committees** with officials of the Council and the European Commission.*

Increased contacts at expert level, an intensified committee to committee cooperation, and more dialogue at Sherpas' level will help increasing the relevance and enhance the positioning of the European Parliament.

- *The role of traditional EP delegations, working in close cooperation with EEAS services, contributes to advance EU interests abroad. Yet the cost of EP delegations and the cost of joint parliamentary assemblies should lead to revisiting the present structures with a view to maximise their output in a cost-efficient way in the context of an increasingly digital environment in which thematic policy networks play a more and more decisive role. A detailed **performance audit of delegations and joint assemblies** beyond the production of declarations and statements may be carried out to examine possible reallocation of resources in this field.*
- *On an internal level, there is **an urgent need for better coordination** between the delegation and committee secretariats to avoid overlapping visits to third countries, meetings and other events. At present, information is not adequately exchanged, in part because of restrictions placed on delegation staff wishing to attend certain (in camera) committee meetings. These restrictions hinder the work of delegation secretariats, undermine the delegations and occasionally also lead to misunderstandings during visits to third countries, where delegation members and committee rapporteurs cannot access the same information.*
- *The situation could be improved by establishing **horizontal pools of competences** — such as 'political and economic integration to the EU', 'immigration, 'justice and home affairs' — within the delegation and committee secretariats, in which the number of staff with economic background should be increased.*

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ ***Joint committees** with officials of the Council and the European Commission.*
- ➔ *Carry out a detailed **performance audit of delegations and joint assemblies**.*
- ➔ *The role of a specific diplomacy between legislators starts to gain momentum. Legislators are legitimately eager to contribute to the agenda setting for executive fora such as the G8, the G20 or UN conferences, as the guidelines decided there will end impacting legislation. This is why it might be considered to find a **new balance** at the European Parliament's level **between traditional delegation and joint assemblies' activities** on the one hand **and a more focused parliamentary diplomacy** on the other, concentrating on legislative/regulation issues as well as on democracy building. An overall efficiency audit of delegations and joint assemblies might be envisaged to prepare for such a restructuring.*
- ➔ *Create **horizontal pools of competences** - such as political and economic integration to the EU', 'immigration', 'justice and home affairs'.*
- ➔ ***Ad-hoc task forces** to support joint assessment may also be needed.*

### 1.2.7. How could political groups, transnational political parties and their foundations develop stronger international impact?

Political parties and their foundations can complement the EU public diplomatic efforts but should not be substituted to it. Political parties and foundations have a specific role to play in pre-election and election periods. They can offer technical training to fellow parties. They can strengthen access to local networks of active citizens and militants. They may contribute to disseminate information and positive image of the European Union.

- *The action undertaken by European political parties in third countries should become a part of the relation **between European political parties and the European Parliament**, which provides them with part of their funding.*

Ways to enhance their impact of political parties and their political foundation may include the following:

- European political parties and their foundations could aim at developing closer links between them for their activities in the field of external relations, increasing their common ability to shape the EU's external policy and thereby also providing a better value for money. Structures such as the Westminster Foundation and the National Endowment for Democracy help political parties to cooperate when dealing with third countries while respecting their identity and their proportionate weight.
- Parties should also aim to establish international political alliances, i.e. coalitions with sister parties from strategic countries or regional blocks (the 'world players'). Creating common policy hubs and networks, and establishing exchange programmes for training (young) politicians are among the future activities that European parties could develop with their international sister parties. This would enhance mutual understanding of one another's positions on various issues — political, economic, trade — and better project European values and interests. Closer links and more intensive cooperation would also make supra-national decisions more effective, accountable and accepted by the public. Transnational common positions could be defined in advance of important international conferences and summits.
- European parties could choose to have their leader (President) focus principally on internal (EU) policy issues, while their first Vice-President (VP) oversees external relations.
- *Party to party relations cannot be substituted for **direct relations between legislators**, which are more focused on policy out-put. Those relations can be functional, for instance committee chair with similar committee chair. The role of the European Parliament officials may become even more decisive in that field, in order to ensure the appropriate flow of information and regular interaction at expert level. This activity may increase with the generalisation of benchmarking and the research of best practices as part of the global efforts towards better governance and better law-making.*



- *Links between legislators can also be based on partisan affiliation: centre right coordinator for a committee with centre right leading figure of the equivalent committee in third country, socialist group leader with the equivalent group leader in third country.*
- *The permanent staffers of EP's political group are essential to support these permanent links between legislators at partisan level. This is why staffers of the political groups should be present in EP liaison offices if they were to be established in new locations.*
- *As a general principle, an adequate balance has to be politically established between international networking through European parties, through the political groups of legislator and through committee to committee activities, as all three types of exchanges contribute to a better informed and more influential European Union.*

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *The action undertaken by European political parties in third countries should develop a part of **the relation between European political parties and the European Parliament**, which provides them with part of their funding.*
- ➔ ***Party to party** relations cannot be substituted for **direct relations between legislators**, which are **more focused on policy out-put**. Those relations can be functional, for instance committee chair with similar committee chair. The role of the European Parliament officials may become even more decisive in that field, in order to ensure the appropriate flow of information and **regular interaction at experts' level**.*
- ➔ *This activity may increase with the **generalisation of benchmarking** and the research of best practices as part of the global efforts towards better governance and better law-making.*
- ➔ ***The permanent staffers of EPs political group are essential** to support these permanent links between legislators at partisan level. This is why staffers of the political groups should be present in EP liaison offices if those were to be established in new locations.*



### 1.2.8. Should the EP formally propose the establishment of an EU-US Parliamentary Assembly + Should the EP reinforce relationships with Brazil and Indonesia?

- *The starting point for deliberating on an EU-US Parliamentary Assembly should be **an efficiency audit of the 'Transatlantic Legislators' Dialogue (TLD)**, providing the following points for reflection:*
  - *Meetings with a limited number of participants provide more time and opportunities for good qualitative exchanges. When the number of EU and US participants exceeds a certain limit (around 25-30), speaking time is too limited and quality undermined.*
  - *An issue-oriented approach and a focused agenda not only help structure the discussion, but also attract strong participants.*
  - *Americans like a topical and 'down-to-business' approach, and are less interested in general speeches and formal declarations.*
  - *A new formula in which 50 percent of the participants would come from the US delegation and 50 percent from relevant EP committees could be considered.*
- *Given these considerations, the existing EP-US Congress links should be further developed rather at a **committee-to-committee level** over time to permit an on-going dialogue between parliamentarians on legislative issues of concrete concern to politicians and electorates on both sides of the Atlantic. Whereas this structure could indeed develop into a formal EU-US Parliamentary Assembly in due course, encompassing the US Senate as well as the House of Representatives, at this point in time the establishment of an EU-US Parliamentary Assembly might not be similarly productive as an intensified cooperation on a more concrete and committee-/topic-based working level.*
- *Another possible option could be the **opening up of the TLD to other countries**. This could be interesting, but should be done on an ad hoc basis, when the agenda includes a particular topic to which the contribution of a third country would add meaningfully to the discussion. The choice of country would depend on its affiliation with a group (for example, the G8 or G20) or on its interest in a particular topic. Although adapting the TLD to incorporate new countries is an option, this would nevertheless undermine the specificity of the TLD's relation with the US.*
- ***Issue-oriented inter-parliamentary relations** could be developed with other strategic partners, such as Brazil or Indonesia. As in the past few years Brazil has become one of the agriculture giants in the world, with the potential to further expand its agricultural sector, the European Parliament could well benefit from closer parliamentary links with Brazil. Cooperation could start again at committee level and possibly develop into a broader parliamentary forum or assembly.*

When appropriate opening a parliamentary dialogue with other major countries, such as China, should remain an option, in order to 'accompany' rather than 'follow' the country's democratisation process.

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Carry out an efficiency audit of the Transatlantic Legislators' Dialogue (TLD).*
- ➔ *Develop issue-oriented inter-parliamentary relations with other strategic democratic partners, among whom Brazil and Indonesia. This cooperation should be based on the principle of genuine mutual interest.*

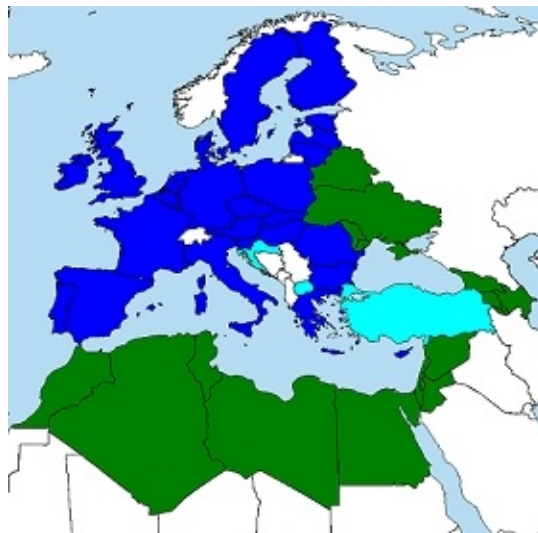
### 1.3. How should we develop relationships with our eastern and southern neighbouring nations?

The future of the European Union's relationships with its neighbours substantially depends on the development of the enlargement policy, itself in relation to EU's own capacity to deepen its integration and perhaps develop into concentric circles of membership.

Should the EU choose to develop over time a more subtle approach to different possible status in the periphery, e.g. 'candidate countries, associate EU members, advanced status associates, associates, neighbours, cooperating countries... ', its options and strategies to influence its extended neighbourhood might increase.

- *Members interact with neighbouring countries in very different contexts and formats: election observation, observation mission with the EEAS, monitoring of Agreements and negotiations, partisan ties. Those activities are very valuable and create a dense and useful network among political elites and should continue to be adequately supported in an increasingly digital context. A **stronger emphasis could be placed** on the core business of the European Parliament: **legislative activities** and **support to democracy**. Members should be able to explain to their fellow counterparts what the state of the play is on key legislative files. They should also be able to provide advice on how to implement more EU compatible legislation in their own countries.*

European Neighbourhood Policy map:



#### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➡ ***Stronger emphasis on the core business of the European Parliament: legislative activities and support to democracy.***

### 1.3.1. Are there ways in which parliamentary relations with neighbouring nations could be strengthened in addition to the possibility of EU membership?

The institutional integrity of the Union has to be kept under any circumstances. No third country should interfere with Members in the decision making process of the Union. A "100% information but 0% decision" privilege should be granted equally to all future members and neighbours, as the legislation currently under discussion at Union level or at Eurozone level is deemed to be their future legislation. Wide ranging efforts in the field of public diplomacy should accompany action plans of the neighbourhood policy as well as accession negotiations.

- *Public diplomacy deployed to support enlargement should fully involve **parliamentary diplomacy**, which is equipped to support democratic developments, human rights and action plans in the neighbourhood.*
- *Parliamentary diplomacy with neighbouring countries could include the EP considering to also **support regional initiatives** by attending their meetings. One current example of an interesting regional initiative is the South East European Cooperation Process, which has begun transforming its parliamentary dimension into a Parliamentary Assembly, following the Nordic Council's example.*
- *Parliaments of negotiating countries might be included in the **subsidiarity mechanism** created for Member States' parliaments with the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, under the condition that negotiating states' observations will of course be treated as non-binding opinions. By participating in the subsidiarity mechanism, parliaments of the future member states would gain knowledge and experience. The Union would get a better knowledge on the red lines for their public opinion. The opinion of the Union would get a better understanding of what their behaviour would be if they were to participate in the Union. The participation in the subsidiarity mechanism would also raise the awareness among these countries' MPs and general public about how national parliaments may be involved in the EU decision making process.*
- *The EP could continue to invite national Parliaments of pre-accession countries to inter-parliamentary meetings organised for national Parliaments of the EU Member States'.*

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➡ Enhance **parliamentary diplomacy** which is equipped to support democratic developments and human rights.
- ➡ *Parliaments of negotiating countries might be included in the subsidiarity mechanism created for Member States' parliaments with the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, under the condition that negotiating states' observations will of course be treated as non-binding opinions.*
- ➡ The EP could **continue to invite** national Parliaments of pre-accession countries to inter-parliamentary meetings organised for national Parliaments of the EU Member States'.

### 1.3.2. What alternatives are there to full membership of the EU for neighbouring nations?

There are no legal alternatives to full membership of the European Union: there are no associated EU Member States, for example. However, during the accession negotiations, special arrangements for candidate countries or even for their regions may be agreed. Those arrangements may provide that some part of the *acquis* does not apply for some countries or regions.

With the neighbouring countries, the EU may conclude agreements establishing an association involving reciprocal rights and obligations, common actions and special procedure (Associations Agreements) under Article 217 TFEU.

#### **Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union: Article 217<sup>11</sup>**

The Union may conclude with one or more third countries or international organisations agreements establishing an association involving reciprocal rights and obligations, common action and special procedure.

Other agreements, usually preceding the Associating Agreements, like Partnership and Cooperation Agreements, may be also concluded under Article 216 TFEU. Taking into account the framework agreed in those agreements, the Union will programme its further actions vis-à-vis every country under the European Neighbourhood Instrument.

#### **Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union: Article 216<sup>12</sup>**

1. The Union may conclude an agreement with one or more third countries or international organisations where the Treaties so provide or where the conclusion of an agreement is necessary in order to achieve, within the framework of the Union's policies, one of the objectives referred to in the Treaties, or is provided for in a legally binding Union act or is likely to affect common rules or alter their scope.
2. Agreements concluded by the Union are binding upon the institutions of the Union and on its Member States.

The Agreement on the European Economic Area (EEA) merits special mention. It comprises the countries of the European Union (EU), plus Iceland, Liechtenstein and

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<sup>11</sup> *Official Journal of the EU*, C326/55, 26 Oct. 2012

<sup>12</sup> *ibid.*

Norway. It entered into force on 1 January 1994 following an agreement between the Member States of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) and the European Community. It allows Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway to participate in the EU's Internal Market without being members of the EU. They are obliged to adopt all EU legislation related to the single market, except laws on agriculture and fisheries. One EFTA member, Switzerland, has not joined the EEA. Its relations with the European Union are governed by a series of bilateral agreements (almost 120) covering different fields, such as, for instance, free movement of persons, air transport, trade in agricultural products, environment etc.

- It is likely that the future architecture of the EU and its neighbourhood will take the form of concentric circles, with the Euro area at the centre.
- Preliminarily it needs to be pointed out that the notion of 'full membership in the EU' is a variable geometry as can be clearly demonstrated with regards to the UK and Denmark, two of the most obvious particularities which enjoy 'derogations'.
- Also the Euro area currently includes only 17 countries, with a central bank nonetheless described as a federal institution.
- Highly relevant for other neighbouring nations is the EU's experience with the four European Free Trade Area (EFTA) countries (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland): These four countries are part of the EU Internal Market without being members of the EU. Relations between the EU and the three EFTA Member States Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway are based on the European Economic Area (EEA), which provides for full participation in the internal market. The EEA agreement is managed and monitored in a highly institutionalised framework. Unlike the bilateral EU-Swiss agreements (130 bilateral and sectoral agreements), the EEA agreement provides for dynamically adapting the agreement to the evolving *acquis*.

The agreement is independently monitored and applied by a judicial authority (the EFTA Court) and an enforcement authority (the EFTA Surveillance Authority). The agreement also foresees possibilities for Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway to shape the EU's decision-making. Both the EU and the EEA/EFTA countries seem to be generally satisfied with the EEA agreement. Yet it is uncertain whether an EEA-type solution would work for countries with varying levels of political and socio-economic development.

- Also other forms of unions have been implemented successfully. With Turkey, for example, the EU has for the time being in a customs union while it keeps on negotiating accession.
- The EU can offer its neighbours a range of tools: visa liberalisation for their citizens, access to EU internal market for their products, participation in EU programmes and Agencies. All the options require a coherent political packaging and a 'symbolic' formula that matches neighbouring countries' aspirations with the EU's values and interests.

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➡ *Develop and generalize regular detailed independent impact assessment of comprehensive trade or association agreements.*



### 1.3.3. Is the current system of interparliamentary standing delegations sufficient?

- *The current system is both excessive and insufficient.*
- *At present, standing inter-parliamentary delegations encompass a very diverse reality:*
  - *Delegations for relations with the parliament of a country or group of countries;*
  - *Delegations for relations with a specific regional body;*
  - *Delegations to a parliamentary cooperation committee (PCC) or to multilateral parliamentary assemblies.*

In some cases, the legal base is derived from an instrument of international law (a treaty), such as a Partnership and Cooperation Agreement or the ACP Convention.

- *The EP's commitment to developing inter-parliamentary relations is unmatched in the world: no other parliamentary assembly has developed such a system. In this sense, **the system is excessive**, as it goes well beyond the institutional and legal obligations of the EP.*
- *What is more, the EP's external relations are by no means limited to standing inter-parliamentary delegations, as also other bodies of the EP carry out substantial external relations activities:*
  - *The President (at times delegating his representation at a specific event to a Vice-President);*
  - *The political groups and their own bodies;*
  - *The parliamentary committees and sub-committees;*
  - *The Conference of Presidents, which also retains the power to establish ad hoc delegations;*
  - *Finally the MEPs themselves, on their own initiative, who can travel abroad and develop their contacts, individually or in the frame of the activities of their national or European party. In this sense, the current system of standing inter-parliamentary delegations is insufficient to frame the external relations of the EP.*

Mutually beneficial inter-parliamentary relations seem to require two basic conditions:

1. *two parliamentary bodies of comparable **democratic quality** and substantive institutional standing, and*
  2. *a **reciprocal degree of interest** in the relation.*
- *Yet these two requirements are rarely met: the democratic quality of a substantial number of assemblies is debatable; the institutional standing of some parliaments — for example those of strong presidential regimes — is not comparable to the EP's and, finally, the interest in sustaining the interparliamentary relationship is often driven by the EP's unilateral commitment. Without questioning the EP's continuation of conducting inter-parliamentary relations, the level of institutionalisation of the relation should be determined — 'earned' — by foreign parliamentary institutions according to their quality, standing and interest. The current system, with its rigid, predefined calendars, risks ritualising parliamentary relations and transforming*

*them into a routine exercise when they should be the expression of an active and shared political interest. Except for delegations established by an instrument of international law, Parliament could consider **rethinking its delegations**, working **more with ad hoc delegations**, possibly also **smaller in size, clearly focused and more flexible** in their calendars (as international political events are not limited to 'turquoise weeks').*

- *Finally, Parliament's need to travel in order to maintain strong foreign relations should also be revisited. The EP devotes considerable attention, resources, and regulatory effort to its foreign missions. But as former Vice President of the EP Fred Catherwood used to say, **'important people don't travel; they receive'**. In evaluating parliamentary missions, a policy for inviting and receiving guests should also be developed, considering that those third parties, including countries who have the means and the interest in developing the relationship with the EP, would also organise visits for themselves.*
- *In general, a concrete first step to reviewing the current system of inter-parliamentary standing delegations would be to subject it to a general performance audit in order to evaluate its impact on legislation as the core business of Parliament.*

The European Parliament Delegations during the parliamentary term 2009-14:

Delegations to Parliamentary Assemblies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delegation to the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly</li> <li>• Delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean</li> <li>• Delegation to the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly</li> <li>• Delegation to the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly</li> <li>• Delegation for relations with the NATO Parliamentary Assembly</li> </ul>
Joint parliamentary committees (JPC)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delegation for relations with the Maghreb countries and the Arab Maghreb Union</li> <li>• Delegation for relations with Switzerland and Norway and to the EU-Iceland Joint Parliamentary Committee and the European Economic Area (EEA) Joint Parliamentary Committee</li> <li>• Delegation to the EU-Croatia Joint Parliamentary Committee</li> <li>• Delegation to the EU-Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia Joint Parliamentary Committee</li> <li>• Delegation to the EU-Turkey Joint Parliamentary Committee</li> <li>• Delegation to the EU-Chile Joint Parliamentary Committee</li> <li>• Delegation to the EU-Mexico Joint Parliamentary Committee</li> <li>• Delegation to the Cariforum — EU Parliamentary Committee</li> </ul>
Parliamentary cooperation committees (PCC)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delegation to the EU-Armenia, EU-Azerbaijan and EU-Georgia Parliamentary Cooperation Committees</li> <li>• Delegation to the EU-Moldova Parliamentary Cooperation Committee</li> <li>• Delegation to the EU-Russia Parliamentary Cooperation Committee</li> <li>• Delegation to the EU-Ukraine Parliamentary Cooperation Committee</li> <li>• Delegation to the EU-Kazakhstan, EU-Kyrgyzstan and EU-Uzbekistan Parliamentary Cooperation Committees, and for relations with Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Mongolia</li> </ul>

## Other interparliamentary delegations

- Delegation for relations with Afghanistan
- Delegation for relations with Australia and New Zealand
- Delegation for relations with Belarus
- Delegation for relations with Canada
- Delegation for relations with India
- Delegation for relations with Iran
- Delegation for relations with Iraq
- Delegation for relations with Israel
- Delegation for relations with Japan
- Delegation for relations with the Korean Peninsula
- Delegation for relations with the Palestinian Legislative Council
- Delegation for relations with the People's Republic of China
- Delegation for relations with South Africa
- Delegation for relations with the United States
- Delegation for relations with Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro and Kosovo
- Delegation for relations with the countries of the Andean Community
- Delegation for relations with the Arab Peninsula
- Delegation for relations with the countries of Central America
- Delegation for relations with the Maghreb countries and the Arab Maghreb Union
- Delegation for relations with the Mashreq countries
- Delegation for relations with the Mercosur countries
- Delegation for relations with the Pan-African Parliament
- Delegation for relations with Switzerland and Norway and to the EU-Iceland Joint Parliamentary Committee and the European Economic Area (EEA) Joint Parliamentary Committee
- Delegation for relations with the countries of South Asia
- Delegation to the EU-Kazakhstan, EU-Kyrgyzstan and EU-Uzbekistan Parliamentary Cooperation Committees, and for relations with Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Mongolia
- Delegation for relations with the countries of Southeast Asia and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)

## Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➡ *The current system is both excessive and insufficient.*
- ➡ *Carry out an **efficiency audit of delegations**.*
- ➡ *Rebuild functionality and support to delegations ahead of next European elections to have a new system in place for the new Parliament 2014.*

#### 1.3.4. How should EU policies such as cohesion and transport policy contribute to relationships with neighbouring countries?

The cohesion policy aims to encourage convergence, competitiveness and growth in the EU's regions. Since 'natural' economic frontiers do not correspond to the EU's borders, the development of regions on the EU's periphery - be they covered by neighbouring policies or not - is often directly beneficial to the EU itself. Cross-border links and projects are essential. Cooperation of border regions can increase support for European integration and potential future enlargement. For southern neighbours, it should help to increase the quality of local administration and the attractiveness of their own territories for their citizens. This kind of the cooperation can also help in limiting illegal immigration to the EU.

A more decentralised approach - more independent from bilateral relations at state level - should be considered. Regions on the borders of the Union or situated in vital corridors should be considered priority targets.

Transport policy is an extremely important tool that could contribute to better relations with directly neighbouring countries sharing a land or maritime border with the EU. Trans European Networks (TENs) should continue beyond EU borders, especially as neighbouring countries often have significantly worse physical infrastructure, legal frameworks and security standards. In this context it is worth noting that the EU neighbouring countries are already covered by the EU's Common Transport Policy (CTP), which notably aims at extending the single transport market beyond the Union and its neighbourhood in a much wider sphere of immediate European interests. European transport policy has to be pursued with a wide continental grid in mind. Such a wider European grid could be discussed with partners beyond the periphery covered by the current neighbourhood policy. Active participation of EIB and EBRD should contribute to materialize projects.

Tourism needs to be named as a "soft" way of sharing beliefs, lifestyles and tolerance among neighbours, and strengthening external policies through a multi-faceted approach. Tourism should be considered a full-fledged field of action for a more integrative European policy towards neighbours.

- *In general, as the economic environment of the EU becomes more global, EU internal policies (including namely those on climate change, energy and transport) will include a more important external dimension. This aspect should be addressed in the **agreements** concluded with neighbouring countries. A policy dialogue should be organised with these countries in order to evaluate their policy priorities, and this information should contribute to shaping internal EU policies. The programming of the external financial instruments, in particular that of the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI), should be consistent with that of the internal policies' instruments. This would increase the efficiency and impact of the ENI's actions. Through opinions on regional road maps and strategy as well as through consent on enhanced trade,*

*cooperation or neighbourhood agreements the Parliament's **different relevant committees** could play a key role in ensuring that consistency. They should have the capacity to organise **wide reaching hearings** on policy options and missions of inquiry concerning implementation.*

- *Parliament's multi-lateral political bodies (i.e. the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean committees on Economic and Financial Affairs, Social Affairs and Education, or Euronest's ECON Committee) should also serve to identify the needs of our neighbouring countries as far as structural policies are concerned.*

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Different Committees should be able to jointly check the programming of the European Neighbourhood Instrument and its implementation, in order to ensure consistency and maximise synergies with other policies.*

### 1.3.5. How can the EP promote and broaden intercultural dialogue?

- *Culture is mainly a competence of Member States and regions and should remain so. Intercultural dialogue being a complex concept with progress in this field being difficult to assess, a better understanding of the many efforts of **decentralized cooperation** in the field of intercultural dialogue may be developed in the European Parliament, with **more slots for** exhibitions and events supported by members aimed at (re-)presenting their region. In general, **political groups and political parties** with their own identity and networks may be better placed than the EP as a whole to get involved in this domain and to decide what resources they wish to devote to it.*
- ***Parliament may focus its efforts** on developing intercultural dialogue where different beliefs coexist and could trigger tensions in the future. In particular, it is paramount to be constantly raising there the awareness of young people towards the importance of developing an active (European) citizen-ship which is based on the rule of law, open to the world and can respect cultural diversity as well as a genuine parity between men and women, as between majority and minorities. Ventures should be stopped wherever a minimal compliance with those principles is not to be attained. A detailed assessment of activities undertaken so far should be carried out by **a unique unit or directorate in charge of democratisation** related activities.*
- *Parliament could also consider developing additional events within the framework of the activities of the **Parlamentarium** to emphasize intercultural dialogue. Also, the **EU representation offices** could organize **events** to strengthen intercultural aspects of local relevance.*

#### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ ***Political groups and political parties** with their own identity and networks that are better placed than the EP as a whole to get involved in this domain to it.*
- ➔ ***Parliament may focus its efforts on developing intercultural dialogue where different beliefs coexist and could trigger tensions in the future.***
- ➔ *Develop further the unique support directorate for all democratisation related activities.*

### 1.3.6. What contacts can be developed through which European values could be communicated?

The debate about values has to develop and be continuously cultivated in the European Union itself. Only then can these values be made part of the basic principles of the Union, and be made explicit in the conditionality applied to negotiations with third countries. Compliance of the Institutions with the European values is paramount.

The pragmatic origin of those principles in recent European history may also be better explained. The present European values are not derived from a religion, a doctrine or a social class that would be specific to the West. They have emerged with the need to maintain peace between and within the European nations.

- *The **House of European History** contributes to playing such a function. And one should consider ways to expand its activities in that field much **beyond Brussels**.*

To promote values, the EU's methods must be based on continuous dialogues, both formal and informal, working with classical methods of political communication as well as social networks and the internet. Informal cooperation between the EU institutions and new structures, such as the European Endowment for Democracy (EED), should be encouraged. A reinforced cooperation with the EU's 'strategic partners', in multilateral and bilateral policy-making platforms, should also buttress our dialogues. Our formal partnerships with third countries and their authorities can be further bolstered by support to non-governmental organisations and by informal interaction with civil society. The action of the EED will be crucial in forging this type of extra-governmental partnerships.

A full-fledged parliamentary diplomacy could be a significant part of the continuum of European public diplomacy in its effort to support the European values. A better evaluation of its impact in failing states and developing democracies is needed

The question should also be considered whether compliance with EU values should become a requirement that is imposed — an element of a 'more for more' principle to be applied to all regions, including those beyond the EU neighbourhood.

- *Concrete actions might include more and better support in the circulation of European films and audiovisual works which underline European identity, possibly based on the **Parliament's Lux Prize experience** which has already become a quality label for European film productions. Moreover, joint events could be foreseen through the EU representations, with local organisations that might be focal points in order to develop and transmit European values.*
- *A **Parliamentary dimension in EU representations** could be a value added in that field.*



### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ The **House of European History** contributes to playing such a function. And one should consider ways to expand its activities in that field much **beyond Brussels**. Extend digitally and by an active exhibition policy the outreach of the House of European History.
- ➔ Build upon the **Parliament's Lux Prize experience** after a clear assessment of its impact. Moreover, joint events could be foreseen through the EU representations, with local organisations that might be focal points in order to develop and transmit European values.
- ➔ A **Parliamentary dimension in EU representations** to support a value oriented diplomacy.



## 1.4. What security, defence and intelligence functions could the EU fulfil?

**Fight against terror.** The EU should be at the forefront of the international promotion of antiterrorism strategies that comply with fundamental rights and values of the EU. Constant democratic scrutiny at European level is necessary to ensure that all citizens can enjoy their freedom of movement.

**Fight against organised crime.** The general threat of organised crime should not be underestimated, as criminal organisations have succeeded in building well organised networks. The various legislative and enforcement mechanisms to fight organised crime at the EU's disposal, as well as the solid anti-terrorist measures, have to be made *working in situ*. In this context, the idea of a **common EU Coast Guard** should also be explored further.

**Digital security** is a vital priority for future developments of the Single Market. It is an immediate challenge for the European Institutions themselves.

By pooling our resources, we may envisage for the future feasibility roadmaps towards:

- A single functioning specialised police force for the borderless Union;
- A force that could help dismantle an international criminal organisation but could, at the same time, fly to the other side of the world to help victims of a national disaster;
- A EU with its Minister of Interior interacting directly with counterparts in the rest of the world in the fight against terror;
- A criminal prosecutor of the Union acting on behalf of the interests of European citizens.

The main shift needed at the EU level is the one from a protective attitude towards sharing **intelligence assets**. Key is here the transformation of the Situational Centre, which in 2011 became the **Intelligence Analysis Centre** integrated in the EEAS. Still, the main obstacle for intelligence sharing at EU level remains the perceived risk of jeopardizing bilateral intelligence sharing with the US. The present existing structures provide a technical mechanism for information sharing, but do little to foster the trust in order to change behaviour on intelligence. Parliament should thus support two Commission initiatives encouraging the sharing of information: the ***Budapest Club***, a forum bringing together government officials and private sector experts to share ideas and collect open-source information and the ***Eurosint*** forum, which is organizing workshops with participants from MS intelligence agencies, EU institutions and private sector experts.

### 1.4.1. What are the costs of non-Europe in the area of security and defence?

It has become a commonplace to point out that the US defence budget is more than twice that of the EU27, or that European countries do not 'get much bang for their euro'. The situation is very heterogeneous between Member States. When air operations were conducted over Libya, the differences between the United Kingdom and France - countries that participated militarily - and others was more than apparent. Yet even the UK and France were unable to sustain a prolonged war without the support of the US first and then of NATO.

While it is difficult to estimate the cost of non-Europe in monetary terms, it is much easier to estimate the cost of non-Europe in political and military terms. Among the weaknesses of the EU and its Member States are:

- Many duplications (27 ministries and headquarters, equipment linked to national industries and strategies, no standardisation of equipment).
- A lack of a common strategic view. Many national armed forces are still oriented toward territorial defence; too few of them are expeditionary. There is no clear vision of the EU role on the world stage, while there is competition with NATO.
- A lack of a common vision for the CSDP.

These faults create financial waste by not using the budgetary resources as efficiently as possible.

As huge as the costs of non-Europe in the area of security and defence are thus already to date, they will be even bigger if a significant number of European nations reach a stage of "structural disarmament".

The lack of technological developments in key dual research clusters may also become preoccupying.

The cost of non-Europe is also detrimental to the Atlantic Alliance as a whole.

From the point of view of ICT security, the lack of cooperation means solutions are developed in parallel, which does not necessarily give compatible results. This has already given rise to many incidents.

A number of initiatives and possible paths provide hope for the future:

- The European Security Strategy should be rewritten, as this Strategy does not correspond to the new strategic environment — the 'Arab Spring', the US's shift from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean, the emergence of new powers (including India, China) and the continued strength of traditional powers such as Russia and Japan. We need a *White Book* on security and defence, providing strategic analysis and outlining operational consequences, to focus the views and efforts of Member States.

- The EU's '*Pooling and Sharing*' and NATO's '*Smart Defence*' (two complementary initiatives), the *Weimar initiative* and the *Lancaster House Agreement*: these plans all provide models for overcoming the current financial and budgetary crisis, and they all entail a shift from national to shared sovereignties. (A prerequisite for this shift involves building confidence between the EU partners, which also requires a common strategic vision.).
- Europe's defence industry policy should be rewritten. As this need has been widely recognised, a task force to accomplish this has been created in the Commission. The European Defence Agency (EDA) can play a role, and permanent structured cooperation could serve as an incentive for developing major companies to compete with US giants. (While EADS and MBDA are European, there are no EU equivalents for shipbuilding or armed vehicles.)

The following solutions might overcome the scarcity of budgetary resources and compensate for the shortfalls identified:

- Developing public-private partnerships (air-refuelling, strategic transport);
- Acquiring some equipment in common (following the model of NATO AWACS or C-17 Strategic Airlift capacity) through an ATHENA-type mechanism;
- Using the EU budget to develop some capabilities (e.g. observation satellites that could be used for CSDP operations, as well as by EEAS, ECHO...);
- **Revising the Treaties** to allow for common financing of military expenditures;
- Public investments in the field of dual research should be discounted from national budgets when it comes to the control of deficits;
- *A **detailed and throughout independent impact assessment** could be carried out by the European Parliament to support a **large own legislative initiative report** that would provide food for thought on the issue at the beginning of the next institutional cycle.*

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➡ *Support the rewriting of a **White Book** on security and defence. Support Members contributing to such an exercise with updated data.*
- ➡ *Establish with European Defence Agency as comprehensive report on the Cost of Non Europe in Defence, military procurement, intelligence and dual technologies.*
- ➡ *A **detailed and throughout independent impact assessment** could be carried out by the European Parliament in the framework of a **large own legislative initiative report** on pooling and sharing to give updated food for thought on the issue before the beginning of the next institutional cycle.*

#### 1.4.2. How will the threats of terrorism and international organised crime evolve and how will it affect the EU?

Terrorism grows out of frustration, while organised crime finds fertile ground where the State is absent (lack of governance). Often the two support one another (as in the Sahel, the Horn of Africa and the Sinai): terrorists protect traffickers, and in exchange, they receive a share of the traffickers' profits.

It is therefore necessary to fight the roots of terrorism by offering economic and democratic support to the countries affected. Otherwise, Europe may face a spill-over; this is the case of drugs coming from South America through Africa, or illegal immigration coming to Europe through Africa or Turkey.

There is no short-term solution. Regarding terrorism, the countries of origin must have the political will and the means to fight, and they must cooperate with western countries (the US and the EU) and their neighbours. Regarding international organised crime (which can be linked to traditional Mafia-type organisations within our Member States), the answer is the same: alternative economic solutions must be available. Solving these issues takes time ... and a mixture of persuasion and repression.

The EU must fight both terrorism and organised crime both through its external instruments (development aid, the CFSP, the CSDP) and its internal instruments (such as those developed within 'Justice and Home Affairs').

But one can wonder whether these two threats will be the major threats that will affect Europe in 2025. Consider the following others:

- The evolution of the situation in the Middle East is worrying, and the potential for a full-scale regional war exists. There are no real prospects for a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian issue; verbal exchanges between Israel and Iran may lead to an uncontrollable situation; Syria may split, bringing the Kurdish issue to the fore, with Turkey involved; the coherence of Iraq remains fragile, as the country is divided between its Sunni, Shia and Kurdish regions. If Iran acquires a nuclear weapon, other countries in the region — notably Turkey and Saudi Arabia — will follow. With too many actors, balance becomes more difficult to achieve. Severe and lasting crisis there will affect Europe's energy mix, competitiveness and immigration. Illegal trade - including that of oil, gas, weapons and military technologies will grow with destabilizing effects. Illegal migrations and new developments of the narco-economy may also result from a prolonged situation of conflict. The ability for the Union to ensure in an autonomous fashion the freedom of trade routes and the protection of its citizens against revengeful terrorist attacks may be at a point questioned by citizens.
- If we turn our eyes to the Pacific area, China's growing assertiveness is disconcerting. The country's claims to control many islands in the South-East Chinese sea — well beyond its Exclusive Economic Zone — create a tense rivalry with Japan, South Korea, the Philippines and Vietnam, not to mention the issue of Taiwan. At some point, the

Chinese Navy that is currently being developed will compete with India's, also under development. China, India and Pakistan possess nuclear weapons. Japan and Taiwan enjoy US protection by treaty, while Russia also borders on the Pacific Ocean and with China in Siberia and Central Asia. If there were negative developments in the Pacific region, could Europe remain uninvolved? How would this involvement materialize? What could be the consequences for trade with China and for relations with Russia?

Power games between major actors of the system are no less potentially dangerous than the action of smaller more visible and more vocal groups or gangs.

It is also worth noting that conventional warfare has been reduced and replaced by guerrilla and terror of proxy militia, but also by an ever increasing 'cyber-war', a worldwide phenomenon that we can expect to see increase in Europe. Electronic crime will also undoubtedly grow and make the internet a more hostile place for companies and individuals. As a result, cybercrime and cyber-warfare may become massive challenges for any visible institution, company or prominent individual.

- *Currently cooperation between European countries concerning ICT security is practically non-existent and very limited between the European institutions. It is non-existent with our neighbours outside Europe. Considering recent attacks and the growing threats, this policy is thus not properly adapted. An integrated **cyber-security contingency planning** for Members, data and functions may be developed at EP level, under the direct responsibility of the Bureau, in order to ensure the highest level of political legitimacy at every stage of the process.*

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➡ *Maintain permanent update on changes likely affect the international system, as well as on emerging threats and crisis. Share this expertise with all political groups and committees.*
- ➡ *Enhance cooperation between the European institutions on cyber-security.*
- ➡ *A **cyber-security contingency planning for Members**, data and functions may be developed at EP level, under the direct responsibility of the Bureau, in order to ensure the highest level of political legitimacy at every stage of the process.*

### 1.4.3. Is our neighbourhood policy adapted to the security challenges Europe faces?

The EU Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) has not been specifically designed to deal with security issues, but to support the economic and political development of the countries in the EU's neighbourhood. The ENP does, however, provide an indirect response to security challenges by "promoting a ring of well-governed countries". This constituent could be further reinforced by linking elements of the future European Neighbourhood Instrument with the Instrument for Stability. There are at least three problems in the way the ENP is currently defined.

- In order for neighbouring countries to reform and cooperate efficiently, the ENP should provide them with clear, coherent political incentives. This is currently not the case.
- As events in the southern Mediterranean have demonstrated, the ENP has not answered the 'stability vs. democracy' dilemma: should we work with established regimes, or support democratic forces? Nor has the ENP provided guidance on whether we should favour short- or long-term approaches. Part of an answer might be derived from a more coherent application of the principle of conditionality.
- The security dimension of bilateral agreements is weak and not really conditional.

Besides assessing the current neighbourhood policy, the categories currently used, e.g. 'enlargement countries', 'neighbouring countries', 'development countries', should be reflected upon. These categories, codified in the previous century, may no longer accurately reflect the changing world.

Moreover, the EU's neighbourhood policy should be seen and developed in a broader context of contemporary challenges, including food security aspects. With Southern Mediterranean countries, from Morocco to Syria - not to speak about the Sahel region - all being net food importers, they face the dangers of food price volatility, climate change, water availability and poverty. Severe food shortage could destabilize part of the region and trigger unexpected reactions, migration flows, humanitarian and sanitary issues. The Union could play here a stabilisation role for its own benefit.

The AFET Enlarged Bureau decided on 1 March 2011 to set up a monitoring group, with an advisory role, to follow the deep political crisis affecting Tunisia, Egypt and Libya and to monitor EU assistance to the whole region, in the light of the current review of the ENP.

The monitoring group shall meet on a regular basis (i.e. as a general rule once a week) and shall, on the basis of the mandate given to it by the Enlarged Bureau\*:

- act as an interface and provide political guidance to the EEAS/Commission Task Force chaired by Pierre Vimont on the crisis in the Mediterranean; in this context it will consider current programming of EU financial assistance in the countries concerned, with a view to possible reallocation;
- follow closely measures put in place to accompany the electoral processes in the countries



concerned by the democratic transition;

- provide regular feedback to the Enlarged Bureau/AFET committee on the evolution of the crisis;
- advise the Enlarged Bureau on necessary steps to be taken (including fact-finding missions) to ensure that EU response to the democratic transition in the Southern Mediterranean region is relevant, effective and timely;
- formulate recommendations, in the light of the lessons learnt, for the AFET committee on the review of the ENP South.

\* Its mandate will last until the end of the EP's current term-of-office [in 2014].

Accordingly, the ENP could be improved by integrating agriculture and rural development within its framework, particularly in the Union for the Mediterranean. Specific financial support should be made available in this field. The setting up in mid-2012 of a new European Neighbourhood Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development under the new ENP is an indication that this issue is beginning to be considered by EU institutions.

- *In general, many policies of the European Union tend to develop an external dimension. The role of the Legislators is decisive to optimize the links between those different dimensions while ensuring consistency. **More cooperation between relevant committees** and more ad-hoc support by joint project team may be required in the future.*

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➡ *Optimise the links between different policies (internal / external / humanitarian) while ensuring consistency in time and message them to third countries.*
- ➡ ***More Cooperation between relevant committees on ENP.***
- ➡ *More ad-hoc Task Forces to support a joint assessment of delivery of ENP.*
- ➡ *Organise a capacity to follow-up new formats being developed by the Council in the Neighbourhood such as the **Task Forces** working with Egypt or Tunisia.*

#### 1.4.4. Should a supra-national global authority be established in order to design global rules/security measures which will govern the ICT?

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) permeate the daily lives of people, businesses, academia, media, governments and others. Global Standards in the field of technology mainly result from the action of the private sector and will continue to do so, yet action has to be taken at the appropriate public level where massive imbalances and divide are created.

Establishing a global governance system for ICT — including by mandating a supranational authority to create and supervise measures and obligatory mandatory standards — would involve significant challenges.

What would be the decision making process of such an authority?

Would it be by consensus? In that case, the 'least common denominator' principle would likely apply, leading to relatively lenient ICT rules and security measures.

Would such an authority instead adopt measures by majority, without a veto or opt-out possibility? In this case, the authority would be extremely powerful and require significant public control. The sovereignty and freedom of member states would be constrained.

In either case, sanction mechanisms would be needed to deal with states' infringements of the rules in order to make them enforceable.

To create a single set of mandatory standards, countries that share only a few common values would have to reach compromises on individual and collective rights and freedoms.

Finally, there remains the question of how such a supra-national authority should treat non-members.

The authority would also need to define how to incorporate new members, as well as how to deal with existing members. The interconnected nature of ICT suggests that significant tension might develop between those 'in' and those 'out'.

Given all these issues, the likelihood of such a supra-national global ICT authority being created remains small.

Instead, a useful initial step would involve mandating an international group or body to establish a set of good practices regarding ICT rules, as well as security measures and tools that member states could employ to assess their own performance. This should not be created from scratch, but built on existing institutions and leading countries and should include other countries to rapidly achieve a global representation and a relationship of trust among the actors. The issue of democratic accountability will have to be raised in the process.

In a second step, more binding commitments and more formal global structures could be envisaged, as both a reference point is indispensable and a supranational means of redress necessary.



#### 1.4.5 Would a fully fledged EP Committee devoted to security and defence have an added value?

Yes, as the issue of 'pooling and sharing' and common capacity building in this field may become a very demanding one as the limits of a national approach appear more clearly.

- *The EP should envisage the **setting up of such a fully fledged Committee on Security, Defence and Armaments Policy as quickly as possible, maybe even already by 2014**, for the following reasons:*
  - *The CSDP has acquired a new weight with the Treaty of Lisbon, and this should be taken into account. In particular, the US's shift of focus from Europe to the Pacific has made the CFSP more relevant — even for EU Member States within or close to NATO — because of the CFSP's clauses on mutual assistance and solidarity.*
  - *The scarcity of budgetary resources provides an impetus for 'pooling and sharing'. Permanent structured cooperation makes it necessary to strengthen the EP's scrutiny of those changes in the CSDP envisaged by the Lisbon Treaty.*
  - *The European Parliament's political structure should reflect the growing importance of the CSDP, given the rise in threats against European security. Such threats stem from the situation in the Middle East, the Sabel, the Pacific region and Russia (which has the most assertive foreign policy). Even climate change — which may cause displacement of refugees or competition for resources — may come to constitute a threat.*
  - *The creation of a fully fledged Committee on Security, Defence and Armaments Policy would send a strong political signal to the European Council, the HR/VP, national parliaments and the general public. The creation of the committee would indicate that the EU is taking its own defence seriously, even without a European army.*
  - *This committee would cover armaments policy in order to guarantee the coherence of the European Parliament's views. This committee would be responsible for the European Defence and Technological Industrial Base (EDTIB) and for security research, including dual use and military research if allowed by a new treaty. The committee could also see ICT security included in its remit. The more technical work done by the committee may justify its split from AFET. However, Annexes to the Rules of Procedure would require coordination between the two committees.*
  - *Finally, a fully fledged Committee on Security, Defence and Armaments Policy would enable Parliament to react more quickly (with direct access to plenary) and more professionally (as it will include former Defence Ministers and MEPs interested in defence issues) to events affecting the security of the European Union. The committee would have greater authority with the HR/VP and with the corresponding committees of national parliaments.*

### Key action point for the European Parliaments:

- ➔ *The EP should envisage the **setting up of such a fully fledged Committee on Security, Defence and Armaments Policy.***
- ➔ *A fully fledged Committee on Security, Defence and Armaments Policy would enable Parliament to react more quickly (with direct access to plenary) and more professionally (as it will include former Defence Ministers and MEPs interested in defence issues) to events affecting the security of the European Union.  
The committee would have greater authority with the HR/VP and with the corresponding committees of national parliaments.*
- ➔ *A close cooperation should be maintained with the AFET Committee and duplication of support capacities and expertise should be avoided.*

#### 1.4.6. Should the EP become a Member of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and under which conditions?

The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe is a regional security organization based on the final act of the Conference on Security and co-operation in Europe held in Helsinki in 1973 (the so-called Helsinki Final Act).

Art I of its Rules of Procedure reads: "*All States participating in the OSCE shall do so as sovereign and independent States and in conditions of full equality*". This provision leads to the conclusion that at that stage, membership could be granted to such States exclusively and therefore not to other non-State international actors, such as the European Union.

Of course, OSCE as many other international organizations is in a process of revising its mandate, structure and statutes. Should it become legally possible for the Union to apply...

- ***It should not be considered a top ten priority as the capacity of this assembly remains symbolic.***
- *Currently the EP is an observer to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, alongside other parliamentary assemblies (the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Nordic Council). While this position clearly does not reflect the status of the EP as a directly elected assembly, the added value of full membership can be questioned. At present the EP is invited to all the meetings of the OSCE PA and may participate in plenary discussions. Yet the Vice-President has only sporadically attended the plenary, and has never attended the Standing Committees' meetings.*
- *If the EP obtained full status, it could — in addition to participating in all combinations of the OSCE PA, including the standing committees — directly contribute to resolutions. (The impact of these resolutions, however, remains to be proven).*
- *Without seeking full membership, the EP could participate more actively and substantively in the OSCE PA activities. The Committee on Foreign Affairs — rather than a Vice President — could be asked to participate in such meetings (as is the case for Stability Pact meetings).*
- *Another reason not to seek full status is that this would mean participating in OSCE PA election observation missions. Both the European Parliament and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly undertake election observation activities, each according to their own practices and experiences. For the EP, full membership in the OSCE PA could undermine the EP's independence when observing elections in OSCE countries. As an OSCE PA observer, on the other hand, the EP can strengthen the role of ODIHR, which is often questioned by the OSCE PA and its structures. This would ensure that its work and its added value were not diminished.*
- *An alternative solution would be to follow the recommendation of the EP Resolution of 11 November 2010 on strengthening the role of the OSCE. This resolution recommended that the EP 'with a view to strengthening relations with the OSCE, should reflect on its participation in the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (PA) and study the possibility of establishing a standing*

*Delegation to the OSCE PA, to follow more closely the activities of the OSCE and the OSCE PA' (Paragraph 37). The resolution did not advocate that the EP become a member of the OSCE PA.*

Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➡ *If application to OSCE were to become possible, it should not be considered a top priority.*

#### 1.4.7. What role can the EP play as a mediator in crisis or negotiations?

International mediation has come to be recognised as a key tool in the 'conflict prevention toolbox'. This trend will likely continue through 2025 and will have concrete implications for the EU.

- *As an elected body, generating a variety of political views and policy ideas, the EP has a particular role — and responsibility — to play in this field. As prominent and respected figures, the President of Parliament and a few individual members may play a specific or more prominent role on a case by case basis. But usually mediation without appropriate intelligence and capacity to act in secret is difficult. To enhance its role, position and standing as possible mediator, the following options are open for the EP:*
  - *Increase involvement with the other EU bodies and institutions (principally the EEAS), shaping the service's mediation capacities and subsequently integrating them into the relevant entities (the EU Special Representatives, the EU Delegations), creating synergies with the EU Member States' diplomatic services.*
  - *Strengthen its role in **shaping the external financial instruments**, ensuring that they adequately consider — and **finance — international crisis mediation** and negotiations activities. This would require solidifying the EP's skills in trilogue negotiations for the external financial instruments.*
  - *Advocate for the creation of the **European Institute for Peace (EIP)** and ensure **the EP receives a mandate to influence its structures** and scrutinise the programme's activities.*
  - *Enhance its **direct crisis mediation activities**, when possible, moving beyond its current focus on international election observation to link observation to global crisis management and mediation. (The recent Cox-Kwasniewski mission provided a positive example in Ukraine.) Through its political bodies, in particular delegations and multi-lateral parliamentary assemblies, the EP could stimulate a culture of dialogue and a step-by-step approach. This might involve inviting representatives of the parties involved (MPs and others) and involving party representatives in conflicts, crises and negotiations. (Strong examples of this have been provided by the Euronest Working Group, co-chaired by Armenia and Azerbaijan, and the political committee of AP-UfM, which included both Israeli and Palestinian members.)*
  - *Internally, ensure adequate resources and proper training for staff supporting international mediation. Especially interpreters play a crucial role in crisis situations and negotiations. Many interpreters working in war zones are not properly trained. There are initiatives led by the Red Cross and also by the Faculty for Interpretation at the University of Geneva for providing these interpreters with basic training by using new technologies in the area of remote training and e-learning. The EP could, via its responsible Services, contribute to these initiatives.*

Traditional crises are not the only ones ahead of us. Severe climate related crises (drought, massive floods) or food crises may be around the corner and will require another type of mediation between countries concerned, NGOs, international providers of support, finance and assistance.

- *In the event of international food crises (e.g. like in 2008 in 37 developing countries), or in the framework of other negotiations aimed at improving global food governance, the European Parliament could play the role of a **consensus builder** or **opinion leader** by organising high-level ad hoc forums, followed by the adoption of documents endorsed by a large number of stakeholders. The Euro-Mediterranean Conferences on Agriculture (organised by the EP in 2001 and 2006), even though not aimed at solving an international crisis, could inspire the EP to developing such fora in the future.*

### Mission statement of the United States Institute of Peace:

The United States Institute of Peace is an independent, nonpartisan institution established and funded by Congress to increase the nation's capacity to manage international conflict without violence.

The United States Institute of Peace (USIP) is transforming approaches to international conflict. USIP draws on a variety of resources in fulfilling its congressional mandate: staff, grantees, fellows, research, education, training, innovation, outreach, publications, and national and international partnerships.

### USIP's Strategic Goals

- To help prevent, manage, and resolve violent international conflict both within and between states
- To promote post-conflict stability and development
- To increase peacebuilding capacity, tools, and intellectual capital worldwide
- To build and shape the field of international conflict prevention and management and to professionalize its practice
- To build knowledge and create innovative tools for peacebuilding
- To bridge research and practice in preventing, managing and resolving violent conflicts
- To teach, train, inform policymakers, practitioners, students and the public about the challenges of conflict prevention, management and resolution and how to respond to those challenges

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Advocate for the creation of the European Institute for Peace (EIP) and ensure the EP receives a mandate to influence its structures and scrutinise the programme's activities.*
- ➔ *Train interpreters to work in war zones.*
- ➔ *Support Members involving themselves in peace mediation activities with adequate expertise, security and insurance as soon as they receive the backing of the relevant political level.*

## 1.5. How can the EP develop development and democracy promotion policies?

When shaping the development policy, expanding the scope of civil Jurisdiction could help ensure that it takes place with full respect for democratic values and human rights.

Through the adoption of new instruments of private international law (which fall within the EU's competence), the EU could ensure that cases can be brought in the territory of member States against individuals and legal entities that have caused damage abroad.

Such a change, modelled on the US Alien Tort Statute, would suit the EP's ambition to promote human rights in the world by ensuring that persons who can be found or who own property in the EU are held accountable. The EU has already begun following this path in the field of criminal Jurisdiction (see i.a. the Directive 2011/92/EU).<sup>13</sup>

***Make the most of its representation in the European Endowment for Democracy (EED), a new, semi-autonomous structure that will support democratisation and peacemaking activities in third countries.***

**Catherine Ashton, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the Commission on the mission of the EED<sup>14</sup>:**

“The central idea that motivated the creation of the Endowment is Europe’s commitment to advancing democracy. Not only does this benefit the people who aspire to freedom and who champion democratic transitions worldwide; it is also in our own European interest. The Endowment comes at a very timely moment, as 2013 will be a crucial year for democratic transitions, in particular in the EU’s neighbourhood. The European Endowment for Democracy can play a very important role. By working directly with those in the field, who are striving for democracy; and by offering flexible, non-bureaucratic and dedicated procedures that are tailored to the needs and demands on the ground.”

### **EED background:**

The EED is a joint political project by the EU and its Members States. It was defined as a political objective in the May 2011 Neighbourhood Communication and in Foreign Affairs Council Conclusions in June and December 2011. Following an agreement by all Member States, EP and Commission/EEAS, the EED was established in October 2012 as a private law Foundation under Belgian Law, governed by its own Statute and governing bodies.

<sup>13</sup> See e.g. Wray, B., Raffaelli, R., *False Extraterritoriality? Municipal and Multinational Jurisdiction over Transnational Corporations*, in *Human rights and international legal discourse*, 2012, 108-130.

<sup>14</sup> Press Release of the EC, IP/13/17, 9 Jan. 2013



## EED background:

The Foundation's main purpose is direct grant-making to pro-democracy activist and/or organisations struggling for democratic transition in the European Neighbourhood and beyond, through specific flexible procedures. EED can also work through European CSOs (such as Political Foundations).

On November 13th [2012], the EED Board held its first meeting in Brussels. 9 MEP are present in the Board. MEP Brok was elected as Chairman. MEP Lambsdorff will be part of the Executive Committee. Switzerland joined the EED Board. In December, the EED signed a €6.2 million grant contract with the European Commission. Several Member States together with Switzerland have pledged up to an additional €8 million for EED activities. Thus, the initial budget for EED will be around €14 million.

The EED will have its headquarters in Brussels. The EED is in the process of completing its setting up process and recruitment of staff. The European Endowment for Democracy should be operational during the first half of 2013.

Consolidate and further develop the newly established in the European Parliament's Directorate for Democracy Support.

## Objectives of the DG EXPO Directorate D: Democracy Support, as in 2013:

1. to assist the Democracy Support and Election Coordination Group (DEG) in defining a coherent strategic outlook as regards Parliaments democracy support and capacity building policies for parliaments in new and emerging democracies (NED) - in particular in the European Neighbourhood - and to consolidate and further develop EP election Observation activities, including follow-up;
2. to consolidate further the newly established Directorate for Democracy Support and develop a comprehensive and transparent System of project planning (based on cost effectiveness) in close coordination and Cooperation with all colleagues in Directorates A, B and C and with all relevant Services in the EP, including the political groups;
3. to ensure that the strategic guidance of the DEG is implemented in practice - making good use of the expertise of MEPs (such as Chief Election Observers, rapporteurs and delegation chairs) and that the monitoring of these actions is facilitated by regular and comprehensive feedbacks;
4. to launch the activities of the Human Rights Actions Unit, in particular by activating the Sakharov Prize Network beyond certain annual events. developing synergy effects in

## Objectives of the DG EXPO Directorate D: Democracy Support, as in 2013:

- Cooperation with the Subcommittee on Human Rights (DROI), thus increasing even further the visibility of Parliament's prominent role in the field of Human Rights;
5. to launch a new Pre-Accession Fellowship programme for Western Balkans and Turkey, based on the experience of the (OPPD) Democracy Fellowship Programme, taking into account a new internal approval procedure for fellows;
  6. to deepen qualitatively the Cooperation with the European External Action Service and the European Commission in the field of democracy support and capacity building through inter alia regular policy consultations , close Cooperation with EU-Delegations and joint training sessions, in order to underline the EU's strategy commitment of fostering democratisation policies in its external actions;
  7. to improve the qualifications and competencies of colleagues by inter alia encouraging their active participation in external training courses. exchange programmes (such as UNDP) and in conferences;
  8. to help ensure a more prominent visibility, both internally and externally, of Parliament's role and engagement in democracy support programmes.

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Support a new step forward in criminal jurisdiction.*
- ➔ ***Make the most of EP representation in the European Endowment for Democracy (EED).***
- ➔ *Consolidate and further develop the newly established Directorate for Democracy Support.*

### 1.5.1. Is EU development policy adapted to meet current and upcoming challenges in developing countries, or should it be reassessed?

There is no doubt that development policy has a kind of constitutional nature in a continent that played a major role in colonisation and the subsequent development of the global economy. Article 208 of the Lisbon Treaty stipulates that the 'Union development policy shall have [as] its primary objective the reduction, and in the long term, the eradication of poverty. The Union shall take account of the objectives of development cooperation in the policies that it implements which are likely to affect developing countries'.

As a part of Europe itself is under structural adjustment and distanced by emerging economies, the legitimacy to assist so called "developing" countries is less shared by the public opinion in Europe, whereas focused actions against poverty, ill-nutrition and global pandemics gain stronger support.

In general, the efficiency of aid, the channels through which this aid is distributed and the principle of non-conditionality are questioned, thus challenging the monopoly of the West on aid.

An overall and radical reassessment of purposes, means, instruments and competitors may be necessary.

- *The European Parliament should be **fully equipped to fully participate** in this crucial debate cutting across foreign policy, trade, development, environment, human rights.*

#### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *The European Parliament should be **fully equipped to fully participate** in this crucial debate cutting across foreign policy, trade, development, environment, human rights.*
- ➔ *Ad-hoc taskforces supporting joint assessment beyond traditional development issues may be required.*

### 1.5.2. Could Europe use its soft power strength in development policies covering both trade and aid?

The EU's attention to development issues is far from solely altruistic and value-based; it is also driven by significant interests. These include security concerns, some aspects of which are mentioned in the European Security Strategy and commented upon in the Council's 2008 'Report on the Implementation of the European Security Strategy'<sup>15</sup>. Relations between human, state, climate and other aspects of security in developing countries, on the one hand, and EU security interests, on the other hand, need to be fully understood and acknowledged.

Through the implementation of its trade and aid policies, the EU continuously exercises soft power. In poor countries that are highly dependent on preferential trade and aid, this power may be considerable. The EU should exploit its full power, using impact assessments when helpful, and make sure that the effects of its policies and measures serve its strategic objectives.

This could mean designing measures so that they strengthen vulnerable groups; favouring social peace by improving the conditions for job creation; reducing the factors contributing to disruptive migratory flows; or increasing incentives for good governance by strengthening civil society and independent media. Certain measures, on the other hand, should be avoided; the EU should not, for example, adopt trade measures that effectively lock Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and other non-industrialised countries into the role of primary commodities suppliers, rather than permit them to move up global value chains.

As the world's largest trading power, the principal trading partner of many LDCs and the world's first provider of development assistance, the EU has a particular responsibility.

The EU must also constantly monitor the effects on third countries of its policies targeting a given developing country, or a group of such countries. Third countries may be non-ACP developing countries and/or ACP countries that do not benefit from a particular trade preference granted by the EU, but which are in fact negatively affected by this preference. Third countries can also be competitors for trade, economic and political influence — for example China, which plays a role in Africa.

A provision sought by the EU in trade agreements with developing countries illustrates the potential for conflict. This provision obliges the developing country partners to apply to the EU any trade preference, which they also grant to a third country. This provision is more demanding than WTO obligations and has provoked strong criticism, both from developing countries and competing trading nations.

The EU and its Member States adopted a joint Aid for Trade Strategy (AfT) in 2007 to help all developing countries, particularly LDCs, better integrate into the world trading system and to mitigate the short-term adjustment costs of trade liberalisation. The AfT should help

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<sup>15</sup> Council of the EU, *Report on the Implementation of the European Security Strategy - Providing Security in a Changing World* (17104/08), Brussels, 10 Dec. 2008

developing countries use trade more effectively to achieve economic growth, regional integration and eventually poverty reduction, thus contributing to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The EU AfT Strategy covers all developing country regions, and commitments have increased for all, with Africa accounting for the largest share. ACP countries receive specific attention in the strategy, including in relation to their ongoing regional integration efforts and the anticipated conclusion of **Economic Partnership Agreements** (EPAs). These EPAs go beyond conventional free-trade agreements, focusing on ACP development, taking account of their socio-economic circumstances and including cooperation and assistance to help them implement the agreements. Progress towards the conclusion of EPAs has so far been slow, but the delivery of the AfT should not depend on the outcome of negotiations.

The EU serves as an example globally, as its markets are the most open to developing countries and its AfT efforts account for more than one third of global flows. This places the EU in a position to combine classical soft power instruments — such as structured dialogues and working groups — with technical assistance to further promote its objectives in partner countries. Such objectives include, for example, regional integration and a greater use of trade to reduce poverty. The EU's approach should be included in its development strategies, and its focus should extend beyond increasing aid volumes: the Union should also enhance the impact of its support by coordinating better with donors and establishing joint monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. In order to have a sustainable, long-term effect, supportive macroeconomic and structural adjustment policies are needed.

Trade is aid in itself. As resources for traditional aid will most likely be more limited in the coming years with budget consolidation in the Union, a rebalancing of development policies towards more trade focused policies seems likely. Comprehensive bilateral trade agreements may become the new format to channel modernization.

- *The European Parliament should be fully equipped to assess the impact of Economic Partnerships Agreements and comprehensive bilateral agreements and evaluate their potential in domains cutting across foreign policy, trade, development and environment.*

At the same time, the economic attractiveness of the EU Single Market should encourage the EU to be more demanding with third countries as regards observance of European values such as democracy or human and labour rights. The EU should not hesitate to make development policies covering both trade and aid conditional on the respect of EU values and principles, including parity between men and women, minority rights, and good practices in the field of sustainable developments.

- *When giving its consent on comprehensive trade agreements the EP should **fully examine conditionality** and ways to deliver on it in the implementation phase. This is why it remains important to gain **full democratic scrutiny on the financing instruments**.*

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➡ *The European Parliament should be fully equipped to assess the impact of Economic Partnerships Agreements and comprehensive bilateral agreements and evaluate their potential in domains cutting across foreign policy, trade, development and environment.*
- ➡ *When giving its consent on comprehensive trade agreements the EP to **fully examine conditionality** and ways to deliver on it in the implementation phase. **Full democratic scrutiny on the financing instruments.***

### 1.5.3. Should the EU redefine relations with beneficiaries from EU aid that are emerging donors such as China, India and Brazil in the context of the global development agenda?

- *The European Parliament should indeed develop an independent impact assessment capacity on changes or new formats proposed by the European Commission as a result of this increased competition in the field of aid.*

One of the key challenges the EU will face in the coming years is how to adapt to the growing role of the emerging donors (the BRICS countries). The role of the Union and its currently successful aid programmes will soon be challenged. Among the many issues of concern, four stand out:

- New actors have arrived on the international development scene. The financial crisis has accelerated the global power shift towards emerging economies (China, India, Brazil, the Gulf States and South Africa), which have assumed a more active role in developing countries, sometimes even pursuing agendas that extend beyond the internationally accepted development objectives defined by the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC). Other donors may also be tempted to divert their development policy to serve narrow national interests. In the future, the Union will need to address these issues in its development agenda by working to adapt global governance frameworks.
- Reporting on flows of development funding is still inadequate. To improve co-operation and avert possible conflicts, it is essential to invest in better data collection and encourage new donors to improve their financial reporting.
- Europe's objectives in the fields of development and energy, climate change and agriculture policies are not always concordant. These policies should be considered holistically. The EU increasingly depends on energy imports, notably from regions experiencing democratic instability. Biofuels are also likely to become important, and these are sourced partly from developing countries. The next Common Agricultural Policy (2014-2020) should be compatible with development goals and the EU's policy needs and concerns about food security in developing countries.
- Finally, climate change needs to be addressed. By 2020 greenhouse gas emissions from developing countries are expected to overtake those of developed countries, leading to increased water stress for between 75 and 250 million people in Africa. Such concerns are emerging at a time marked by a global financial crisis, pressure on donor country aid, increased economic growth in Middle Income Countries (MICs) and some Least Developed Countries (LDCs), and questions over European identity. The EU should adopt principles — such as transparency, accountability and equitability — for mobilising and managing climate change funds.

#### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➡ *Indeed develop **an independent impact assessment exercise** on changes or new formats proposed by the European Commission as a result of this increased competition in the field of aid.*

#### 1.5.4. What could be the impact on the definition, content and implementation of the fundamental rights within the EU?

The fundamental rights dimension as set out in the Charter on Fundamental Rights carries increasing weight in preparing or implementing legislation. The outcomes from case law in which it has been at issue is therefore a cornerstone on which the elaboration of legislative acts is built.

Article 21 of the TEU defines the general provisions on the Union's external action by linking the Union's internal identity with its approach to external relations: 'The Union's action on the international scene shall be guided by the principles which have inspired its own creation, development and enlargement, and which it seeks to advance in the wider world: democracy, the rule of law, the universality and indivisibility of human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect for human dignity, the principles of equality and solidarity, and respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter and international law.'

Conversely, the need to define and agree on democracy support policies for the EU's external policy will benefit EU-wide discussions about civil and political rights, democratic decision-making, accountability and citizenship. This should have the beneficial effect of reminding European countries of their own commitment to democratic standards and of their responsibility as models of democracy.

Creating coherence between internal and external policies when dealing with fundamental and human rights is a challenge that the European Parliament — and the European Union as a whole — must increasingly confront. This is quite clear when it comes to the external dimension of EU policies on justice, liberty and security, as well as other internal policies with a direct impact on the external sphere. In order to ensure the consistency and credibility of EU policies, democracy support and development policies in third countries should be defined similarly to the EU's internal policies for democracy and fundamental rights.

- *As a decision-maker and public forum for debate on the EU's external and internal policies, the European Parliament must enhance the **EU's internal-external consistency**. In the past, one potential option for improving coherence involved institutional changes that gave a single parliamentary committee the competence to deal with fundamental rights inside Europe and human rights outside Europe. Another option could be to enhance the co-operation and coordination between the LIBE and DROI committees. The EP task force on EU human rights policy could also play a role in this.*

#### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➡ *A **single parliamentary committee** to deal with fundamental rights inside Europe and human rights outside Europe. At least, enhance the co-operation and coordination between the LIBE and DROI committees. The EP task force on EU human rights policy could also play a role.*



### 1.5.5. How could EP develop democracy promotion activities and capacity building?

The growing multi-polarity of the world, its multi-level governance and the multiplicity of players interacting in the international political sphere are shifting the working environment of the EP's activities in the field of democracy promotion. With the rise of new powers and authoritarian regimes, the EU's model of liberal democracy faces competition from alternative models. Similarly, EU development policies face rivalry from funding sources that are not burdened by the political conditionality the EU imposes.

- *One can expect democracy promotion by the EP to become — together with defence, the promotion of human rights and good governance — key tools for projecting EU values internationally. Democracy promotion will also become an even more 'networked' activity than it currently is. At present, networks and communities of government actors, international organisations and national and international NGOs working in this domain exchange information, seek synergies, **share best practices** and, to a certain extent, coordinate their activities. In the future, these networks are likely to expand and become more heterogeneous, both geographically and politically.*
- *Finally, parliaments' increased use of ICT will be reflected in the content and requirements of their capacity building, and technological advances will alter delivery. (An example might be training events conducted partially or entirely on-line.) **Internet-based knowledge hubs and platforms for on-line cooperation** in this area are likely to be developed.*
- *The EP could respond in the following ways:*
  - *Maintain and strengthen efforts to promote democracy by providing adequate resources and attention, and by incorporating the topic — and the related fields of human rights and gender issues — into all the EP's international activities.*
  - *"Europe's freedom fighters" are at present the best resource of the European Parliament. Yet they will soon be less available. The approach has to be institutionalized through a common resource centre for those activities.*
  - *In the field of democracy promotion Parliaments usually have an important say and specific structures. The projected European Endowment for Democracy should be anchored in the European Parliament and not duplicate existing structures. An adequate control by the EP should be established.*
  - *Develop a more focused policy approach for the follow-up of election observation in order to maximise the EP's broader democracy-building efforts. One important way to enhance follow-up would be to strengthen the role of the Chief Observer-MEP. The Chief Observer could be regarded as a Special Representative of the European Parliament; the position is perfectly suited to promoting and developing the EP's democracy support policies.*
  - *Endorse the EU EOM's recommendations as part of the 'road map for Democracy', and charge the Chief Observer with ensuring that recommendations are followed up. This could be accomplished by, inter alia, participating in 'follow-up missions' to EU EOMs, and should be supported by EP standing bodies.*

- *Coordinate democracy support activities with all the relevant institutional actors: the EU institutions the EEAS and the EC, as well as those beyond the institutions' walls (the UN, NGOs, foundations etc.). The EP's oversight of the Commission and EEAS in this area should be strengthened. When the EP is itself engaged in democracy promotion, the relationship with the Commission and the EEAS should be one of genuine partnership. This would involve enhanced exchanges of information, staff and training activities.*
- *Continue to cooperate closely with US and European actors, while working more closely with emerging southern powers, such as South Africa, India and Brazil, to engage them in EU-style democracy promotion activities. As many of these emerging countries are reluctant to engage in this process, creating stronger ties with their parliaments may help overcome their resistance. Include democracy promotion as a topic in the political dialogue.*
- *Ensure coherence among all components of democracy promotion, and insist that the EC and EEAS adopt a similar approach. The creation of the new Directorate D is a step in this direction. Administrative structures should be adapted as necessary.*
- *Continue to invest in and support internet-based cooperative platforms in this area. Train staff to use them more effectively.*

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➡ *Develop a **more focused policy approach for the follow-up of election observation in order to maximise the EP's broader democracy-building efforts**. One important way to enhance follow-up would be to strengthen the role of the Chief Observer-MEP. **The Chief Observer could be regarded as a Special Representative** of the European Parliament; the position is perfectly suited to promoting and developing the EP's democracy support policies.*
- ➡ *Ensure coherence among all components of democracy promotion, and insist that the EC and EEAS adopt a similar approach.*
- ➡ *Structures should be adapted as necessary.*
- ➡ *Continue to invest in and support **internet-based cooperative platforms** in this area. Train staff to use them more effectively.*
- ➡ *Develop a new **Directorate for Democracy Support Activities**.*

### 1.5.6. How should the EP establish a dialogue with regional bodies such as the Arab League and the Gulf Cooperation Council?

Regional organisations such as the Arab League and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) are important international actors, where an improvement of relations should duly be considered, possibly also via new structures.

- *The EP could invite GCC representatives more often to EP meetings. A trade agreement with the GCC could be considered.*
- *Another organisation that should figure on the EP's radar is the Organisation of Islamic Countries (OIC). Although the OIC is not a regional partner sensu proprio, it is gaining in political importance, and the EP should engage it while maintaining its commitment to European principles and values such as parity between men and women, respect of religious freedom, minority rights.*
- *For election observation, the Arab League would be a useful interlocutor for the EP. Enhanced co-operation between the EP and the Arab League could be beneficial and could include exchanging good practices; having Arab League representatives participate in meetings of the Democracy Support and Election Coordination Group (DEG); better coordinating the two institutions' final conclusions and recommendations. The aim is to create a single, international voice with a clear message regarding the country observed.*

In general, the Arab League is a political entity which offers possibilities to work closer together in the context of the UN. Joint actions and projects should be preferred to conventions, delegations or joint assemblies.

For all three established organisations, the parliamentary branch is embryonic or very weak in countries with limited experience with democratic parliamentary life.

- *One objective for the EP could therefore be to try to reinforce their parliamentary dimension, with an exchange of Information at expert level to be established with the Arab League once it fully deploys its capacity. Should democratic standards prove still impossible to achieve, the process should be refocused on trade issues and EP's participation revised.*

#### Key action point for the European Parliament:

- ➡ *Invite GCC representatives more often to EP meetings.*

## 1.6. Can EU foreign policy resources and trade competences match future challenges?

### 1.6.1. How can the EP develop a positive regulatory impact in the economic, financial and trade sectors since even domestic shocks have global dimensions?

- *Create greater convergence, both within the EU and between the EU and global regulators (for taxes on financial transactions and currency transaction, stimulus plans, monetary co-ordination, emission trading systems, intellectual property rights protection and technology transfer mechanisms, etc.) In some cases, however, the EU will have to take its first steps unilaterally and hope the rest of the world will follow.*
- *More efficient global governance is needed, which will mean reforming the IMF and the World Bank, boosting the WTO, regulating global finances and investments, and creating a multilateral, rules-based system. To prevent and correct shocks effectively, more federal elements are unavoidable.*
- *Under Article 225 of the TFEU, the EP may request the Commission to submit a proposal on matters for which the EP considers that a Union Act is required to implement the treaties. This calls for a more proactive approach and a strategic vision.*
- *A first strategic and pragmatic priority could be to establish full democratic scrutiny over the joint venture between the Union and the IMF, i.e. **Troikas** designing and implementing bail-out agreements. The Parliament should be given a capacity to consent on nominations and proposed plans, as well as full investigation capacity on implementation, with a structured reporting process.*

#### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *A first strategic and pragmatic priority could be to establish **full democratic scrutiny** over the joint venture between the Union and the IMF, i.e. **Troikas** designing and implementing bail-out agreements.*
- ➔ *Dialogue based on **consent on nominations and proposed plans**, as well as full investigation capacity on implementation, structured reporting process.*

### 1.6.2. How will the growth in bilateral agreements affect the multilateral goal and is there sufficient democratic legitimacy?

- *The proliferation of bilateral trade agreements in recent years could undermine ambitions for multilateral trade agreements and may have contributed to the lack of progress in the WTO's ongoing Doha Round.*
- *Yet there is no general agreement on the issue. Some experts argue that bilateral trade agreements create stumbling blocks to global agreements, while others consider bilateral agreements building blocks.*
- *The EP acting under its full-fledged Lisbon potential as a Legislator in those matters should be ready to reject bilateral agreements that could jeopardize general and well established principles of the WTO and prevent future global principles to be established at a later stage. The issue of WTO compatibility should be checked by the EP in preparation phase through special committees, in agreement through the consent procedure, in implementation through full control on instruments and implementing decisions.*

#### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *The proliferation of bilateral trade agreements in recent years could undermine ambitions for multilateral trade agreements and may have contributed to the lack of progress in the WTO's ongoing Doha Round.*
- ➔ *Yet there is no general agreement on the issue. Some experts argue that bilateral trade agreements create stumbling blocks to global agreements, while others consider bilateral agreements building blocks.*
- ➔ *The EP acting under its full fledged Lisbon potential as a Legislator in those matters should be ready to reject bilateral agreements that could jeopardize general and well established principles of the WTO and prevent future global principles to be established at a later stage. **The issue of WTO compatibility should be checked by the EP in preparation phase** through special ad-hoc committees, following specific negotiations.*
- ➔ *Consent procedure.*
- ➔ *Scrutiny on the implementation of related financial instruments.*

### 1.6.3. How should the EP use EU soft power to respond to rapid and unexpected international political priorities?

- *The EU must address the economic crisis within the Union and deliver peace and security in its neighbourhood in order to re-generate confidence in its 'softpower'. Yet the EU must also develop 'hard power' crisis management and defence skills.*
- *The EP will need to use parliamentary diplomacy, as well as legislative, budgetary and political means, to restore confidence in the EU's soft power whilst developing the harder instruments. In addition to providing democratic accountability and legitimacy to EU foreign policy, the EP has a significant legislative, budgetary and political role to play, including:*
  - *Ensuring that the external financial instruments are flexible and complementary, whilst also addressing longer-term strategic programming interests under its authority;*
  - *Verifying that these instruments have sufficient budgets to fulfil the ambition and strategic interests of the Union;*
  - *Continuing to define the strategic framework for pursuing EU interests and priorities, and monitoring the implementation of related decisions;*
- *Further developing parliamentary diplomacy to lead the political response to unexpected international priorities, and then use its 'classic' powers to provide the means (financial instruments and budget) of pursuing its aims and monitoring implementation.*
- *In recent years the EP has consolidated its 'classic' roles — budgetary, legislative and oversight. It should now increase its capacity to deploy parliamentary diplomacy as needed. This will involve developing internal expertise on specific crisis areas and crisis-related topics, and rapidly deploying its expert support. (The experience of the Cox-Kwaśniewski mission to Ukraine could provide lessons, as mentioned in point 1.4, indent 7.)*

#### Key action point for the European Parliament:

- ➡ *In recent years the EP has consolidated its 'classic' roles — budgetary, legislative and oversight. It should now increase its capacity to deploy **parliamentary diplomacy** as needed. This will involve developing internal expertise on specific crisis areas and crisis-related topics, and rapidly deploying its expert support.*



#### 1.6.4. What impact does the proliferation of permanent political structures dealing with foreign policy have on the EP?

- *The new structures provide opportunities to develop new partnerships and to interact with other actors, particularly on a regional level. On the other hand, the proliferation of such structures may overstretch Parliament's limited capacities for engagement and thereby undermine its legislative and political priorities. Parliament should thus identify those structures where its engagement can bring added value to its legislative and political priorities, at the same time investing resources in new partners and in their capacities to ensure they can work effectively with the EP.*
- *On the other hand, redundant partnerships should be phased out and alternative strategies in less important structures pursued. To accomplish this, a parliamentary foreign policy strategy should be developed that identifies 'priority structures', and that is more flexible, with informal channels that will allow the EP to pursue its interests. These partnerships will have to be regularly adapted in response to changes in the migrating 'centres of gravity' in international political decision-making.*
- *An example of such an adaptation is the EP's effort to develop the parliamentary dimension of the G20 and to engage with this new group. Another example is the EP's insistence on its prerogatives within inter-parliamentary conferences on the CFSP.*
- *The EP also needs to pay close attention to the proliferation and role of 'networks' that parallel to permanent structures. The EP's extensive political networks (of parliamentarians and political groups) complement its own formal structures and are well attuned to the networks beyond the Parliament. The key challenge will be achieving a balance of institutional and informal connections, and maintaining our focus on those that match Parliament's interests.*

#### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Parliament should **identify those structures where its engagement can bring added value to its legislative and political priorities**, at the same time investing resources in new partners and in their capacities to ensure they can work effectively with the EP.*
- ➔ *Redundant partnerships should be phased out.*
- ➔ *A parliamentary foreign policy strategy should be developed that identifies 'priority structures' and that is more flexible, with informal channels that will allow the EP to pursue its interests. These partnerships will have to be regularly adapted in response to changes in the migrating 'centres of gravity' in international political decision-making.*

### 1.6.5. How should the EU balance strategic economic demands with supporting European values?

- The European Parliament represents a broad spectrum of interests, and advocates both economic goals and European values. This is consistent with the Treaties (Article 21 of the TEU and Articles 205 and 207 of the TFEU), which present trade policy not as an end in itself but as a vehicle for promoting the EU's political goals and values. Particular files link the two explicitly; in the Generalised Scheme of Preferences<sup>16</sup> (GSP) file, for example, beneficiary countries must abide by international conventions (on human rights and labour protection) to qualify for the scheme. The EU systematically includes a human rights chapter in trade deals.

#### Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union: Article 205<sup>17</sup>

The Union's action on the international scene, pursuant to this Part, shall be guided by the principles, pursue the objectives and be conducted in accordance with the general provisions laid down in Chapter 1 of Title V of the Treaty on European Union.

#### Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union: Article 207<sup>18</sup>

1. The common commercial policy shall be based on uniform principles, particularly with regard to changes in tariff rates, the conclusion of tariff and trade agreements relating to trade in goods and services, and the commercial aspects of intellectual property, foreign direct investment, the achievement of uniformity in measures of liberalisation, export policy and measures to protect trade such as those to be taken in the event of dumping or subsidies. The common commercial policy shall be conducted in the context of the principles and objectives of the Union's external action.

2. The European Parliament and the Council, acting by means of regulations in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure, shall adopt the measures defining the framework for implementing the common commercial policy.

3. Where agreements with one or more third countries or international organisations need to be negotiated and concluded, Article 218 shall apply, subject to the special provisions of this Article.

The Commission shall make recommendations to the Council, which shall authorise it to open the necessary negotiations. The Council and the Commission shall be responsible for ensuring that the agreements negotiated are compatible with internal Union policies and rules.

The Commission shall conduct these negotiations in consultation with a special committee appointed by the Council to assist the Commission in this task and within the framework of such directives as the Council may issue to it. The Commission shall report regularly to the special committee and to the European Parliament on the progress of negotiations.

4. For the negotiation and conclusion of the agreements referred to in paragraph 3, the Council shall act by a

<sup>16</sup> See at <http://ec.europa.eu/trade/wider-agenda/development/generalised-system-of-preferences>

<sup>17</sup> *Official Journal* 2012 (C326), *op. cit.*

<sup>18</sup> *ibid.*



qualified majority.

For the negotiation and conclusion of agreements in the fields of trade in services and the commercial aspects of intellectual property, as well as foreign direct investment, the Council shall act unanimously where such agreements include provisions for which unanimity is required for the adoption of internal rules.

The Council shall also act unanimously for the negotiation and conclusion of agreements:

(a) in the field of trade in cultural and audiovisual services, where these agreements risk prejudicing the Union's cultural and linguistic diversity;

(b) in the field of trade in social, education and health services, where these agreements risk seriously disturbing the national organisation of such services and prejudicing the responsibility of Member States to deliver them.

5. The negotiation and conclusion of international agreements in the field of transport shall be subject to Title VI of Part Three and to Article 218.

6. The exercise of the competences conferred by this Article in the field of the common commercial policy shall not affect the delimitation of competences between the Union and the Member States, and shall not lead to harmonisation of legislative or regulatory provisions of the Member States in so far as the Treaties exclude such harmonisation.

## **Treaty on European Union: Article 21<sup>19</sup>**

1. The Union's action on the international scene shall be guided by the principles which have inspired its own creation, development and enlargement, and which it seeks to advance in the wider world: democracy, the rule of law, the universality and indivisibility of human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect for human dignity, the principles of equality and solidarity, and respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter and international law.

The Union shall seek to develop relations and build partnerships with third countries, and international, regional or global organisations which share the principles referred to in the first subparagraph. It shall promote multilateral solutions to common problems, in particular in the framework of the United Nations.

2. The Union shall define and pursue common policies and actions, and shall work for a high degree of cooperation in all fields of international relations, in order to:

(a) safeguard its values, fundamental interests, security, independence and integrity;

(b) consolidate and support democracy, the rule of law, human rights and the principles of international law;

(c) preserve peace, prevent conflicts and strengthen international security, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, with the principles of the Helsinki Final Act and with the aims of the Charter of Paris, including those relating to external borders;

(d) foster the sustainable economic, social and environmental development of developing countries, with the primary aim of eradicating poverty;

(e) encourage the integration of all countries into the world economy, including through the progressive abolition of restrictions on international trade;

(f) help develop international measures to preserve and improve the quality of the environment and the sustainable management of global natural resources, in order to ensure sustainable development;

(g) assist populations, countries and regions confronting natural or man-made disasters; and

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<sup>19</sup> *Official Journal* 2012 (C326), *op. cit.*

(h) promote an international system based on stronger multilateral cooperation and good global governance.

3. The Union shall respect the principles and pursue the objectives set out in paragraphs 1 and 2 in the development and implementation of the different areas of the Union's external action covered by this Title and by Part Five of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and of the external aspects of its other policies.

The Union shall ensure consistency between the different areas of its external action and between these and its other policies. The Council and the Commission, assisted by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, shall ensure that consistency and shall cooperate to that effect.

- The EU must uphold and promote its founding values in its relations with the wider world according to Articles 2 and 3 of the TEU. This can be achieved by:
  - Offering incentives to partners to join and effectively implement core international conventions (role of GSP+);
  - Exercising active diplomacy in international forums, export control regimes and commodity bodies;
  - Applying rapid and well-targeted sanctions and embargos;
  - Reducing its dependency on raw materials through R&D and diversification, and by creating a genuine energy union (with the Commission negotiating energy contracts and emergency oil and gas reserves on behalf of the whole EU) to increase its leverage;
  - Fighting protectionism and settling trade disputes within the WTO, ensuring market access, protecting investors from foreign governments demands that are not compatible with human rights;
  - Pushing for corporate social responsibility ('sustainability'), transparency in the extractive and logging industries, country-by-country reporting;
  - Insisting on including trade and sustainable development chapters and 'standard clauses' in trade agreements, including investor responsibilities;
  - Instituting monitoring and reporting requirements in trade agreements;
  - Promoting development to ensure that aid partners become trade partners;
  - Monitoring who benefits from trade with authoritarian countries;
  - Better coordinating among and within EU institutions and Member States to ensure the coherence of external action;

To date, the EU has worked to assert its core values while negotiating international agreements, attempting to reconcile often contradictory aims and goals (for example, trade, development, security and human rights interests) with varied levels of success.

The current tendency involves focusing on comprehensive agreements (linking these elements), and this practice should continue into the future, to 2025 and beyond.

## II. Multi-level governance

### 2.1. How can we help to establish a functioning democratic dimension for the G8/G20?

At the global level, growing legitimacy accompanies the idea of building up a large forum to solve problems that are genuinely global in nature, requiring adequate political commitments and the critical mass for their implementation. The financial crisis has accelerated this trend to build up an executive forum able to give broad political guidelines and to follow their implementation.

The G20 has to remain such a provider of political guide lines and should not try to interfere in legislation. Throughout the financial crisis, it has been clear that political guide lines agreed upon in the G20 by participating Member States would then be mostly translated into European Law in the context of the European Union. It is therefore the interest of all Members of the Union that the G20 benefits from the highest level of expertise and serious preparation, and that the European Commission and the legislators of the European Union are associated at an early stage, as they will be responsible for final implementation and democratic scrutiny.

*For these reasons, one can envision the creation of a permanent secretariat of the G8-G20, where other relevant international organisations could also be represented (IMF, WB as well as the European Commission). It would be charged with coordination and assist the presidency with the drafting of the agenda, as well as organise an ex-ante consultation with the members, possibly including the national parliaments as well as the European Parliament.*

At the sub-global level, recent attempts at inventing other formats for decisions may appear to be short-sighted and counter-productive, unless they are used to prepare better G20 meetings with common positions, as the BRICS do between them. At that stage, it seems to be in the Union's interest to have a well-functioning and smooth G20 process in which natural ties, common interests as well as a fluid diplomatic game between major nations prevent a sterile confrontation between North and South and countries with different political models. Members of the European Union participating in G20 summits have a common interest in coordinating their positions ahead of them in order to enlist the support of other countries of the Union. Should decisions be impossible to be taken in G20, as in the WTO, a smaller global forum would of course be a no-regret option. The absence of Russia, an important strategic EU partner, from any such format would certainly be problematic for the Union. The present G8 by itself cannot muster the critical mass to put global changes in motion; even if focusing solely on its economic power the G8 represents still only around 42.5% of the GWP (PPP).

Multi-level democratic scrutiny is on the way. At this stage, the follow-up on commitments and global executive guide lines is still lacking, jeopardizing the credibility of the G20 process. In these fields (legislative transcription of executive guide lines and scrutiny of the

executive), the parliaments have their natural role to play at their respective level (European, national).

- *The EP (continental level) could be well placed to coordinate the consultation of the national parliaments of G20 countries (national level) building on its existing network of delegations and possibly contributing to the creation of a **joint parliamentary G20 conference** (global level). This conference could be accompanied by a mechanism of exchange of information on the scrutiny done by national parliaments on national positions.*
- *The European Parliament acting as the budgetary authority of the European Union and the democratic assembly trusted with the scrutiny of the European Commission should mainly **check how the Commission implements the commitments taken at G20 summits** (i.e. Financial stability, treatment of systemic banks etc.) with due respect for the existing legal and budgetary framework of the European Union. At an earlier stage, the EP should also be able to **express its opinion based on a report from the President of the European Council** when he endorses or prepares the EU position for the G20 meetings.*

#### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ ***Contribute** to the creation of a joint parliamentary G20 conference (global level).*
- ➔ ***EP to give its opinion based on a report from the President of the European Council** when he endorses or prepares the EU position for the G20 meetings.*
- ➔ ***Check how the Commission implements the commitments taken at G20 summits** (i.e. Financial stability, treatment of systemic banks etc.) with due respect for the existing legal and budgetary framework of the European Union.*

### 2.1.1. How can the decisions reached at international summits be better prepared and legally framed?

International summits such as the G20 or G8 should not claim to be legislative forums nor create the expectation that guidelines decided there will become immediately binding.

This does mean that more care should not be given to the preparation of executive decisions taken at such international summits.

Currently, both the G8 and G20 have a troika structure of rotating presidencies rather than permanent secretariats. In 2011, French presidency of G20 proposed a permanent secretariat, but objections to the proposal prevented it from advancing. It could be worthwhile to further explore this idea of a permanent Secretariat, as this could allow for a more structured and coordinated preparation as well as for a closer integration of actors like the European Parliament.

A closer cooperation of G20 governments with G20 Parliaments is necessary and should be developed along the lines of preparation already taking place with International Agencies and International Financial Organisations.

- *A parliamentary dimension to the G20 process is emerging, with the European Parliament actively participating. It is paramount that Cooperation between parliaments also occurs in the **preparation phase**.*

Additionally, contacts at Sherpa level could prove also useful.

- *The President of the European Parliament could have **a dedicated Sherpa** to prepare those meetings, aiming at avoiding duplication and executive decisions that could have no follow-up.*

#### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➡ *Active EP involvement in the **preparation phase** of G20 Summits, at presidential, political and expert levels.*
- ➡ *The President of the European Parliament could have **a dedicated Sherpa** to prepare meetings.*

### 2.1.2. Can existing structures like the OECD form the basis for this, building on their longstanding institutional relations with parliamentarians through the Council of Europe and NATO Parliamentary Assemblies?

The OECD to date increasingly plays the role of an expertise hub and a non-formal secretariat general for G20 summits. Of all international institutions, the OECD is indeed the most appropriate to support the G20. The OECD deals with issues similar to those treated by the G20, and 10 of the OECD's 34 OECD Member States are also members of the G20. As demonstrated by the OECD's 'global reach' policy — which involves the BRICS and Indonesia — the organisation clearly intends to include emerging economies among its members.

Of the BRICS, however, only Russia has applied for OECD membership (under Boris Yeltsin), as the OECD is still perceived as a 'Western' organisation, and this perception has also contributed to the opposition of some countries, including China, to the idea that the OECD might become the standing secretariat of the G20. Nonetheless, steps in that direction have been completed. The OECD sends a 'Sherpa' and provides services to the G20 and G8. The G20 also regularly assign tasks to the OECD in its conclusions; the Los Cabos communiqué<sup>20</sup>, for example, included 15 such tasks.

- *An **increased exchange of information and expertise** should be therefore encouraged both at **expert level** and the **relevant political level**: specialised committees should interact with specialised OECD teams, the EP Secretary General with the OECD Director General, OECD ambassadors with respective delegation chairs of the European Parliament.*
- ***Pooling and sharing of expertise with the OECD** should be developed as both the OECD and the EP produce expert content for policy makers. OECD products should thus be made easier to access for Members as a complement to the European Parliament's own in-house production.*

The OECD could also play a role in expanding the parliamentary dimension of the G20 process. Not only does the organisation have longstanding relations with parliamentarians through the Council of Europe and NATO parliamentary assemblies, but it also has its own parliamentary network. If the parliamentary element of the G8/G20 were to further develop, the OECD could provide expertise (perhaps in conjunction with other international organisations, such as the WTO, which is already associated with the G20's work). Nevertheless, and especially from the view of the European Parliament, it has to be said that today neither the Council of Europe's nor the NATO's Parliamentary Assemblies play significant roles in Europe beyond control on their own organisations.

#### Key action point for the European Parliament:

- ➡ ***Increase exchange of information and expertise at expert level and relevant political level: pooling and sharing of expertise with the OECD.***

<sup>20</sup> G20 leaders released this communiqué at the 4-5 June 2012 summit in Los Cabos, Mexico

### 2.1.3. How can the EP ensure democratic accountability plus monitor and shape initiatives and decisions taken by the G8/G20? And do we want a G3 format created between the EU, China and the United States?

The international system for agenda setting developed into a multi-polar system with several players. Some are trying to reduce complexity in the process and put forward the idea of a G3. But there is no argument why India, as the largest democracy in the world and with a larger population than the US and the EU combined, should not also participate in such a set-up, thus already leading to a G4. Other countries, like Brazil or Nigeria (biggest population in Africa) could argue that they should participate as well - which then would lead to the consideration of including the participation of regional organisations representing groups of countries. But to avoid a mere Sino-American condominium on the global economy, the European Union does not have an interest in a format such as G3, which would be immediately delegitimized by the rest of the world and in addition reduce the inclusive function of G20.

G20 summits are not international conferences leading to international treaties or international negotiations. They should remain executive forums setting political guidelines and signalling global consensus on global issues. As such an informal forum fostering dialogue among its members and setting global policy priorities, the G20 has undoubtedly become a real global agenda setter during the financial crisis. However, it remains to be seen whether the G20 can keep this position in post-crisis times. In addition to the UK, Germany, France and Italy, the European Union (represented by the President of the Commission and the President of the European Council) is a member of the G20. European institutions (Commission, Council and European Parliament) are involved in the implementation of the G20 commitments. There is thus no urgent need for a Single European Seat nor for a fully-fledged negotiation mandate proposed by and given to the European Commission.

Preparation of G20 summits should take place between participating Member States and the European Union representing those that are not represented individually. The equality between EU members, as far as information flows related to G20 are concerned, should be an important principle to bear in mind at every stage of the process.

- *The European Parliament may require the respect of the principle of equal access to information between Member States of the European Union when it comes to.*
- *The Parliament could also play a more decisive role in the implementation phase, using its own legislative initiative capacities to compel the European Commission to take action on the basis of guide-lines agreed upon in G20 summits. The monitoring of the implementation of the G20 commitments could further be enhanced by e.g. using the already available monitoring institutions like the Financial Stability Board (FSB, created by a G20 decision).*



- The **parliamentary dimension of the G8/G20 is currently constituted** by the G8 and G20 **speakers' consultation meetings**. Yet these are not formally linked to the G20 summits themselves. Lessons from past experience include the following:
  - Given that the G8/G20 speakers' meetings are not aligned — either temporally or in terms of content — with the G8/G20 summits, the speakers' meetings do not provide a democratic input into the summit;
  - Certain speakers (those from Canada, the UK and Australia) are not authorised to take political positions by their national parliamentary system.
- While the second point cannot be solved easily, the EP has suggested ways to overcome the democratic divide implied in the first point. One approach could be by a better aligning the meetings with the schedule (timing and agenda) of the G20 Summits. The host country (or the Parliament of host country) of the G20 Summit should also organise the Speakers Consultation, ideally before the Summit in order to allow some influence on the agenda.
- **Discussion with Sherpas** preparing G20 summits should also take place during the Consultation in order to get an exchange of views and the EP's voice heard.

At the G20 Speakers' consultation meeting held in Riyadh (Saudi Arabia) in January 2012, the European Parliament suggested linking the speakers' consultations and the summits. The principle of accountability — familiar to those in the EU system — is, however, not shared by all delegations. The European Parliament should build coalitions with partners that share the same objectives. In the meantime, there exist other ways to develop cooperation between parliaments of the G8/G20 countries. The network of EP delegations with the parliaments of third countries could be used to invite delegations of G8/G20 parliaments to a single, coordinated event in Brussels.

#### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ **Request equal access to information** in the preparation phase of **G20 summits**.
- ➔ **Monitor the implementation of G20 guidelines**.
- ➔ **Invite the parliaments of G20 third countries to a single, coordinated event in Brussels**.
- ➔ **Improve the timing and preparation of Speakers' Conference**.



#### 2.1.4. How does the G8/G20 fit into the international governance architecture and relate to other international organisations such as the IMF, World Bank and OECD?

With the G20 being an executive forum, providing general guidelines and stronger political support at the highest level for initiatives implemented by other institutions and States participating directly or indirectly to the G20, the success of the G20 will largely depend of the level of international consensus as well as on the efficiency of the other international organisations involved

Although the G20's brightest moment occurred during the 2008-2009 economic and financial crisis, the G20 still plays a vital role in setting the international agenda, especially in the area of financial regulation. The Financial Stability Board (FSB) also plays a prominent role in implementing and monitoring the progress of the financial regulatory reforms. Before G20 meetings (Head of States or Governments, Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors) the FSB sends progress reports. Other international institutions are of importance for the international governance architecture in this domain as well: the Basel Committee and the International Organisation of Securities Commission (IOSCO).

The IMF supports the G20 in the area of macroeconomic surveillance<sup>21</sup>.

The EU should certainly invest in these global institutions and support the creation of a new architecture that expands the current one, which largely dates to the post-World War II era. The EP may be persuaded to examine different options of initiatives in order to shake up the 'stalled procedure' of reform of the IMS. The G20 and G8 have closely aligned international organisations (notably the **IMF** and **OECD**, but also the **WTO**) with their work. These organisations have produced interesting reports and analyses on topics included in the G20 agenda.

- *The European Parliament should **better connect with those hubs of expertise and policy influence at expert level.***

#### Key action point for the European Parliament:

- ➡ ***Better connect with IMF, OECD, WTO as hubs of expertise in particular in preparation phases of G8/ G20 summits.***

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<sup>21</sup> See also the overview of the global financial architecture provided in the Policy Department A (European Parliament, DG IPOL) study: PolDepA, *External Representation of the Euro Area*, (PE475.113), Brussels, May 2012

### 2.1.5. Should the EP involve G8/G20 parliamentarians in its work, seeking their input and comments?

- *The involvement of other G20 parliamentarians could increase the overall visibility and influence of parliaments in the G20 setup. An increased exchange of information at the relevant level, i.e. mainly committee level, could be a most valuable format to better prepare G20 summits.*
- *With the development of multi-level governance and multi-actor policy-making it becomes more and more important to know what is already in the **legislative pipeline**. This mutual monitoring is better achieved by expert contacts and exchange of information than by travel, meetings or even the institutionalisation of new formats of discussions.*
- *The European Parliament could develop integrated **instruments to monitor legislative developments** occurring in main legislative institutions around the globe. This comparative analysis is obviously easier to achieve with fellow democracies and transparent systems.*
- ***Cooperation with parliamentarians** of the EU Member States in G20 could be done via the existing channels of EP cooperation with national parliaments. Delegations to G20 countries or the organisation of joint meetings with incoming delegations from G20 countries could be used for this purpose as well, particularly with those of our strategic partners. An example of such an exchange of views was held with Members of the US Congress and the AFET Committee in Strasbourg on 11 June 2012. The event was timed to follow the regular TLD meeting in Copenhagen. AFET, INTA, ECON, ITRE and other committees could all organise such events after the visits of the G20 parliamentary delegations. An exchange of views in ITRE on the textile industry with Indian MPs might, for example, produce a lively debate. Videoconference would be a practical way of organising brief ad hoc discussions on subjects of common interest.*

#### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ ***Develop integrated instruments to monitor legislative developments** occurring in main legislative institutions around the globe. This comparative analysis is obviously easier to achieve with fellow democracies and transparent systems.*
- ➔ ***Cooperation with parliamentarians of the EU Member States in G20 could be done via the existing channels of EP cooperation with national parliaments.***

## 2.2. How should we develop our relationship with other regional bodies such as ASEAN and the African Union?

### 2.2.1. How can the EU's political role and leverage in international institutions and forums be enhanced to reflect the global financial assistance the EU provides?

In the area of global development aid, the EU is, by far, the largest donor to the World (accumulated aid from Member States and the European Commission). In addition, Europe remains the number one world commercial power and represents the largest relative part of GNP on the planet. Those features are not likely to be dramatically altered, although the Union is not fully assured to remain the top on the list. Nevertheless, its dominant position in global financial aid given to the rest of the world does not translate into a political role and effective power. The Union remains perceived as "weak" by other actors. This situation of "structural inferiority" can be ascribed to different factors:

- A political, economic and financial integration whose shortcomings are widely perceived and felt in this unprecedented period of worldwide economic and financial crisis; in this regard, the more advanced projects for banking and budgetary integration are heading in the right direction but are only a start.
- A political, institutional and legal hybrid evolution, original but insufficiently integrated, to find a single European position in all sectors of activity; this situation results in a decision-making process which is not very quick, as opposed to that of a federation or a confederation;
- The absence of an integrated, standardised European defence or a united European armed force;
- A high (and expensive) level of Member States' representation in international assemblies, forums, organisations and agencies that does not necessarily help to find a common EU position.

To increase leverage, policy content may be more important in the long run than structures and positions.

For instance, the main instrument of the European Union in this field - the development fund - is now put under the community method. It remains nonetheless difficult to convince the international community and developing countries alike that the 27 Member States are seriously committed to work as one with their many national agencies, funds and priorities. Fighting for (and eventually obtaining) a single seat here and there will not fundamentally change the game.

A first urgently needed step is to better define and coordinate the EU policy in the field, to deliver more rapidly and to strengthen conditionality. Faced with other large organised continental political entities (USA, China, Russia, India), Europe must become much more

competitive against the dominant players in the system as the only genuine promoter of balanced partnerships and inclusive forms of governance. The EU should better stress the scope of the financial assistance — mostly in the form of nonconditional aid — it provides. The Union should be appropriately recognised for this assistance and its results, not only from the beneficiaries of EU assistance, but also from other donors and the international community. The dialogue about aid with third countries should be a full-fledged dimension of the political dialogue established with them, with the view to establish co-financing on specific projects and specific regions.

In the longer term, the development of a renewed European "smart power" will have to combine influence, attraction and coercion. The external dimension of immigration, science, agriculture and environmental policies are to play a major role.

The European Union must react quickly if it is to maintain its influence. Otherwise it risks being strategically sidelined.

- *The European Parliament should **assess the progress made in influence and attraction of the European Union in an autonomous fashion** and on a regular basis to create momentum for a more proactive and more integrative action.*

The Vice-President/High Representative should draw up a White Paper on the role of the EU in multilateral organisations and should outline a comprehensive and strategic approach for the short and medium terms, through 2020. The EU and its Member States should identify the international/multilateral bodies whose current arrangements are inefficient and should be streamlined. Among those to be examined are:

- The UN system. In several UN programmes/conferences (UNDP, UNCTAD, OHCHR, UNHRC), the EU is merely an observer, despite being an important financial contributor and having major policy interests. Because it would be very difficult to alter the UN Charter, the EU is likely to remain an observer to the UN General Assembly (UNGA). Yet the EU's effective participation in the work of the UNGA and other UN bodies and agencies should be enhanced. The EU should confirm that an EU seat in an enlarged UN Security Council remains its long-term goal. In the meantime, one should not shy away about the legitimate reinforcing of Germany's position within the United Nations' Security Council.
- International Financial Institutions. Given that monetary policy is an exclusive EU competence for those Member States sharing a single currency, a single, common seat and constituency on the IMF Executive Board should be created. In addition, the EU should seek a seat as an observer to the World Bank's Executive Board and group all the EU's MS in the same constituency.
- NATO. A mutual observer status in the North Atlantic Council and the Political and Security Committee should be considered, following the adoption of the new NATO strategic concept. The EU should also work towards developing a genuine EU-NATO strategic partnership and try to decouple this venture from the Turkish Cypriot and the Turkish accession issues.

### 2.2.2. Does the EP need to reorganise its existing pattern of assemblies and structures in response to new regional shifts and emerging organisations?

- *The **cost/benefit of joint parliamentary assemblies** should be assessed with respect to their general input in actual legislation and on a case by case basis. How can technology reduce the costs associated with big gatherings? See Chapter I, (1.3.4).*

#### Key action point for the European Parliament:

- ➡ *Assess the **cost/benefit of joint parliamentary assemblies** by a detailed efficiency audit.*

### 2.2.3. Are there ways in which one could help regional bodies like ASEAN and the African Union to develop stronger parliamentary dimensions?

The democratic quality and the strength of the parliamentary dimension of a regional integration process ('regional dialogue' may be a more appropriate term) depend on the quality of the 'building blocks' or, in other words, the democratic nature of the States participating in this process.

The 10 States that currently belong to ASEAN participate in the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA). On the basis of commonly recognised standards, three of these states are considered authoritarian regimes (by *Freedom House*, *Reporters without Borders* and the *Economist Intelligence Unit* indices of democracy and freedom): Vietnam, Laos and Burma (although positive developments have recently occurred in Burma).

Of the 56 states that belong to the African Union (AU), 49 are represented in the Pan-African Parliament. The absolute majority are considered to be 'authoritarian regimes' (by the *Economist Intelligence Unit's* 2011 Democracy Index).

It is not clear yet if that situation is really on the move and whether or not stability and pluralism will prevail.

- *At this stage, the European Parliament should dare to ask the pivotal question: how much support should the European Parliament offer to the parliamentary dimension of a regional Cooperation process when a substantial proportion of the participants lack the essential elements of a democratic parliament?*

Some preliminary developments should obviously be considered *sine qua non*, while not discouraging the "first" democratic generation.

- a) Security is the first pillar of development and democracy.
  - b) The preliminary development of the rule of law, the establishment of Parliamentary rights and the organisation of genuine legislative procedures should be pre-conditions if one expects to belong to joint parliamentary bodies.
- *At present, The European Parliament engages in dialogue and supports the development of democracy through various **EU financial instruments** whose capacity to produce an impact has **to be assessed** in an independent fashion. Support to better governance and sound public finances is essential. This is almost the precondition to any further steps, given that 33 of the 54 States of the AU for which data is available are considered 'fragile states' (according to the 2011 Foreign Policy Index).*
- c) *The EU, and the European Parliament as an institution of the EU, cannot replace the will (or lack of it) of states to engage in regional cooperation processes.*

d) *What the European Parliament can do is adapt its level of involvement and support according to the states' progresses towards the aims and values defended by the EU and towards a cooperative attitude at regional level. This requires more action at a bilateral level (for example, promoting democracy in Burma) than at the level of the regional institutions.*

e) Capacity building of continent wide democratic institutions is essential.

The standing parliamentary delegations to ASEAN and to the Pan-African Parliament could thus be strengthened in their remit to allow for an increased exchange of views and best practices.

- *Likewise, parliamentary services could strengthen their existing cooperation with the Pan African Parliament and contribute to **capacity building in the area of Interpretation and Conference organisation**. Initiatives like the African Project for training conference interpreters on the African Continent could also be supported further. Virtual seminars and traineeships for conference interpreters, conference organisers and technicians could be offered to enhance this process, using the Parliament's services link to international organisations and institutions with interpreting services to support the exchange of best practices.*

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Ask the **pivotal question**: how much support should the European Parliament offer to the parliamentary dimension of a regional Cooperation process when a substantial proportion of the participants lack the essential elements of a democratic parliament?*
- ➔ *Assess in an independent fashion **EU financial instruments** supporting democracy: what is their actual impact?*
- ➔ *Strengthen **direct technical parliamentary assistance**, as, for instance, cooperation with the Pan African Parliament and contribute to capacity building in the area of interpretation and conference organisation.*



#### 2.2.4. How could political groups, transnational political parties and their foundations further these relationships?

See *Chapter I (1.2.7.)* on the role of trans-European parties and their foundations.

#### 2.2.5. Should standing delegations with strategic countries in Africa be set up outside the framework of the Pan African Parliament and the ACP/EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly, or should the EP establish relations with African sub-regions or organisations such as ECOWAS?

Both approaches have their merits. As a continent-wide Parliament the EP should establish and strengthen its relations to both existing assemblies like the Pan African Parliament and develop new relations with regional organisations such as ECOWAS.

At the same time, the development of relations to possible future strategic partners must not be neglected. African major power houses like Algeria, Egypt, Nigeria and South Africa deserve a special approach, as their national interests and their national policy options do not fully equate with those of the continental or regional organisations they belong to. *Strong bilateral relations with those countries shall thus not only develop at executive level but also at legislative and **parliamentary level**, especially when rule of law and parliamentary structures are solidly established.*

*As to the future of the ACP process and specifically the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly, two possible scenarios exist.*

*In 2020 the current agreement serving as the basis for EU-ACP cooperation - the 'Cotonou Agreement' - will expire. If the ACP Group of States still exists after 2020, regional delegations could be created for its six regions (Caribbean, Pacific, Central Africa, East Africa, Southern Africa and West Africa). Each of the 78 European Parliament Members of the ACP-EU JPA could:*

- i) be a member of one of the six regional delegations,*
- ii) be specialised in that particular region and*
- iii) participate in the specific regional meeting.*

*If the ACP Group of States does not exist after 2020, regional delegations could be created with the African Regional Economic Communities (RECs). RECs can have a determining role in enhancing democratic participation and supporting regional integration by harmonising trade and investment laws, regulatory frameworks and procedures. The focus of parliamentary cooperation may differ according to the objectives of the organisations.*

It might also be possible to reorganise the countries currently in the 'ACP', linking the Caribbean with Latin America and the Pacific with Asia.



## 2.3. How could we organise relations with national parliaments more effectively?

Political effectiveness premises political engagement. Inter-parliamentary activities have to meet with a specific interest of MEPs. In this regard new formats have been developed focusing on more specific topics and on areas of mixed competences (e.g. budget, EMU, Justice and Home Affairs), mainly focusing on direct contacts at committee level. More specific contacts between EP rapporteurs and their counterparts in national Parliaments could be organised in the future (e.g. using video-conferencing).

The economic, financial and social crisis and the political responses to it, such as rescue mechanisms (EFSF, ESM) and coordination efforts among EU Member States outside ('Euro Plus Pact') as well as within the EU legal order ('European Semester'), necessitate further reflection on how to guarantee democratic legitimacy and how to organise effective parliamentary control at European and national level. The European Parliament, as the only directly elected democratic institution of the European Union must play a leading role on this issue.

In administrative terms of effectiveness, the EP has definitely contributed to it via a planning exercise of inter-parliamentary activities. This is just the first attempt to increase effectiveness and quality of inter-parliamentary cooperation following the principle of gathering together 'the right people, on the right issues at the right time'. This has proved to be useful and needs to be promoted and improved.

The current Treaties allowed for the first time a structured and intensified integration of the national parliaments into the EU decision-making process. One of the national parliaments' most salient expressions is reasoned opinions, which relate to subsidiarity concerns.

- *This might in the future require a **clarification of the distribution of competences**. The European Parliament could push for such a clarification.*
- *Currently, the Commission has taken charge of the political response to the national parliaments' opinions, with the EP to date largely setting aside both the reasoned opinions (until they reach critical mass) and the contributions. Generally, contributions of national Parliaments should be considered both as an invitation to increase dialogue and as an opening to involve them more tightly in the EU legislative process all along, from conception to implementation. This nevertheless opens up the necessity for the political debate to also focus on which EU institutions should act as **first point of contact** for national parliaments and their contributions.*

Two possible scenarios could be envisaged.

Traditionally, a 'natural' political axis would be argued to exist between the national parliaments and the European Parliament, being directly and democratically elected bodies with the responsibility of representing their electorates, i.e. the citizens, in their respective levels of decision-making.

Taking into account the closely linked multi-level structures which have come into being in the past few years and which in consequence have led to a complex interweaving of political decision-making levels, a different line of argument as regards the integration of national Parliaments in the European decision-making process could be employed.

- *On the European level, the European Parliament's legal and natural counterpart is the Council. Whereas the European Parliament should represent the interests of the citizens in Europe, the Council is putting forward and defending the interests of the Member States. In this respect the specialisation principle inherent to representative democracy has to be remembered: the role of national parliamentarians is to check their national governments and to legislate at the national level. The role of MEPs is to check the European Institutions and to legislate at the European level.*
- *National parliamentarians cannot thus claim to possess a monopoly of representation that would allow them - and only them - to directly represent their national citizens at home for home affairs, in Brussels for European affairs or elsewhere on global issues. The role of national parliaments in European affairs derives mainly from the fact that they have to check the European policy of their governments, the correct transposition of European law and the respect of the subsidiarity principle. The European policies of national governments take place in the Council and - possibly in the future - the European Council. Deriving from these principles one could argue that **direct relations** should be encouraged **between ministers in the Council** and the members of their respective national parliament. The Council could thus benefit from an increased presence in Brussels of national parliamentarians.*
- *At the same time, MEPs representing the citizens of the Union could strive to communicate better with their constituencies.*
- *This parallel move best illustrates the complex dynamics of multi-level governance in the European context: national parliaments aim at getting direct European access via their national government's representatives in Brussels, while MEPs aim at establishing stronger ties with the citizens in their constituencies and - on a thematic basis - throughout the continent through social networks. This emerging (and competitive) dynamic calls for **increased cooperation and exchange of information** between the European Parliament and the national Parliaments, providing them with **all necessary information** while leaving them their full autonomy to organize in Brussels.*

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Push Member States to clarify **the distribution of competences** as presently included in the treaties.*
- ➔ *EP to profile itself as **first point of contact** for national parliaments as far as inter-parliamentary cooperation is concerned.*
- ➔ *Assert that the European Parliament's legal and natural counterpart in legislation is the Council.*
- ➔ *Encourage direct exchanges **between ministers in the Council** and the members of their respective national parliament.*
- ➔ *MEPs representing the citizens of the Union to **strive to communicate better with citizens in their constituencies**. More working time at constituency level, more recourse there and a more intensive use of communication technologies may help.*
- ➔ *Obtain in negotiations with Member States **a harmonized European electoral law or the building blocks of it** putting emphasis on democratic standards, the role of pan-European parties, and the direct link between candidates and citizens at the local level.*
- ➔ ***Increase exchange of information** between the European Parliament and the national Parliaments, providing them with **all necessary information** while leaving them their full autonomy to organize if they wish to reinforce their presence in Brussels.*

### 2.3.1. How could the EP respond more effectively to national parliaments' reasoned opinions and contributions?

The perception of the legislative work should change with a view to better integrating the post-adoption phase. This would also provide valuable feedback when legislating at a later stage, thus permitting better integration of the perception of difficulties seen at the national level. The relationships between the EP and national parliaments in all cases have to be perceived as open and functioning in both ways. The EP could give even more visibility to reasoned opinions and contributions by way of organisational measures. Even under the current regime, they may be taken up for debate at committee stage. A formalised procedure does not seem to be justified - the issues raised should be treated according to their merits and subject to the wishes of the rapporteur.

For democracy to take place in ever more complex structures more time is required. Especially contributions delivered by national Parliaments need to be scrutinised at the European level by the correct and best suited recipients. The Council, acting as the legislator representing the member states, should be considered the primary body responsible to adequately take up such contributions from member states' parliaments and channel them into their legislative proposals and negotiations positions.

- *The European Parliament on the other hand could continue to provide national parliaments with its valuable and diverse expertise, using the output of debates in the European Parliament in committees, groups and plenary for debates on similar issues within national parliaments.*
- *Committee secretariats could play a more active role in **diffusing national parliaments' contributions to the Members** concerned, in particular the Rapporteur and Shadow Rapporteurs, drawing their attention to the most important points contained therein.*
- *Hearings with the contribution of the relevant rapporteurs and equivalents from national parliaments could be considered occasionally, when a clear added value can be proven.*
- *Video-conferencing could be a well suited instrument to develop this practice.*
- *When dealing with EU External Policies and especially when drafting annual reports, more attention could be paid to opinions and contributions by national parliaments. For instance, a joint AFET/PARLNAT debate could be scheduled twice a year, in the autumn for the enlargement countries and in the spring for the ENP countries (when the respective reports are published). This would create a common approach. The twice-yearly Inter-parliamentary Conferences on CFSP/CSDP could contribute to the debate.*

At present no argument or reflection seems to play in favour of a need for the EP to radically change its response to NPs submissions (reasoned opinions and contributions). As long as the Treaty will not provide new legal obligations for the EP in this field, it will be difficult to imagine a scenario/ procedure which would go beyond what has just been implemented (Rule 38a of the EP Rules of Procedure and 2010 Common Approach of the Conference of Committee Chairs on the treatment of NPs' submissions).

According to the Treaties, the EP, the Commission and the Council 'shall take into account the reasoned opinions issued by national Parliaments'. As the author of the majority of legislative proposals and in the context of its political dialogue with NPs, the European Commission has taken the political decision to formally reply to all reasoned opinions and contributions sent by national Parliaments (even without the majorities required in the Treaty to trigger the 'yellow' or 'orange' card).

The EP has taken another approach which does not foresee a formal reply by any competent political body, but its Rules of Procedure foresee that the committee responsible for the subject matter does not proceed to its final vote before the expiration of the deadline of eight weeks laid down in the Treaty. All reasoned opinions are translated into all EU languages (except Maltese and Gaelic)<sup>22</sup> - the EP is the only EU Institution to do so - and reasoned opinions are listed in the recitals of the legislative resolution of a specific draft legislative act.

The question on EP systematic responses to reasoned opinions could become virulent again in the future if either Protocol (No 2) on the application of the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality changed or if the EP received additional rights of initiative for legislative acts to which national Parliaments could adopt reasoned opinions and on which the EP might have to react once they reach the thresholds laid down in Protocol No 2.

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<sup>22</sup> From the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty until 1 September 2012, the EP has received a total of 991 submissions from national Parliaments. Of these, less than 1/6 are reasoned opinions (147) while all the remaining - over 5/6 - are contributions (844).

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Distribute national parliaments' contributions to the Members and draw their attention on the most important point therein.*
- ➔ ***Consider hearings with the presence of the relevant rapporteurs** from national parliaments in specific cases, when a clear added value can be proven. The use of **videoconferencing** maybe considered.*
- ➔ *When dealing with EU External Policies and especially when drafting annual reports, more attention could also be paid to opinions and contributions by national parliaments. Try, for instance, to schedule joint **AFET/PARLNAT debates on Foreign Policy Issues**.*

### 2.3.2. Should the EP create a network of national parliamentary liaison points in response to the 26 national parliaments establishing offices in Brussels? What modus operandi could lead to a better working relationship between the EP and these national parliaments' representations?

No. Creating an additional network of national parliamentary liaison points situated in the national parliaments seems a disproportionate measure.

- *Instead of creating such an additional network, it would be better to **reinforce the existing EP information offices** and adapt their mission so they can report on the preparation and the implementation of the European legislation in each Member State.*
- *Establishing **more structured relations and contacts between committee secretariats** would also seem to be a pragmatic solution (with the additional advantage of promoting cooperation on specific legislative and political dossiers).*
- ***Regular contacts and exchange** with national parliaments could be sought on specific topical subjects, in particular by encouraging **videoconferencing** between EP and NP rapporteurs for a better understanding of positions adopted by NPs or in the case of a 'yellow card'. These could ideally involve the EP rapporteur and shadows and be organised independently from the formal Committee meetings. A useful precedent in this respect has been the exchange of the trio Brok-Gualtieri-Verhofstadt with the Italian Camera dei Deputati on the TSCG negotiations.*
- *Additional communication methods such as virtual meetings, automatic or remote translating and interpretation etc. would also allow for an increase in personal contacts or work meetings for improving collaborative work in the 'European legal system'.*
- ***IPEX** can be a starting point for a constant evolution and adaptation aiming at sharing and establishing an effective transfer of information are likely to contribute to improving relations between the EP and national parliaments.*

#### IPEX: Inter-parliamentary EU Information Exchange

In order to facilitate the flow of information, national Parliaments - in cooperation with the European Parliament - have created their own database and website – [www.ipex.eu](http://www.ipex.eu)

IPEX contains parliamentary scrutiny documents and information concerning the European Union. Parliamentary documents, which are uploaded individually by each national Parliament, are the main building blocks of the IPEX database. These documents are organised according to the specific EU document which they relate to.

Since November 2009 the IPEX domain belongs to the European Parliament. In 2010 it underwent important changes to make it more user-friendly.

- *Such improvements as mentioned above would not only impact on the consultation process as such, but also on the transposition of European law, which would be easier to monitor if information and data flows were better identified and at least partially automated. In this area, the adoption of a common viewpoint regarding the relevant document and a **standard structure** would be essential to achieve substantial progress.*
- *A mutual change in perception regarding the legislative work of both European Parliament and the national parliaments could contribute to **improve coherence in the post adoption phase** and would provide valuable feedback when legislating at a later stage, permitting to better take into account the perception or difficulties perceived at the national level.*
- *From a longer-term perspective, a more **consistent exchange** between EP and NPs about the important legislative dossiers with **wide-reaching economic and social externalities** at European and national levels is clearly necessary.*
- *The current practice of **inter parliamentary meetings** with MNPs of relevant expertise appears **not to be fully satisfactory** to participants both from the EP and the NP. There is a need for further development of well-prepared and focused meetings with specific outcome.*
- *The EP could expand the experience of the **Steering Group** on the relations with the national parliaments in order to put additional political impetus into the development of the respective relations.*
- ***Effective scrutiny** is necessarily associated with increased capacities of expertise. This might give rise to the need to review the distribution of competences as present in the treaties and reflect on the notion of 'legislative intensity' as a complementary concept.*
- *First EP's expertise capacity should be fully deployed to contribute to providing answers to the NPs with regard to the rationale of a legislative proposal by demonstrating the **European Added Value** or contrasting it with the negative impact of isolated policies. The **European Centre for Parliamentary Research and Documentation (ECPRD)** might be strengthened for this reason, acting as coordinator of the relations.*

#### ECPRD: European Centre for Parliamentary Research and Documentation

The European Centre for Parliamentary Research and Documentation (ECPRD) is an information exchange network between parliament administrations on topical matters of parliamentary practice. The network comprises more than 100 correspondents from 70 member parliaments. The Secretariat is hosted by the Directorate of the European Parliament dealing with Relations with national Parliaments.

[www.ecprd.europarl.europa.eu](http://www.ecprd.europarl.europa.eu)

- *This in turn implies a form of **expertise pooling between EP & NPs**. In this context it is important to make available to the national parliaments the expertise developed in the EP,*



*with additional publicity for the comparative studies, where the EP is in the best position to promote convergences and a broad EU perspective.*

- *It could also be possible to develop 'joint products'. An example could be an overview of the involvement of National Parliaments in the fiscal policy processes. Another 'product' of such cooperation could be a yearly updated overview/summary of the involvement of National Parliaments in the whole European Semester process. Additionally information could be gathered about the involvement of the National Parliaments in the National Semester (implementation of the European Policy recommendations at the national level in the budget process). This would provide valuable information regarding the legitimacy of the European Semester on the national level. One could imagine gathering this information via an annual survey.*
- *But taking into account that surveys work better with direct contacts, staff meetings could be organised in parallel to the planned **Inter-parliamentary Week** on topics related to the European Semester (together with the presentation of the 'joint products' as input to this parliamentary meetings).*

Currently 39 out of 40 national Parliaments/Chambers are already represented at the European Parliament by 55 civil servants. A *modus operandi* will prove useful in view of the relatively high turnover of the representatives of national Parliaments if it defines practical arrangements for their work and the relations with the EP. This *modus operandi* should cover areas such as badges, the allocation of office space and equipment, the organisation of visits and seminars within the EP, the allocation of seats for national Parliaments representatives in committee meetings, organisational details of inter-parliamentary meetings etc. A *modus operandi* with NP representatives would create additional benefits if the EP were to obtain something in return from the NP. A 'culture of reciprocity' still needs to develop.

Practical arrangements could be improved: the Directorate for relations with national Parliaments should be allowed to attend the Monday Morning Meetings (MMMs) currently organised by the national parliaments' representatives among themselves (at the moment held behind closed doors). The representatives should inform the Directorate about visits from national parliamentarians and the adoption of resolutions with EU relevance in their parliaments/chambers. They should support the preparation of inter-parliamentary meetings by making information on their parliaments/chambers position available for the meeting.

It must be underlined, however, that some of the EP offers (e.g. the availability of office space or seats in committee meetings) might be subject to changes and scarceness. A unilateral codification of offers to NP representatives by the EP itself therefore seems to be easier to handle (and easier to adapt to changing circumstances) than a multi-lateral agreement with national parliaments (or their representatives) on a *modus operandi*.

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Audit, adapt and upgrade the existing EP information offices in a context of closer cooperation resulting from the European Semester and other European policies directly affecting citizens at the national level.*
- ➔ *Establish more structured relations and contacts between committee secretariats.*
- ➔ *Encourage, when needed and requested, videoconferencing between EP and NP rapporteurs.*
- ➔ *Build upon IPEX for the effective transfer of information between the EP and national parliaments.*
- ➔ *Organise better the post-adoption phase.*
- ➔ *Encourage the Council to push Member States to harmonize structures and processes for transposition.*
- ➔ *Assess the current practice of the different types of inter-parliamentary meetings.*
- ➔ *Demonstrate European Added Value in EP's impact assessment shared with national parliaments.*
- ➔ *Pool expertise, whenever possible, between EP & NPs and develop 'joint assessment products'.*
- ➔ *Strengthen the European Centre for Parliamentary Research and Documentation (ECPRD).*
- ➔ *Establish a new modus operandi with the officials of National Parliament present in the EP in a spirit of reciprocity.*

### 2.3.3. Can MEPs be more involved in the committee work and legislative scrutiny of national parliaments?

No, this is not the correct way forward. Mandates and responsibilities of the European Parliament and the national parliaments need to be kept separate. The EP should not give the impression that it intends to interfere in national competences and responsibilities, as national executives are only accountable to national Parliaments. Therefore both committee work and legislative scrutiny touch upon different topics and are based on different interests.

- *The European Parliament and its Members should nonetheless be prepared to give **up-to-date briefings** on European issues to their colleagues in national parliaments, national parties as well as to citizens in their constituencies.*
- *To this end only, the European Parliament should deploy its diplomatic skills in order to extend and encourage the practice of individual MEPs ready to **contribute to committee meetings in national parliaments.***
- *At the same time it is important to see that already the different tasks and responsibilities of MEPs are very demanding and time-consuming, with a high likelihood for an even increased demand for information, content and interaction in the future. Under the current system, in major Member States, one or two MEPs would represent a million citizens, opposed to usually 15 to 20 Members of national parliament taking care of the same number of citizens. Enabling close and good working relations between MEPs and the national MPs of the same region should be encouraged by the development of compatible electoral divisions whenever and wherever possible.*

First and foremost this is a question of Members' time and their priorities. In cases where MEPs do have the option to spend part of their time on participating in national Parliaments' work and debates they tend not to make much use of these options (as to be seen in the German Bundestag), since there is no direct benefit for their daily work and they do not exert any direct influence on the results of votes at national level. It has to be accepted too, that an active involvement of MEPs in the work (and in decisions) of national Parliaments could blur the (so far) clear distinction of roles and responsibilities between national and European parliamentarians.

Under the current conditions such an involvement could be interesting for MEPs where national parliaments have a direct influence on the government's position in the (European) Council (e.g. the Danish Folketing). It could also be interesting where MEPs would be able to benefit from a nation-wide platform for their political messages (e.g. the 'State of the Union' debates in the Dutch parliament).

Secondly, the EP has to be aware that advocating and requesting additional rights for MEPs in national Parliaments could also trigger demands for reciprocal rights for members of national Parliaments in the European Parliament (such as for speaking time in committee meetings and in plenary debates).

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Prepare MEPs to give **up-to-date briefings** on European issues to their **colleagues in national parliaments, national parties as well as to citizens in their constituencies.***
- ➔ *Extend and encourage the practice of individual MEPs ready to **contribute to committee debates in national parliaments.***
- ➔ *Enable closer working relations between MEPs and the national MPs of the same region. More working time in constituencies and more resources to support Members at that level could prove helpful.*
- ➔ *Push for the development of compatible electoral divisions whenever and wherever possible.*

#### 2.3.4. Could closer structured cooperation between the EP and national parliaments lead to better communication and legislative synergies? What procedure could the EP develop to regularly assess its relations with national parliaments?

The European Parliament's natural counterpart in legislative affairs is the Council of the European Union, whereas there is no direct legal or even legislative *continuum* between national parliaments and the European Parliament. National parliaments may object before and after the European legislative process. During the legislative process, they can exert political pressure on their respective national governments, which are represented in the Council and, as such, take part in the European legislative debate and negotiations.

- *Of course, the European Parliament may and should **share with national parliaments its independent impact assessment** of incoming legislative proposals.*
- *An efficient and structured cooperation between the EP and national parliaments is mutually beneficial. Both the EP and the national parliaments have a shared interest in reinforcing democratic scrutiny and parliamentary democracy, not only within the EU but also beyond the EU's borders. The Treaty of Lisbon provides the legal framework to reinforce this relationship, but it needs to be implemented in practice, and this will require **a joint effort**.*
- *Although the current financial constraints make it difficult for the EP to continue its past tradition of visiting the national parliament of the Member State holding the presidency of the EU, this practice has proved useful. National parliaments and the EU have grown closer as a result, and mutual understanding of issues of common interest has improved. If possible, the tradition should be maintained. Different ways of communicating, e.g. videoconferencing, should be explored to intensify contacts.*

- (a) The less formalised inter-parliamentary meetings (IPMs) are organised following concrete requests by EP or NP committees. Each Presidency Parliament prepares a semi-annual calendar as does the EP twice a year, listing all upcoming IPMs. However, the organisation of meetings by the Presidency Parliament and the European Parliament could be better coordinated to avoid potential duplication and overlaps. This would necessitate a coordinated selection of topics for discussion in view of the EP's legislative priorities.

At the same time, to improve synergies, NPs could adopt, translate and make available contributions to the themes discussed in the meetings organised in the EP.

A closer cooperation between the EP and national parliaments could increase impact and awareness of each other's policy agendas and constraints. More coordinated legislative efforts could improve the implementation of EU Directives.

- (b) Based on the experiences gathered with the final report of the Steering Group for relations with national parliaments in 2011 the EP could decide to assess annually its relations with national parliaments, based on a set of quantifiable criteria referring to

inter alia the work of the EUSC, COSAC and the CFSP/CSDP Conference, developments under Protocol No. 2 TEU, inter-parliamentary meetings, video-conferences, bilateral visits, IPEX, ECPRD and the representatives of national parliaments in the EP premises. The two Vice-Presidents responsible for relations with national parliaments could request the Conference of Committee Chairs to contribute, e.g. by way of answering a questionnaire, to the preparation of an annual report for the Conference of Presidents (and the Bureau).

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ ***Share with national parliaments its independent impact assessment of incoming legislative proposals.***
- ➔ ***Carry out an independent check on whether the subsidiarity principle has been duly respected** by the Commission, the European agencies or even the **Troikas** established to deliver on bailout agreements.*
- ➔ *Share this information with national parliaments so that they can fully exert their rights vis-à-vis their governments.*

### 2.3.5. How should the EP respond to subsidiarity questions posed by national parliaments, and are there new ways the EP and national parliaments could harness budgetary, research, expertise and legislative synergies?

A more specialised dialogue, from peer to peer, specialist to specialist, should be encouraged as a general rule.

- *As to date, cooperation between the EP and national parliaments' content related services exists with the European Centre for Parliamentary Research and Documentation (ECPRD). But the system is overstretched with more and more users. The EP could encourage National Parliaments to strengthen the network of ECPRD correspondents as well as joint seminars at expert level.*
- *Moreover, coordination structures involving experts from national parliaments and administrators from the European Parliament could be set up to reinforce exchanges between these institutions, if needed. A parallel move should happen at the Council level.*
- *Concerning the second part of the question, a close cooperation between the respective research and expertise services of the EP and national parliaments should be developed as a first step.*
- *Programmes for common workshops (aiming at Members), for common training sessions (aiming at staff) and the exchange of staff, and the exchange of knowledge, through direct access to databases and internal websites, could serve as basic measures.*
- *A possibility to respond to subsidiarity questions from national parliaments could be the organisation of inter-parliamentary meetings to debate proposals that trigger a significant number of reasoned opinions. To a certain extent this is already happening, with recent examples being the organisation of inter-parliamentary meetings on the reform of the EU data protection in October 2012 and on the Common European Sales Law in November 2012.*
- *Especially for cases where the yellow or orange card procedures are triggered, the responsible EP committee could organise an exchange of views with national parliaments.*
- *Synergies with national parliaments are already exploited in the framework of the Inter-parliamentary EU information exchange platform (IPEX) and the European Centre for Parliamentary Research and Documentation (ECPRD). Building on this, pilot projects could, for instance, be envisaged in the field of impact assessments and European added value where national Parliaments could provide the EP services with their "bottom-up" data from the national context.*
- *Another possible area for cooperation could be large-scale studies, where the EP could cooperate with several or all national parliaments to jointly finance a study on a particular topic and/or gather the relevant data directly from national Parliaments.*



### Key action points for the European Parliament:

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- ➔ Reinforce the *effective network of parliaments' services between EU parliaments*.
- ➔ *Programmes for common workshops (aiming at Members), for common training sessions (aiming at staff) and the exchange of staff and knowledge, through direct access to databases and internal websites, could serve as basic measures.*

### 2.3.6. How should the EP exchange good practices in political decision-making with national parliaments to improve accessibility, openness, participation, accountability, effectiveness and coherence?

- *Concerning improving the accountability, and also effectiveness and coherence, the European Parliament **as the discharge authority** could enhance its **technical cooperation** with the national parliaments acting in the same capacity.*
- *On the one hand, the EP has been repeatedly concerned (as expressed in its discharge resolutions) by the question of limited accountability of EU funds spent at the national level. On the other hand, the national parliaments typically exercise some budgetary ex-post control of implementation of the national budgets, often including the EU funds spent nationally. Therefore, an increased cooperation and exchange of information and documents on a regular basis between the Committee on Budgetary Control of the EP and the respective committees or other bodies responsible for budgetary control in the national parliaments would increase the accountability and coherence of parliamentary control over budget and could potentially contribute to filling in the existing gaps. Through these measures, common views on weaknesses in management systems could be identified, especially for shared management expenses (i.e. 80% of the EU budget).*
- *In order to bring about concrete results, such cooperation and information exchange would need to take place at both the political and administrative level. Another possibility would be the establishment of fora aimed at promoting the exchange of information. This could be done through the extension of the knowledge management portal to national parliaments, once it is in place.*

Exchanges of views on concrete issues could for instance also be organised in areas such as promoting gender equality in parliaments, communication, and electoral strategies, for instance ahead of EP elections, or on citizens information services of the EP and national parliaments, or on policies and technical solutions for the live broadcasting of parliamentary meetings.

In this context, technological cooperation could for instance be explored to ensure that the live video stream of inter-parliamentary meetings taking place at the EP is advertised simultaneously on the websites of all participating parliaments. Or, if MEPs speak before national parliaments, these sessions could also be broadcast on the EP website.

Important inter-parliamentary meetings could also be followed up by the development of networks of parliamentarians interested in that particular topic. This process could be greatly facilitated by new media and IT tools, such as videoconferencing, as the EP is currently developing a new service for videoconferencing with interpretation.

Bilateral contacts between the EP's Directorate for Legislative Acts and the relevant offices of the national parliaments would serve to raise mutual awareness of the quality issues underlying the drafting of legislation at the EU level and its implementation at the national level. This could improve the consistency of national implementation in the

medium term. Contacts currently exist between a number of NP offices (UK, FI, US etc.) and the Directorate for Legislative Acts (DLA), but these could be pursued more systematically.

#### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Concerning improving accountability, and also effectiveness and coherence, the European Parliament **as the discharge authority could enhance its technical cooperation** with the national parliaments acting in the same capacity.*
- ➔ *Increase cooperation and exchange of Information and documents on a regular basis between the Committee on Budgetary Control of the EP and the respective committees or other bodies responsible for budgetary control in the national parliaments.*
- ➔ *In order to bring about concrete results, such cooperation and **information exchange would need to take place at both the political and administrative level.***
- ➔ *Another possibility would be the establishment of digital fora aimed at promoting the exchange of information. This could be done through the extension of the **knowledge management portal to national parliaments**, once it is in place.*

## 2.4. What mechanisms should the EP use, or put in place, in Member States if national, regional and local actors become more important for us?

- *If national, regional and local actors become more important in the decision-making process, **the EPIOs would be a priori best placed to be the focal point** for enhanced contacts with those actors on a decentralised level, both in terms of buildings, enduring networks and specialised communication channels and with a constant view to enhance political debate and communication on concrete legislative issues under discussion. In the future, EPIOs should aim at developing closer ties with existing authorities on the national, regional and local level, such as counterparts from national parliaments. The circulation of relevant and reliable information and the possibility to interact are among the most important mechanisms in need of improvement. This should be achieved in a cost effective way. To prepare for those additional tasks, a **performance audit of the EPIOs** should be carried out.*
- *The communication between the EP and the other governance actors should be better targeted, according to the issues at stake, in the process of developing legislation, as local authorities or civil society organisations might have data which would allow a better assessment of the situation in the different Member States or at the regional and local level.*
- *The capacity for the European Parliament to operate as a **smart actor in the new Global Open Data environment** may be decisive in the years to count to bring together the relevant expertise available.*
- *To go beyond the mere communication on Union activities, the EP must enhance its role of **scrutiny** as well as its visibility, in **monitoring the transposition** and implementation of EU rules.*
- *Another strategy to ensure a better impact of action carried out by the EU might be to convince the Member States and the civil society of the **added-value of a European action** as opposed to 27 (or more) separate actions. The EP could envisage creating and promoting together with the relevant actors **a clear common methodology** to evaluate the European added-value. This would improve the coherence and the credibility of the results of the analysis. For that purpose, the EP could define and introduce, at the earliest possible stage of the policy process, in cooperation with the national Parliaments and the CoR, common indicators to be used at a further stage for the assessment of the results of EU programmes or legislative provisions. It should also ensure the transmission of the results of the impact indicators from all the stakeholders at national and regional level.*
- *The JURI, PETI and AFCO Committees are currently promoting the idea of the **codification of administrative procedure in the EU**.<sup>23</sup>*

This idea supports the principle that '[a] pre-established decision-making procedure is essential to any complex organisations if their activities have to be controlled internally and externally, which is particularly crucial if the organisation deals with public interests. At the same time, the procedure has to guarantee the rights of those dealing with the

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<sup>23</sup> Law of administrative procedure in European Union, see at:  
[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/oel/popups/ficheprocedure.do?reference=2012/2024\(INI\)&l=en](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/oel/popups/ficheprocedure.do?reference=2012/2024(INI)&l=en)

administration'<sup>24</sup>. So far, the Council and the Commission have expressed their opinion in favour of a version of this code which will seriously limit its impact.<sup>25</sup> However, **a comprehensive code of administrative procedure could make the EU decision-making more transparent and participatory, enhance consultation practices, formalise access to certain documents and by consequence facilitate the transposition and implementation and their monitoring.** This exercise would join the one developed by the Committee of Regions which has launched, following its White Paper on multi-level governance, a process which might lead to the adoption of a 'EU Charter on multi-level governance', to which local and regional authorities could subscribe.

- ***EP officials** should be encouraged to participate actively in a regular manner in high-level conferences, not only in 'European circles' but also to events organised at national or local level. The role of the EP in forums that bring together civil society organisations (such as, for instance, European Integration Forum) should be more precisely defined and systematised.*

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➡ Carry out a **performance audit of the EPIOs** in order to adapt and upgrade them.
- ➡ **Enhance scrutiny in monitoring the transposition** and implementation of EU rules.
- ➡ Create and promote together with the relevant actors **a clear common methodology to evaluate the European added-value.**
- ➡ Continue promoting the idea of the **codification of administrative procedure in the EU.**<sup>26</sup>
- ➡ **Encourage EP officials** to participate actively to events organised at national or local level.
- ➡ Define and systematise the role of the **EP in fora** that bring together civil society organisations (such as, for instance, European Integration Forum). Organise the EP's own open forum with civil society.

<sup>24</sup> Administrative Procedures in EU Member States, Wolfgang Rusch, SIGMA, Conference on Public Administration Reform and European Integration Budva, Montenegro 26-27 March 2009, see at: <http://www.oecd.org/site/sigma/publicationsdocuments/42754772.pdf>

<sup>25</sup> '...even if a codification were to apply only to EU institutions, bodies, offices and agencies, the principles and rules that it would establish need to be thought of in the light of the co-operation between them and Member State's authorities which most EU policies implies. This is especially important when it comes to composite proceedings (...), or when dealing with flows of information.'

'Is a law of administrative procedure for the Union institutions necessary - Introductory remarks and prospects', Professor Jacques Ziller, Università degli Studi di Pavia for the European Parliament, March 2011

<sup>26</sup> Law of administrative procedure in European Union, see at: [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/oel/popups/ficheprocedure.do?reference=2012/2024\(INI\)&l=en](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/oel/popups/ficheprocedure.do?reference=2012/2024(INI)&l=en)

#### 2.4.1. How could the EP involve grassroots civil society in creating and explaining EU policy initiatives and legislation such as migration and integration?

- *In general terms, by **identifying early the points on the EP agenda** which will be of interest to stakeholders, the civil society, multipliers, etc., Parliament could allow the relevant target groups to be involved at the earliest stage in the decision-making process (e.g. by means of organising information campaigns, debates, discussion fora, etc.), thus enabling civil society organizations to further spread the information to citizens.*
- *Closer **cooperation with the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)** would allow for better identification of Civil Society Organisations in Member States that could act as multipliers of EU policies. The EP could envisage creating a **list of such organisations**, mentioning their fields of activity and the type of work carried out. Such a list, which should be accessible online, if managed centrally and continually updated, could be a tool for a better dissemination of the available information from the EP and from (and between) these various actors all around the Union. Furthermore the same list could help in the organisation of a consultation to define the most suitable strategy to face the coming challenges.*

The involvement of grassroots civil society could be further developed through international education and **knowledge transfer programmes** for civil society groups and actors. These programmes would allow knowledge about EU policy initiatives and legislation, as well as relevant background knowledge, to trickle down to the relevant parties (e.g. through workshops, information sessions etc.), thus furthering the awareness of these issues amongst those who would otherwise be less likely to come into contact with such information, as well as making it possible for the implementation of EU legislation to be adapted to different local situations.

- *Inside Parliament, the '**citizen's agora**' in particular and the structured dialogue with civil society in general, represent already an opportunity to involve and draw from the expertise of civil society, stakeholders and academia. These events also provide an opportunity to foster cooperation with all actors involved in parliamentary procedures. A specific targeting of organised interests groups allows taking advantage of their multiplier effect to reach particular audiences.*

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Identify early the points on the EP agenda and communicate them to relevant stakeholders.*
- ➔ *Develop a closer cooperation with the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC).*
- ➔ *Create and update a permanent list of civil society organisations.*
- ➔ *Build upon the experiment of the 'citizen's agora'.*



## 2.4.2. How can the EP draw upon its experience of organising joint parliamentary meetings with national parliaments and agora with citizens to develop with national parliaments consultative mechanisms for civil society on EU policy?

- *Consultation with civil society is already undertaken at different stages of the legislative procedure, namely through the opinions of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) and through the green books of the European Commission.*
- *There are also different forms of already existing cooperation of the EP with national parliaments (Conference of EU Speakers, COSAC, Joint Parliamentary meetings, joint committee meetings, inter-parliamentary committee meetings etc.).*
- *Moreover, consultation and getting feedback from the civil society in its constituency is one of the most important tasks of each MEP.*
- *Concrete proposals for improving on the current situation:*
  - *Enhancing **cooperation** and coordination with already existing institutions, like the Committee of the Regions ('voice of regions and cities'), seems to be important.*
  - *Organising **joint debates** of EP Committees and national Parliaments Committees on various topics could be beneficial in order to get feedback from different stakeholder groups.*
  - *Enhancing the **EPIO networks** with the local actors in order to better reach target audiences and choose Parliament's messages and themes more effectively. The performance of such efforts should be adequately measure with clear cut impact instruments.*
  - ***Consultation of citizens through the internet** or even the simulation of votes should not be considered taboo, as other European institutions are moving in that direction too. In the European Commission, the shift has already started from communicating through social media towards **collective inquiry**. The key words are stakeholders' engagement tools, participatory policy process, 24 hours on-line consultations, global open sources. These new tools should not be considered the panacea to bring about a democratic surplus as they maximize the influence of digitally literate activists and hardly provide a picture of the public opinion or even of this opinion cluster actually interested by a specific policy. Nonetheless, it would be surprising not to see the Parliament as one of the European front-runners on those new technologies to maximize interaction with citizens.*

Joint Parliamentary Meetings and the "Agora" are completely separate meeting formats, with completely different purposes and target groups.

In view of the EP 2025 and the current and future austerity measures, rather than organising big events such as Joint Parliamentary Meetings or Citizens' Agoras, and thanks to the possibilities offered by internet, more focus should be given by the EP to web-streaming, Europarl TV and videoconferences. The vision of 'Virtual Citizens' Agoras' using the internet could be explored.



### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Assess together with national parliaments the different forms of cooperation of the EP with national parliaments (Conference of EU Speakers, COSAC, joint committee meetings, inter-parliamentary committee meetings etc.) according to purpose and efficiency.*
- ➔ *Emphasise focus on constituency.*
- ➔ *Enhance **cooperation** with the Committee of the Regions ('voice of regions and cities').*
- ➔ *Continue to organise **joint non-legislative debates** of EP Committees and national Parliaments Committees on various topics.*
- ➔ *Enhance the **EPIO networks** with the local actors in order to better reach target audiences.*
- ➔ ***Consult with citizens through the internet.***
- ➔ *Equip the EP to be a front-runner in **collective inquiry**. The key words are stakeholders' engagement tools, participatory policy process, 24 hours on-line consultations, global open source.*

2.4.3. What lessons can be learned from the different approaches of our EP information and liaison offices in order to promote best practice?

2.4.4. How is the balance between communication and political networking changing, and what impact will this have on the role of EP information offices?

Networking may well be the new form of communication and the new form of participation. Networks must not only be seen as new channels of communication, neither is presence on networks the new content of communication. Networking may be the new format if not the new language of communication.

Together with this, the concept of 'general public' may also disappear, as messages will have to be more and more designed for target groups and, in many cases, co-produced with them.

- For MEPs, such possible **local target groups** are party followers and activists, the many local networks of their constituency, their **thematic networks** at the EU and even global level constituted by a shared interest in the thematic field in which the MEP legislates.

Only a small part of those many networks can be called 'policy networks'. A policy network is a select and usually hybrid group in which policy decisions are prepared, planned and supported. A well functioning policy network requires time to be built, a certain level of trust and confidentiality, common vision and division of labour.

#### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➡ The opportunities of social networks should be fully integrated in customer oriented communication culture with specific target groups, channels and deliverables.
- ➡ For MEPs, develop **local target groups** (party followers and activists, the many local networks of their constituency).
- ➡ For MEPs, enlarge and develop their **thematic networks** at the EU level constituted by those with a shared interest in the thematic field in which the MEP legislates.
- ➡ For MEPs, **go global** on thematic issues.

#### 2.4.5. Can the EP make better use of its relations with national, regional and local actors in monitoring the preparation, the transposition and implementation of EU rules?

- *The EP must have an interest as co-legislator in ensuring the correct transposition and implementation of EU legislation. Although this responsibility is primarily conferred on the Member States and the Commission (as guardian of the Treaties), the EP can only act as a 'soft power', focusing primarily on monitoring the transposition and application of EU rules as well as applying political pressure if needed and necessary.*
- *Yet, it must be noted that there is no systematic or consistent approach to monitoring the implementation of EU law in Member States in the European Parliament, allowing for an untapped potential for a more proactive role by its committees and political bodies.*
- *It could be considered whether the technical part of such monitoring could be entrusted to a new department within the EP (e.g. '**Observatory of EU legislation application**'), which would act in close cooperation with the committees and other political bodies (e.g. Conference of Presidents) in order to transform such administrative monitoring into political action. The action could take the form of resolutions, INI reports, parliamentary scrutiny (e.g. parliamentary questions, letters to Commissioners) with a view to exerting influence on the Commission and the Member States to enforce EU legislation.*
- *In any case, the EP should intend to deepen its relations with different actors at all stages in order to make transposition and implementation easier, faster and ensure it is in compliance with adopted EU legislation:*
  - ***Closer cooperation and dialogue with national parliaments during the transposition process can help promoting and increasing effective monitoring of the application of EU rules.** The EP should seek closer cooperation with the principal actors of transposition and implementation, especially with national parliaments, also exploring the possibility of further institutionalising the existing structures for cooperation during the transposition phase and at a later stage, with a view to reduce the transposition deficit. In the context of the European Semester for example, national parliaments and the EP could play a stronger role in the budgetary monitoring process, working together in reviewing Member States' compliance with EU recommendations.*
  - ***More regular and systematic consultations during the negotiation phase would facilitate subsequent transposition and implementation of EU law.** As co-legislator the EP has a responsibility to ensure that EU rules are drafted in such a way that transposition, implementation and enforcement is facilitated. The EP already organises consultations on current and future development of EU law (through hearings, via the inter-parliamentary cooperation, etc.) with actors that will have to implement the EU law or who are directly concerned by the measures. Thus, closer links with national, regional or local authorities should be developed during the preparation and negotiation phase.*

- ***The right of petition, which gives the EP the opportunity to evaluate the implementation process of EU law in Member States, should be strengthened.*** Complaints formulated by citizens allow the EP to detect problems concerning the application of EU law or to call the EC's attention to any infringement of a European citizen's right by a Member State or other local authority. The EP acts as a 'relay' between citizens and institutions, and this relation with people directly confronted to EU law enforcement are of utmost importance. While the European Citizens Initiative is being set up, the question of a possible reduction in the use of petition to the benefit of an initiative which can develop direct effects might be addressed, as it could mean a possible loss of influence by the EP.
- ***Closer cooperation with the Committee of Regions as well as with representatives of regional and local administrations (through the regional representations in Brussels, EP representations in the Member States and workshops) can provide the Parliament with unique information and knowledge about the realities of implementation on the ground of EU rules and the future expectations of citizens.***

Monitoring, and indeed ensuring, the transposition of EU rules is primarily the role of the Commission. It is nevertheless important for Parliament to be aware of the effects of legislation, so that it evaluates the impact of its role as a legislator and the results of the policies it adopts.

The transposition of EU legislation into national law is done by national governments and parliaments, sometimes involving also regional and local authorities and parliaments.

In view of the relative increase of EU legislation which will have to be reviewed periodically, national Parliaments might be encouraged to report back at the European level about problems encountered with existing EU legislation. Building upon 'lessons learned' could improve the quality of EU legislation and could increase its acceptance not only by those who have to transpose and implement it but also by the citizens.

Clear, simple and precise drafting is crucial for the effective implementation of EU legislation. Contacts, both bilaterally and on a larger scale (e.g. conferences) between the EP's drafting services (DLA) and actors who will eventually be responsible for the implementation in national law, such as national executive authorities, would enable a simple, direct and unbureaucratic source of feedback on specific linguistic drafting and formulation issues. These contacts would also facilitate responses to individual queries by Members (often initially raised by their national constituents, including lobbies and civil society) regarding wording of legislation in a specific language, in particular as regards sector-specific terminology, where use of an incorrect (or partial) translation can have direct consequences for specific industry sectors.

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Ensure, as much as possible, the correct transposition and implementation of EU legislation. The EP can only act in this field as a 'soft power', focusing primarily on monitoring the transposition and application of EU rules as well as applying political pressure if needed and necessary.*
- ➔ *Develop a systematic and **consistent approach to monitoring the implementation of EU law** in Member States.*
- ➔ *Entrust a new department within the EP (e.g. '**Observatory of EU legislation application**') to transform such administrative monitoring into political action. The action could take the form of resolutions, INI reports, parliamentary scrutiny (e.g. parliamentary questions, letters to Commissioners) with a view to exerting influence on the Commission and the Member States to enforce EU legislation.*
- ➔ *Deepen EP's relations with different actors at all stages in order to make transposition and implementation easier, faster and ensure it is in compliance with adopted EU legislation:*
- ➔ ***Develop closer cooperation and dialogue with national parliaments during the transposition process to establish an effective monitoring of the application of EU rules.***
- ➔ ***Develop closer cooperation with the Committee of Regions about the realities of implementation on the ground** of EU rules and the future expectations of citizens.*

#### 2.4.6. What should the EP do to communicate the added value and benefits of EU policies at local, regional and national levels?

- *The weakness of current communication policies goes in parallel with the low level of knowledge of the EU at local, regional and national levels in the Member States. The EP should use its prestige to raise the attractiveness of **training and workshops** explaining the rules and functioning of selected EU policies at the regional level.*
- *The EP should concentrate on **coordinating** information campaigns **via EP information offices** in the Member States **most affected by significant reforms** and policy re-orientations, such as the CFP reform: this is essential in order to communicate and gain acceptance of the reform in national/regional/local fishing communities.*
- *EU quality labelling in the field of tourism, such as the Blue flag in beach and marina destinations, is both a recognizable symbol of European excellence and high standards, and a practical tool for international cooperation.*
- *The EP should broaden its traditional ways of communication, while focusing the messages as needed. On the one hand, the EP could make intensive use of the new social networks, such as Twitter, Facebook and various advertising channels, to reach grassroots civil society. On the other hand, massive reports from the EP, which sometimes require hours to read, are bound to be overlooked by citizens. Therefore, information sent to the civil society should be synthesised to the core messages.*
- *The potential of the **new generation of communication technologies** should be assessed: are we ready for knowledge mining open data, wide reaching semantic technologies and the different tools associated with new forms of collective inquiry and collective data building?*

#### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➡ *Contribute by all means possible to bridging the knowledge gap on the EU at the local, regional and national levels in the Member States.*
- ➡ *Coordinate information campaigns **via EP information offices** in the Member States **most affected by significant reforms** and policy re-orientations, as it is, for instance, the case with the fishing policy. Communication should aim at generating a pluralistic debate and, when possible, gain acceptance of the reform in national/regional/local (fishing) communities.*
- ➡ *Make intensive use of the new social networks, such as Twitter, Facebook and various advertising channels, to reach grassroots civil society.*

- *Synthesise information sent to the civil society should be synthesised to the core messages.*
- *Provide content not search function.*
- *Assess the potential of the **new generation of communication technologies**: are we ready for knowledge mining, open data, wide reaching semantic technologies and the different tools associated with new forms of collective inquiry and collective data building?*

## 2.5 In what ways can the EP improve cooperation with the other EU institutions?

A progressive development of closer working linkages between the Commission, Parliament and Council is a logical result of applying the principles of Better Law-Making as enshrined in the 2003 Interinstitutional Agreement on Better Law-Making and the successive EP-Commission Framework Agreements. By improving its cooperation with the other EU institutions the EP might also improve its influence in a European (and indeed global) multi-level governance system. A key challenge is to use the new, more explicitly legislative role assigned to the Council by the Lisbon Treaty as an opportunity to establish closer **legislative planning** between the three institutions. That structure, once established, could be broadened to cover other issues as well.

- *The EP should insist that the in-coming Commission in 2014 advocates the updating and **renegotiation of the 2003 Interinstitutional Agreement on Better Law-Making** in order to reflect the realities of a post-Lisbon EU.*
- *A better interaction with other European institutions and a more active participation of the EP in long term planning should be accompanied by a deeper involvement of the Parliament in **policy networks** and **pre-legislative fora**. Parliament could also push for its involvement in the **Tri-partite Social Summit for Growth and Employment**.*
- *Within the framework of **the petition and the European Citizens Initiative procedures** there could be some improvements to make and some possibilities to better cooperate with and influence the actions of the European Commission. The EP could for instance develop its independence in collecting information related to a petition (mainly via fact finding missions and external expertise provided by the Policy Department) and consequently speed up the treatment of a petition. Those European Citizens Initiatives and petitions which did not lead to a positive action of the EC might also sometimes be interesting sources of inspiration for EP initiatives.*
- *Parliament also could make use of **Art. 225 TFEU** to support the Commission in the definition and implementation of its political agenda, notably in areas which promise to provide the wider public with tangible benefits.*
- *The EP should as well **reinforce its collaboration with the Committee of the Regions and the European Economic and Social Committee**. For instance it could think about the adoption of a cooperation protocol with the European Economic and Social Committee as the European Commission did. These two institutions might provide for interesting data related to European programmes and legislation implementation. The EP should take care of the collection of the most relevant one. Consultation of the Committee of the Regions and the European Economic and Social Committee could be useful in the establishment of impact indicators to monitor the legislation implementation.*



- Finally, the role of **inter-institutional staff** should be better promoted as essential to facilitate the understanding between the different services, the exchange of information and their putting into perspective. It might also identify the challenges to be expected to finalise a specific procedure.
- The Inter-parliamentary EU Information Exchange (**IPEX**) tool, already in use for sharing information with national Parliaments, could also be used to better structure and support both the consultation phase in the legislative process between the institutions (documents, amendments, etc.) as well as the monitoring of the transposition of European law, which would also be easier if flows were better identified and at least partially automated. Combined with new communication methods (videoconferencing, virtual meetings, automatic or remote translating and interpretation, etc.) aiming at improving collaborative work in the 'European legal system', IPEX can be a starting point for a constant evolution.

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- *Insist that the incoming Commission in 2014 updates the **2003 Inter-Institutional Agreement on Better Law-Making** in order to reflect the realities of a post-Lisbon EU.*
- ***Actively be involved at the political and expert levels in policy networks and pre-legislative forums.***
- *Push for EP's involvement in the **Tripartite Social Summit for Growth and Employment**.*
- *Develop EP's independence in collecting information related to a petition (mainly via fact finding missions and external expertise provided by the Policy Department) and consequently speed up the treatment of a petition.*
- *Use, when useful, the ECI and petitions which did not lead to a positive action as sources of inspiration for EP initiatives.*
- *Use **Art. 225 TFEU** to negotiate with the Commission its political agenda, notably in areas which promise to provide the wider public with tangible benefits.*
- *Reinforce **collaboration with the Committee of the Regions and the European Economic and Social Committee**.*
- *Promote the role of **inter-institutional staff** to facilitate understanding between the different services.*
- *Use, support and develop the **Inter-parliamentary EU Information Exchange IPEX** tool.*

### 2.5.1. How could the EP improve its influence vis-à-vis the Council, European Commission, Committee of Regions, European Economic and Social Committee and the External Action Service?

Strengthening relations with all institutions as well as intensifying EU public diplomacy is particularly important in times of economic and political instability, when critical voices grow louder. With its open and transparent parliamentary discussion, the EP can provide a strategic public space that allows citizens to better follow and understand EU policy making — a powerful contrast to the closed doors of other EU institutions, diplomatic missions and agencies. This open space is increasingly attracting the attention of the other institutions and can be further harnessed to promote the EP's interests and develop inter-institutional cooperation.

- *In foreign policy, Parliament should put the **priority on supporting the development of the European External Action Service (EEAS) into a real 'innovative driver of 21st century diplomacy'**. To do so, Parliament must consolidate and implement the gains in the High Representative and Vice President's (HRVP) Declaration on Political Accountability. This requires both a political and a technical approach to ensure the EP receives adequate information, as without this information Parliament cannot deliver on its political, legislative and budgetary responsibilities, or strengthen **its parliamentary diplomacy** and lead responses to changing international political priorities.*
- *As Parliament exercises its legislative and budgetary role in foreign affairs, it should **seek complementarities among the external financial assistance instruments** (and, increasingly, between them and those EP internal instruments that have an external dimension). This will achieve more effective policy outcomes and avoid wasting taxpayers' resources.*
- *Recent rapidly changing political events — as in the countries visited by the Arab Spring and those further afield — have shown the need for a **better flow of information from the ground to the EP**. While the EEAS is demonstrating its will to cooperate with the EP, the flow of information is far from satisfactory. Ways should be explored how to provide the EP with better, real-time information.*
- *In general, Parliament should aim at being **represented in all inter-institutional meetings** (on both administrative and political level) at the same rank as the Commission and the Council.*
- *Parliament should **systematically communicate and defend its position as the institution representing the citizens**, being at the forefront of communicating EU policies as the only directly elected institution.*

The Treaties set out complex objectives for the EU and attribute functions and tasks to the different institutions. The institutions frequently interact with each other in

many different types of configurations and contexts, be they legislative, budgetary, political or judicial.

There are three general areas where improvements could be made in the way Parliament interacts with the other institutions (in whatever context that interaction may take place). These points are unrelated, except that they all share one fundamental objective: for Parliament to develop working methods that enable it to fulfil its role, as established in the Lisbon Treaty, more effectively.

**Access to information.** It is difficult to access information from the other institutions, even when it directly concerns Parliament and its core functions as a legislator and budgetary authority. This applies to the Commission and the Council, but especially to the latter. Information is guarded jealously, although Council and Parliament have been established by the Treaties as joint legislators and budgetary authorities. Where legislative and budgetary matters are concerned, there should be efficient mechanisms (perhaps even an online platform) to allow Parliament and Council to exchange information in real time on the evolution of dossiers. Reaction times are slow, from committees to trilogues, from COREPER to Council; the simplest piece of legislation takes long months to be adopted in the best of circumstances. This is not just (or not directly) the fault of the legislative process as such, but rather of the way it is managed. Finding ways and establishing mechanisms for information to travel back and forth more quickly, at least concerning the legislative process, would probably render it more efficient.

**Joint planning between Parliament, Council and the Commission.** Very simply, there isn't one for the time being. This is surprising for several reasons: Council and Parliament share the legislative and budgetary functions; the Lisbon Treaty specifically introduced this possibility in Article 17 TEU; and, above all, Parliament and the Commission have agreed to a procedure which allows Parliament to give its input regarding the Commission's Work Programme. This is a process that cannot possibly be completed unless the Council is also a part of it, as it is evident that both co-legislators ought to be on board. Joint planning among the three institutions would allow them to agree on priorities, which would have at least two advantages: to push ahead with urgent legislation without undue delays, and to be able to present clear objectives to the public opinion (citizens, markets, companies, stakeholders). Recently the Cyprus Council Presidency has proposed to the Parliament and the Commission a Common Understanding with a Roadmap for the implementation of the Compact for Growth and Jobs. This could constitute the beginnings of a joint inter-institutional planning, and, in any case, shows that the Council has recognised the need for such an initiative.

**New forms of exercising power.** Parliament, Council and the European Council all need to adapt to the institutional reality created by the Lisbon Treaty. Parliament was conferred a reasonable amount of power and perhaps ought to rethink certain aspects of how it exercises it. One major example is the lack of a real scrutiny exercise.

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ ***Put priority on supporting the development of the European External Action Service into a real a 'innovative driver of 21st century diplomacy'. To do so, Parliament must consolidate and implement the gains in the HRVP's Declaration on Political Accountability. This requires both a political and a technical approach to ensure the EP receives adequate information, as without this information, Parliament cannot deliver on its political, legislative and budgetary responsibilities, or strengthen its parliamentary diplomacy and lead responses to changing international political priorities.***
- ➔ *As Parliament exercises its legislative and budgetary role in foreign affairs, **seek complementarities among the external financial assistance.***
- ➔ *Organise a **better flow of information from the ground to the EP.** Ways should be explored to provide the EP with better, real-time information as support for a rapid reaction capacity.*
- ➔ *Aim at being **represented in all inter-institutional meetings** (on both administrative and political level) at the same rank as the Commission and the Council.*
- ➔ ***Systematically communicate and defend its position as the institution representing the citizens in a pluralistic fashion,** being at the forefront of communicating EU policies with a plurality of views on them.*

### 2.5.2. What role can inter-institutional staff exchanges and secondments play in improving cooperation?

Such exchanges and secondments hold significant potential, and have not been used well until now: the unit dealing with National Parliaments seems to be oriented only towards input from the national parliaments (amounting to "**unilateral communication**", rather than complete exchange at staff" level). A good illustration of secondments benefits is provided by the valuable expertise brought to the EP by the Seconded National Experts working within its services.

This does not concern only the staff involved in drafting legislation but also other services (financing, audit, personnel, communication, translation, etc). It should be stressed however that staff exchanges are meaningful only if the knowledge acquired during the secondment period is shared and passed on to other colleagues in the same institution. In other words, the secondment should not be beneficial only for the person concerned but for the institution as well.

- *The EP could consider establishing rather short (but intensive) periods of secondment in order to allow **as many officials as possible** to benefit from such an exercise.*

Staff exchanges can be extremely effective in developing sectoral and country-specific expertise - and thereby strengthening the EP's capacity to deploy parliamentary diplomacy. Exchanges can also help improve our understanding of EU development cooperation and financial assistance instruments, thereby **enhancing the quality of our democratic scrutiny** and our capacity to shape future instruments). The secondment of staff from other institutions can also establish more permanent channels of communication between the relevant actors. In any case, attention should be given to the fact that the usefulness of staff exchanges depends on the similarity of the exchanging bodies and institutions. Previous experience has shown that programmes conducted with institutions such as the EEAS have been successful at creating networks and improving the flow of information, whereas similar schemes conducted with e.g. the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) have yielded fewer obvious benefits.

- *The EP should therefore consider seriously instituting **medium-term secondments to the EEAS headquarters and EU delegations** as a means of achieving these goals; these secondments also provide an economical alternative to the establishment new EPLOs in partner countries.*
- *Parliament could gain valuable experience from staff exchanges and secondments also to **international organisations such as the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) or the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD)**, and even in other Parliaments' Committees or research services such as the Congressional Research Service (CRS) in the **United States Congress**. The presence of EP staff would also contribute to make the EP better known to these key organisations.*

Incoming and outgoing secondments should also be distinguished. With incoming secondments (i.e. national experts seconded to the EP), the experts bring professional experience and 'savoir faire' with them, and they return to their national administration with greater knowledge of EU issues and institutions. On the other hand, when EP staff is seconded 'out', the benefits are not always as clear.

- *Secondments of EP staff should be encouraged in the framework of **democracy support and expert assistance**, e.g. when drafting rules of procedure or in assisting parliaments in third countries with multilingualism.*
- *Other networking activities, such as **common training sessions** or joint workshops and seminars, can improve cooperation by expanding knowledge of other professional environments.*
- *A '**coordination task force**' involving European Commission and EP officials (from Committees and Policy Departments) could contribute to the smooth running of legislative negotiations (analysis of Amendments, preparation of trilogies, discussions on the topics under discussions, etc.). Moreover, the **setting up of an interinstitutional structure** (possibly in the form of an agency?) could be envisaged. This structure, involving statisticians, staff from the Joint Research Centre (JRC) and other research staff would be made available to all EU institutions. It would help the EP to meet its expertise needs.*

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Establish rather short (but intensive) periods of secondment in order to allow **as many officials as possible** to benefit from such exercise.*
- ➔ *Consider seriously instituting **medium-term secondments to the EEAS headquarters and EU delegations.***
- ➔ *Secondments to **international organisations such as the FAO or OECD**, and even in other parliaments' committees or research services such as the CRS in the **United States Congress.***
- ➔ *Encourage secondments of EP staff in the framework of **democracy support and expert assistance.***
- ➔ *Organise **common training sessions** or joint workshops with main partners.*
- ➔ *Analyse the potential of '**coordination task force**' at expert level involving the European Commission EP and Council officials (from Committees, Policy Departments and WG) to the smooth running of legislative negotiations (pre-analysis of amendments, preparation of trilogues, discussions on the topics under discussions, etc.).*
- ➔ *Contribute to the **setting up of joint inter-institutional expertise structures when possible.***



### 2.5.3. Is a new institutional arrangement needed for future economic governance and financial coordination in the EU?

The October 2011 European Council and the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union (also known as the fiscal compact) have recently established new institutional arrangements on economic governance: a Euro Summit (at the level of Heads of State or Government), prepared by the Euro Group (at ministerial level), which is in turn prepared by the Euro Group Working Group (a subgroup of the Economic and Financial Committee).

This can be seen as a parallel structure to the existing formal structure (European Council, Council and Economic and Financial Committee). This in itself is not necessarily a problem, and may in practice be more adequate to deal with euro area governance. Furthermore, there are several provisions in the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance that address its relationship with the EU Treaties, and provide some accountability towards Parliament: the declaration that this Treaty has to respect EU Treaties and EU law; the obligation for the Euro Summit to report back to Parliament; the aim of incorporating the substance of the Treaty in the EU Treaties; and also the provision stating that national parliaments and the European Parliament are to organise and promote a conference of representatives.

However, the fact remains that this structure has been created outside the EU Treaties. It was not a part of the discussions regarding the institutional architecture that led to the Lisbon Treaty, and it was not considered in the overall institutional balance. For example: it would be worth discussing why the Euro Summit is simply the abridged euro-equivalent version of European Council meetings. Why does it not have a different format, including on a permanent basis the Presidents of Parliament (who may be invited), the ECB (who is invited), and the Eurogroup, as well as the Commissioner in charge of the euro and the President of the ESM?

Furthermore, in their efforts to stabilise the common currency, national leaders take decisions (such as the EFSF/ESM) and create procedures (such as the 'European semester') where Parliament is hardly consulted, or not at all, and national parliaments are presented with *faits accomplis*.

The appropriate course of action in the future would indeed be to undertake a revision of the EU Treaties in order to discuss and incorporate economic governance structures in the EU's institutional architecture, taking into account not only the efficiency of those structures, but also their democratic accountability. In the meantime, cooperation between Parliament and national parliaments becomes even more essential.

Not necessarily. A change of paradigm, approach and work methodology could deliver substantial policy inputs.

The EP can influence and even drive the policy-agenda of the EU, provided it disenfranchises itself from the Commission's work and legislative programme and focuses

on key building-blocks of growth and of European added value. This presupposes the prioritisation of key policy themes with the highest potential for growth delivery and positive impact in citizens' lives (see text box below for operational steps). Such operational steps do not require constitutional changes and could serve to raise the image of the institution and citizens' awareness of the concrete contributions the EP makes to their livelihoods.

1. *At the initiative of the Conference of Committee Chairs a proposal is made to the Conference of Presidents for the selection of one or two key policy themes to make the object of a 360 degree analysis by the policy departments and the European Added Value and Impact Assessment Units;*
2. *The Conference of Presidents sets a time-frame for the delivery of the analysis and decides also on the committees which are to benefit from the outcome of the above analysis;*
3. *The committees selected are authorised, in advance, by the Conference of Presidents to draft ad-hoc Strategic Initiative Reports (SIRs) to be submitted within a specific time-frame;*
4. *The SIRs are all to be submitted at the same part-session of the EP which would be dedicated to the selected key policy-theme(s);*
5. *A number of related activities/events could be organised by DG COMM to raise awareness, ensure and maximise the publicity of EP positions;*
6. *On the basis of the Resolutions adopted, the Conference of Presidents defines 'key political message' by the EP and entrusts the President with their formal delivery to the Presidents of the European Council and the European Commission. The President could request that these are put on the agenda of the next European Council.*

Recent developments due to the financial crisis have resulted into a hybrid setting of institutions and funds acting for the benefit of the citizens of the European Union and of the Economic and Monetary Union. Coordination between institutions different in nature, mandate and governance is an unexpected challenge. The simplification operated by the Lisbon Treaty has finally come together with a new institutional and budgetary complexity. Several sources on EU level (besides the EU budget) now provide funding for different purposes, such as the newly created EFSF/ESM (crisis management). The ESM is based on an international treaty (therefore not part of a new EU inter-institutional agreement). The Fiscal Compact has its own *sui generis* governance. The future banking is likely to be managed from the independent but accountable European Central Bank. How to streamline that additional complexity in a context not supportive for the European integration?

1. *In a first stage, better coordination, transparency and pragmatic cooperation and mutual information exchange could be helpful in order to coordinate the additional tasks associated with the future economic governance framework (European Semester) as well as up-coming changes in the EMU.*



2. *In a second stage, a full use of the existing Inter-institutional Agreement on budgetary discipline and sound financial management should be made, with the emphasis put on the full use of new financial instruments.*
3. *In a third stage, common programming could be achieved, and the EP could be instrumental in achieving this result through the dialogues it has established or it may establish with the funds, the new authorities, the Central Bank etc.*
4. *In a fourth stage, if possible, the integration of the new mechanisms into the European Treaties should be achieved by Treaty change.*

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Develop **detailed analysis and assessment** on **central political issues** affecting citizens.*
  - ➔ *Such operational steps do not require constitutional changes and could serve to raise the image of the institution and citizens' awareness of the concrete contributions the EP makes to their livelihoods.*
1. *At the initiative of the Conference of Committee Chairs a proposal is made to the Conference of Presidents for the selection of one or two key policy themes to make the object of a 360 degree analysis by the policy departments and the European Added Value and Impact Assessment Units;*
  2. *The Conference of Presidents sets a timeframe for the delivery of the analysis and decides also on the committees which are to benefit from the outcome of the above analysis;*
  3. *The committees selected are authorised, in advance, by the Conference of Presidents to draft ad-hoc Strategic Initiative Reports (SIRs) to be submitted within a specific time-frame;*
  4. *The SIRs are all to be submitted at the some part-session of the EP which would be dedicated to the selected key policy theme(s);*
  5. *A number of related activities/events could be organised by DG COMM to raise awareness, ensure and maximise the publicity of EP positions;*
  6. *On the basis of the Resolutions adopted, the Conference of Presidents defines 'key political messages' by the EP and entrusts the President with their formal delivery to the Presidents of the European Council and the European Commission. The President could request that these are put on the agenda of the next European Council.*

#### 2.5.4. How might the EP's budgetary and economic role change with the future multi-annual financial framework?

Under current proposals, the EP's formal powers are unlikely to change with the future MFF. However, it is increasingly evident that the budgetary and economic challenges facing the Member States are pan-European in nature and require a pan-European response. In that sense, the EP needs to position itself as the forum for pan-European debate and deliberation on common budgetary and economic concerns.

In the national constitutional traditions of the Member States, the budgetary function is perhaps the most essential responsibility that the parliament exercises on behalf of the Citizens, both in terms of establishing the budget and in terms of ensuring accountability, transparency and sound management in its implementation. In that regard, the symbolic importance and public relations potential of certain formal legal powers of the Parliament that are defended by the Legal Service, such as the President's signature of the Union's budget and the granting of discharge, should not be underestimated. These are formal tasks performed on behalf of the Citizens and should be presented as such to the outside world.

The EP also has a role to play in ensuring that the national budgets of the Member States are co-ordinated and viewed as matters of common concern. It will not be enough in the years ahead to view the EP's budgetary responsibilities as limited to the Union's budget. The Union's budget and the national budgets can be seen as a single package of European public finance instruments, and the EP should be seen as the natural forum for deliberating on the broad lines of budgetary policy to be followed across the Union. Clearly these deliberations will have to be pursued with input from the national parliaments that adopt the national budgets, but only the EP has the necessary pan-European perspective to deliberate on pan-European budgetary challenges. In this context, it is crucial that the EP establishes a role for itself in the European Semester procedure and pursues that role to the fullest. The European Parliamentary Week is an important starting point in this regard.

Any initiatives in the direction of creating, for example, a separate euro area budget, will obviously also have important implications for the EP's role. An intergovernmental approach with expenditure legitimised only by national parliaments cannot be accepted. Only the EP has the necessary pan-European structure and perspective to legitimise a budget that is established and implemented on a pan-European scale.

The creation of genuine own resources of the Union would obviously greatly enhance the EP's legitimising function regarding the Union's budget and should strengthen its political weight vis-à-vis the Council in the budgetary procedure. The fight for a revision and improvement of the Own Resources Decision must continue in the years ahead.

The entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty has changed the EP's budgetary role, including its role in establishing the multi-annual financial framework (MFF). The MFF, previously an inter-institutional agreement requiring the equal participation of Parliament, Council and Commission, has become a Council Regulation requiring the consent of the EP.

- *The EP must therefore **fully exploit its consent powers** in order to influence the content of the next MFF. The risk of an enhanced democratic deficit on the European budget itself is not to be excluded.*

A key issue regarding future multi-annual financial frameworks concerns the **institutional balance**. The Lisbon Treaty requires the institutions to work together by taking 'any measure necessary to facilitate' the adoption of the MFF (Article 312(5) TFEU). It does not, however, specify how this should be done.

- *The EP's influence over the forthcoming MFF has increased significantly through meetings with the Council Presidency before and after every General Affairs Council and through the participation of the EP negotiating team in informal General Affairs Council meetings. **A key objective for the future should be to further develop the value of these meetings with a view to progressing towards genuine negotiations.***

A second objective concerns the **size of the MFF**. In future years, it might be ever more difficult to secure the resources needed to deliver EU policies effectively.

- *More thought needs to be given to the limits to such funding, their implications in terms of transparency and control, and the move they represent away from reliance on **own resources** coming from Member States towards more market-based financing sources.*

However, the binding nature of the MFF, which is an overarching structure covering several annual budgets, is not fully exploited, which means that under the present system amounts not taken up are reimbursed to Member States at the end of each financial year. One way of enhancing the impact of the MFF would be to allow this money to stay within the Union to enable it to fund its priorities and give a boost to the economy. As regards the procedure for adoption of the MFF, Parliament could also:

- *ask the Commission, in the context of the budgetary procedure, to report on the budgetary, economic and political outcomes achieved and the impact of the implementation of the MFF;*
- *request at a sufficiently early stage in the proceedings, commission ex-post studies on the impact of the MFF in improving the EU's economic performance, thus providing material for its internal deliberations;*
- *adopt its proposals for MFF guidelines before the Commission adopts its draft MFF, in order to show what its priorities are and exert an influence on the MFF negotiations at a sufficiently early stage;*
- *seek the support of certain Member States whose position is closer to that of Parliament's desired guidelines, so as to have a better basis for negotiations with the Council on the adoption of the MFF.*

Several sources on the EU level (besides the EU budget) provide funding for different purposes, like the newly created EFSF/ESM (crisis management). The ESM is however based on an international treaty (therefore not part of a new EU inter-institutional

agreement). Better coordination, transparency and cooperation and mutual information exchange could be helpful in order to coordinate additional task in the future economic governance framework (European Semester).

- *For the existing Inter-institutional Agreement on budgetary discipline and sound financial management the emphasis should be put on a stronger use of new financial instruments.*

Proposals for financing instruments in some sectors (including the Development Cooperation Instrument, or DCI) in the next MFF show a marked tendency towards further consolidating programmes. If the structure of the annual budget reflects the programmes included in the legislation with a single budget line per programme, this will reduce the visibility of the proposed use of appropriations and consequently reduce the influence of the budgetary authority.

- *It may therefore be **much better to split and deconsolidate budget lines** to allow the budgetary authority better control over the use of the funds.*

Another important means by which EP may influence the budget is by ensuring it has a meaningful role in the decisions determining the use of funds during the implementation of financing instruments.

- *In this context, it is vital that strategic decisions be adopted as '**Delegated Acts**' under **Art 290 TFEU**; this provides the Council and EP with equal veto powers. The threat of such a veto tends to lead the Commission to consult the EP more on forthcoming financing decisions prior to their adoption, leading to much greater EP influence.*

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ ***Fully exploit consent powers.***
- ➔ ***Progress towards genuine negotiations.***
- ➔ ***Better split and deconsolidate budget lines** to allow the budgetary authority better control over the use of the funds.*
- ➔ ***Insist that strategic decisions be adopted as 'Delegated Acts' under Art 290 TFEU**; this provides the Council and EP with equal veto powers. The threat of such a veto tends to lead the Commission to consult the EP more on forthcoming financing decisions prior to their adoption, leading to much greater EP influence.*

### 2.5.5. What is the potential to share resources, such as buildings, and to coordinate purchasing or renting strategies in order to achieve value for money?

In the 1990s, the European Parliament and the Commission developed the concept of a common location for their external offices in the Member States ('House of Europe'). On this basis, the EPIOs in the capitals of the Member States are located - with the exception of Athens and Brussels - together with the Representation Offices of the Commission in a single building in order to take advantage of the possibilities to make financial savings through sharing common areas, and to create a coherent image of the European Union towards the general public in the Member States.

EPIOs report positive experience concerning joint renting and administrating building with Representations of the EC in Member States. In practical terms, this represents advantages as well with regard to public procurement, joint call for tenders for items that are useful to both the EC Representations and the EPIOs, i.e. European Public Space catering, advertising, organisation of debates, joint venues for inter-institutional communication priorities. This halves the number of calls for tender the EPIO has to carry out. Applying identical implementing provisions for both institutions and promoting inter institutional procurements would be beneficial in this respect.

However, this proximity provides increasingly the possibility to highlight EP's added-value in the decision-making process. Vis-à-vis EP's institutional partner, the EU Commission, the role of the EP should be clearly stated, especially in terms of being the only institution directly elected by the EU citizens.

- *Beyond physical spaces, it might be worth exploring the sharing of other resources such as networks. The EC has an extensive network of stakeholders, associations, national authorities' networks, etc. which 'belong' to operational DGs (e.g. DG EAC has an extensive network of Youth organisations). It would be a significant improvement in efficiency terms for communication purposes if these contacts of interested parties were made available to raise awareness of key activities related to the Parliament, such as the elections or other important events (Sakharov prize, decentralised events by the EP Information Offices, etc.).*
- *A more extensive use and share of framework contracts could be promoted, such as being carried out with TNS regarding public opinion surveys, or in view of the organisation of seminars, or on the work of Teletrax statistics, etc.*
- *The EP should make use of services such as Energy Savings Performance Contracting to save money. In times of austerity, this provides a good way of making investments — in this case, energy saving — while not paying for them immediately. The contractor pays for the investment, and in return receives the savings for a number of years before the EP, as client, can profit. The environment benefits from the investment from the first year, and the EP does not have to manage the engineering aspect, which is done exclusively by the company.*

- *Joint occupation of buildings is an established practice that may develop in the future with telework and increased modularity.*

#### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Use framework contracts.*
- ➔ *Contract Energy Savings Performance services.*
- ➔ *Joint market analysis and joint approach to potential contractors.*
- ➔ *Joint benchmarking.*





### III. Multi-player policy making

*There has been a clear and steady direction taken by the European Parliament to monitor and influence **conversations on the internet**. The Bureau, in its 'Note on Political guidelines for the institutional information and communication campaign on the European Elections in 2014', acknowledges that "Parliament's institutional communicators must have the ability to monitor public conversation and sentiment on the ground and in real time, to understand 'trending topics and have the capacity to react quickly, in a targeted and relevant manner, to join in and influence conversations". This of course applies obviously also to the online environments where today opinions are expressed, exchanged and influenced in a constant whirlwind of discussion. Engaging in and informing online conversations should be a key objective of Parliament's social media strategy in the future.*

But, as shown by a recent STOA study, the public debate on e-democracy seems to have moved from a definition of e-democracy limited to e-voting, online consultations and other forms of digitization of existing democratic practices to a maturing concept of e-democracy aiming at the forthright introduction of more direct citizen participation in the whole political process. The EP should use the potential of e-democracy to overcome the feeling of a growing gap between politicians and citizens and take an active role in setting up the adequate institutional framework and the adequate information and communication technology applications. Participation may be the key word for the new social demand emerging from an 'empowered', better trained, more connected and more content-oriented public.

The general public may identify the European Parliament as a place in which key decisions for economic and social welfare are taken. This will certainly imply more public interest for what is happening behind the walls of the European Parliament. *Demands for citizen journalism, digital panel groups, simulation of vote, role games, internships, 24/7 interaction may rise swiftly. Premises may have to be reorganised in order to allow for more interaction with duly connected Members. With the **appetite for participation** the **appetite for content**, syntheses, actual data and figures is very likely to increase. Permanent effort towards transparency, accuracy of data, user friendly nature of contents and format may play a more important role than successful 'events' to create a positive 'collective image' of the European Parliament in the new context.*

*The same evolution may also designate the European Parliament and its members as (digital) targets for unsatisfied groups of a different nature. Their hostility may at a point complicate EP's operations. They should be anticipated by a full-fledged effort on **risk management**. (Digital) security and protection of Members privacy may gain importance if Members and their decisions become more visible and more invasive in citizen life.*

As far as more specialised 'policy networks' are concerned, technologies may dramatically help to engage with useful (initially unknown) relevant actors in the different policy domains covered by Parliament activities. *As a producer of content and a place for debate, the European Parliament has to be a **front runner** in new knowledge management techniques as well as for the upcoming semantic and interactive technologies associated with Global Open Data. Relevant experts should wish to interact with the European Parliament and its Members, and contribute with their own resources.* The need for direct contacts may be increased and not decreased by more efficient networks technologies better able to identify and involve relevant people. Interpretation will continue to play a decisive role in the direct contacts.

*Multilingualism will continue to play an important role in interaction with third countries, junior or less literate Citizens. Technologies to engage in direct dialogue can be organised for interactive participation of the citizens, for instance in the form of **multilingual chats and surveys**, under the constraint of available resources. More flexible ways of communication with stakeholders may require more capacity for **two-way interpretation**.*

Interpretation can play also a vital role in the direct communication with national parliaments, which are major partners in legislation for the European Parliament. *Due to its experience, the EP services are mostly better equipped to provide interpretation in such instances. Nevertheless, technological developments need to be taken on board constantly in order to allow for and facilitate interpretation in such meetings and to be able to provide advice to national Parliaments on how to deal with such communication needs (technical standards, etc). In the wider context of multi-player politics, Parliament's services could strengthen its cooperation and contacts with other institutions with interpretation services in order to contribute to capacity building and exchange of best practices (e.g. with the Pan-African Parliament).*

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Monitor and actively participate in social media conversations on the internet in real time, to understand 'trending topics' and have the capacity to interact quickly, in a targeted and relevant manner. Key objective of Parliament's social media strategy should be to engage and inform online conversations.*
- ➔ *Reorganize premises in order to allow for more interaction with duly connected Members. Make efforts towards transparency, accuracy of data, user friendly nature of contents and format which may play an important role in creating a positive 'collective image' of the European Parliament.*
- ➔ *Concentrate on fully-fledged efforts on risk management to improve digital security and protect privacy.*
- ➔ *Become a **front runner** in new knowledge management techniques as well as for the upcoming 'semantic' and interactive technologies associated with Global Open Data.*
- ➔ *Organize technologies to engage in direct dialogue for interactive participation of the citizens, for instance in the form of **multilingual chats and surveys** under the constraint of available resources. More flexible ways of communication with stakeholders may require more capacity for **two-way interpretation**.*
- ➔ *Take constantly on board technological developments in order to allow for and facilitate interpretation and to be able to provide advice to national parliaments on how to deal with communication needs (technical standards, etc.).*

### 3.1. How should we deal with new internet-based media and social networks?

Support to an active citizenship accompanied by a feeling of ownership should be a *raison d'être* for the European Parliament. Public hearings in the context of successful European Citizens' Initiatives will certainly galvanize transnational political interest and create a nexus of communication that should be exploited by the EP at all levels, especially the social interactive media.

- *The EP could further enhance its support to citizens creating the **ECI** by putting together **a surveillance/reporting mechanism** on the barriers encountered in the exercise of this right and by pressuring the European Commission to remediate such situations. The EP could also put some of its expertise resources at the service of citizens when building such a proposal, provided that some fundamental criteria are met (constitution of the citizens committee, certain number of signatures, support by Members).*
- *In its privileged relation with the EU citizens that it represents, the EP should gear more of its resources to making its main communication interface - its website - more citizen-friendly. Even to create a **citizen-friendly “democracy navigator”**, focused on the information about their rights in different situations, including its electoral rights with simple, accessible interface (asking questions and proposing the contexts, perhaps fed into by/cooperating with EuropaDirect) and connecting/contextualizing them to the current EP/EU initiatives.*

It would be counterproductive (and illusory) trying to prevent the use of the internet to spread false information and inaccurate facts (as the internet is a space of free expression). But in order to counter-balance disinformation and create a sound basis for public debate, *the EP, in cooperation with other European Institutions, could develop other approaches to deliver timely, well-documented and synthetic content accompanied by pluralistic views on the issue. This is as much a quantitative as a qualitative challenge. The need for reliable, **updated content** is an acute issue for **interactive discussion spaces** that tend to self-organise.*

- *The EP, in which European affairs are being dealt with by elected citizens with different points of views and approaches, should become a digital reference for accurate, pluralistic and critical content on the European Union, even if this is at the expense of leaving behind the traditional EU myth-busting.*

If the EP is to engage as an active player in the internet world and communicate directly, a steady line would need to be chosen, represented and defended at the highest political level. This line could be

- a) accuracy,
- b) timeliness,
- c) pluralistic view points.

To deliver on such a communication line on the rapidly moving universe of the net, one option for the short term could be to act by **promoting fact-checking initiatives** and consider 'certifying' them. **Crowd-sourcing** with the help of EU citizens could certainly be a powerful tool to harness expertise, by for instance allowing the citizens to comment on the expertise produced by the Policy Departments which would feed not only into the quality of the expertise, but also enrich the parliamentary debate.

EP offices could set up a **virtual forum**, where users can discuss key issues following the live streaming of certain committee meetings, and where the EP office will reply to questions of users. The legitimacy of the public expenditure could be enhanced by promoting use of **budget readable** for citizens (both for EU and for Member States, and especially at the local level) and promoting civil society involvement in their scrutiny. This could ensure that public money is spent according to the preferences of the public, as far as viable, and could increase the involvement of citizens in politics (ensuring they understand the importance of politics and thus of their right to vote). **Simulation games** could have a value added in a new pedagogical environment

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- Further enhance its support to citizens creating the European Citizens Initiative.
- Gear more of its resources **to make** its main communication interface - **its website - more citizen-friendly**. Even to create a citizen-friendly 'democracy navigator', focused on the information about their rights in different situations, including its electoral rights with simple, accessible interface (asking questions and proposing the contexts, perhaps fed into by/cooperating with EuropaDirect) and connecting/contextualizing them to the current EP/EU initiatives.
- In cooperation with other European Institutions, develop other approaches to **deliver timely, well-documented and synthetic content accompanied by pluralistic views on the issue**.
- Become **a digital reference for accurate, pluralistic and critical content on the European Union**.
- Deliver on such a communication line on the rapidly moving universe of the net. One option for the short term could be to act by **promoting fact-checking initiatives and consider 'certifying' them**.
- Harness expertise by crowd-sourcing, by allowing the citizens to comment on the expertise produced by the Policy Departments which would feed not only into the quality of the expertise, but also enrich the parliamentary debate.
- Set up **a virtual forum**, where users can discuss key issues following the live streaming of certain committee meetings, and where the EP office will reply to questions of users. The legitimacy of the public expenditure could be enhanced by promoting **use of budget readable for citizens** and promoting civil society involvement in their scrutiny.
- **Simulation games** could have a value added in a new pedagogical environment.

### 3.1.1. Could the European Citizens' Initiative be harnessed by the EP to increase Citizen participation in the EU legislative process?

The ECI constitutes an entirely new instrument of public participation in the EU decision-making process. It opens up the possibility for citizens to organize themselves on a specific topic and eventually launch a comprehensive legislative procedure. Even if the Commission decides not to take action, the political signal of such an initiative remains. In the future, this new tool might well serve the EP as well, with a specific demand by the EP to the Commission that could well be accompanied by the request of more than 1 Million EU-citizens.

*The Parliament's communication services could **promote the concept of citizens' initiatives** and explain the procedures. Furthermore, they should stress that this is a new right fought for by the Parliament. However, they should not be involved in the promotion of specific citizens' initiatives. They could also provide support and expertise to Committees and Members about how to engage in social media activities to promote an online dialogue on a specific topic. Due to the complexity of the project it is also important to avoid raising unreasonable expectations by providing clear information concerning the procedure and the role of the EP in the process.*

*Internet technology could be used in support of the European Citizens' Initiative with the objective to facilitate the submission of citizens' proposals to the European Commission (EC). The EP could offer an **ECI web-based service** to allow any EU citizens who wish to do so to submit their proposals. This web service would allow EU citizens to define and structure their proposals based on the rules of the EC, and then to share this information with other citizens, either directly or through dissemination via existing social networks, such as Facebook, LinkedIN, Yammer, YouTube, Twitter, etc. It would also allow EU citizens to vote and sign electronically for the proposals they support (in order to reach the required number of signatures required by Treaty in this context). Citizens would just use their national ID and their fingerprints to authenticate themselves and sign electronically. These electronic signatures would have the same legal value as conventional signatures. When the right number of citizens in support of a proposal is reached, the proposal will automatically be directed to the right administrative services and legislative bodies of the EU. This web service would also allow EU citizens to follow up the adoption/rejection/amendment of the proposals submitted this way.*

*Since Lisbon, the EP has been much better informed about the progress of negotiations of international agreements (see Framework Agreement points 23-27 and its Annex 3). INTA's Monitoring Groups follow developments closely and the Committee remains informed. The Parliament may also now contribute with recommendations or interim reports, making the parliamentary evaluation of the content of negotiated international agreements much more thorough. Information and citizens awareness on international agreement can be enhanced by **updated communication on the broad picture concerning the state of play of negotiations**, with due respect to the needed confidentiality of the detailed positions and strategies developed.*

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Promote the concept of citizens' initiatives and explain the procedures. Provide support and expertise to Committees and Members about how to engage in social media activities to promote an online dialogue on a specific topic.*
- ➔ *Use internet technology in support of the European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) with the objective to facilitate the submission of citizens' proposals to the European Commission. Offer d ECI web-based service to allow any EU citizens who wish to do so to submit their proposals. It would also allow EU citizens to vote and sign electronically for the proposals they support (in order to reach the required number of signatures required by Treaty in this context).*
- ➔ *Contribute with recommendations or interim reports, making the parliamentary evaluation of the content of negotiated international agreements much more thorough. Information and citizens awareness on international agreement can be enhanced by updated communication on the broad picture concerning the state of play of negotiations, with due respect to the needed confidentiality of the detailed positions and strategies developed.*



### 3.1.2. Can the EP Website be a 'one-stop shop' for voters, Members and staff seeking accurate links to and background information on European legislation?

The European Parliament should embrace the most advanced technologies and communication tools to provide links to and background information on European legislation. Its online information offer should focus on the whole legislative chain, from programming to implementation, including impact assessment and 'cost of non-Europe'. EP services, such as IPEX database, Press/ communication services, Library, Policy Departments or Impact Assessment can provide highly relevant background information, linked to the different steps in specific legislative procedures.

#### **Information architecture**

By 2025 we can expect web services which seamlessly combine both procedural and background/ephemeral information, provided by the EU institutions. Institutional content will need to be properly validated and coordinated, well-structured, searchable and constantly updated. Web services will also allow external communities to tap EP online information in their communication channels ('Open data', 'Re-use of Public Sector Information').

The EP has a number of 'unique selling points' with regard to the type of information disseminated:

- EP-specific input to the legislative process, as well as the implementation of legislation at national level;
- The 'flagging' of democratic aspects (such as impact assessments - both pre and post-agreement, legislative footprint, negotiation phase);
- The promotion of transparency (besides formal markers/documents in the procedure, the EP could also use informal markers, making it easier for users to understand the political relevance of content (e.g. first publication of the draft agreement, explicit reference to the mandate for negotiations etc.)).

#### **'Citizens' agora' role of the website**

By 2025 we can expect access to the internet and social media to all in the EU. This evolution can contribute to a possible shift from a representative democracy to a 'technology-driven' direct democracy.

Enhanced technological possibilities for social communication will foster greater involvement of citizens in EU policy making, and give them the opportunity to organise themselves more easily, thus increasing transparency.

People will not contact the institution just to 'get information', but, also to communicate. The website should not only make the sharing of information easier and richer, but also make communication with the citizens easier and more open. It has to be examined if, and



to what extent, the EP could 'afford' on its website non-organised services or non professional 'communication services', as there are some risk implications (the EP will need to be able to answer with effective, timely, useful, and coherent communication).

EP web services could act as a real 'agora' where citizens will come to inform themselves and debate matters among themselves and with politicians. 'Facebook-type' chat sessions and video conferences with MEPs will become a daily routine.

Legislative proposals, legislation and all related activities and documents will likely be put to scrutiny on (EP-, EU-driven) social media, where citizens will be able to express their opinion or even vote online for legislative proposals. Modern information technology will be able to record and aggregate sentiments and opinion (not only about EU policies, but also about the way the EP communicates and informs) in a much more advanced and powerful way.

Finally, the Parliament will want to lead in the efforts to ensure social inclusion of those who will not have access to all these technological possibilities (for various reasons), but this will have costs.

The multiplication of EU portals and the risk of overlapping advocates for a better rationalisation and specialisation of the information provided by the different 'one-stop shops'. The multiplication of portals and other single points of contacts providing the same information on EU legislation and activities is a waste of time, money and energy. Moreover, that tends to give visitors (EU citizens, tax payers and voters) a negative image which again reinforces the idea of the European Union being far too complex. There is a need to evaluate the existing EU portals.

*It seems logical that the EP website should be dedicated to issues relating to:*

- *The legislative process in which the EP interacts with the Council as the other Legislator of the Union on the basis of Commission proposals (dyadic representation);*
- *The construct resulting from the process: European Law;*
- *Different and competing political visions, competing proposals, as they are developed and expressed by the main pan-European political group, parties and families, ahead of European elections and throughout the legislature (partisan representation);*
- *Other activities of the European Parliament in the field of budgetary control, democratic scrutiny, public diplomacy, citizen awareness (collective representation).*

#### ***(a) Legislative process***

*When it comes to policy networks and legislation in the making, IT tools should be further developed, facilitating Members and staff to find accurate links and background information. An additional tool like the **Legislative Knowledge Management Portal**, which is currently under construction in the EP, could be very useful provided that it takes into consideration the existence of different interests amongst the users and provided it allows them to customise the tool as much as possible according to their particular interests.*

*A special EP **web-based Legislative debate service** could be used to 'dematerialise' the work of all committees and flesh-out the concept of virtual committees. Committee meetings would be conducted through a special web service over the Internet to allow participants to meet virtually instead of physically, as they do today. Any citizen could potentially participate in virtual committee meetings as an observer, experts could also be more easily invited, because they would not have to travel and would just have to join video-conferences. Members would use their national ID and their fingerprint to authenticate themselves and to sign and vote electronically. Committee activity could be partially conducted from EP Information Offices and Houses of Europe, where sophisticated facilities would be available for MEPs, but also citizens and expert of a given country, to gather in order to participate in a virtual committee meeting. An integrated 'virtual committee' meeting application would also allow participants to have access to all the documents needed for the meeting, as well as provide an efficient platform to allow the democratic debate to take place in an structured and organised way, such as voice and video, but also chatting.*

***Specific 'channels'** could be open directly on popular (generic) and **specialised social networks** to allow people who are logged in to easily follow the proceedings of the committee as observers or to intervene as experts, when relevant to the discussion. **Online interpretation** would be available as today for voice and video-based committee meetings and in a text form for chat-based committee meetings. The website of the European Parliament already offers useful information on the ongoing (or completed) legislative work with tools such as the 'EP Legislative Observatory', 'Seance on direct' or the committees' websites. Still, the EP website is not the primary source of information for citizens seeking guidance on EU legislation.*

***'From Search to Find' functionality.** The EP website, in its current form, is already a very reliable source of accurate information. The issue, however, is not only about providing information on a static 'centralised' website, where voters, citizens, stakeholders, MEPs, staff, etc., have to search for the information they are looking for, but rather about offering them immediately serious content with the view of*

- *making sure that the richness of EP content and debates can be shared accurately, not least in 'participatory media';*
- *ensuring consistency and a complementary effect of the messages delivered by the different senders within the EP (MEPs, political groups, DG COMM, committees/delegations, Policy Departments) and in other institutions on the same subject;*
- *providing the 'contributors' of information with tools empowering them to know and to interact swiftly with their respective target audiences;*
- *ensuring that the target audience finds accurate and timely information of mutual interest in the legislative process (two-way and tailored communication at the different stages of a legislative procedure, according to the targeted audience).The committees' webpage should therefore be improved and enriched with new features and more editorial possibilities in order to better attract their target audience (mainly stakeholders, academia and specialised media), provide more structured and coherent information, include multimedia products and allow sharing via social networks. The accessibility and visibility of Committees' activities (including the related expertise) and relevant documents should be enhanced. Synergies and complementary actions with other EP entities, mainly DG COMM, should be further developed by intensifying cooperation.*

## **(b) European Law**

*The EP website already provides links and information on European legislation but could be further improved. On the whole, there is a need for more content and greater visibility of already published **background information on European legislation** on the EP website. The creation of a section solely dedicated to European Legislation would be appropriate. It could refer to other websites dealing with general information on European legislation (OEIL, Pre-lex, Eur-lex, summaries of EU legislation) as well as make the EP factsheets and studies produced by the policy departments available while also offering public documents from other services. References to other websites dedicated to specific EU policies could be given, providing a clear list of links to institutions websites.*

## **(c) Plurality: the EP as a galaxy**

*Making the information more comprehensive and accessible is the aim of the **renewal of the web presence of the EP** which no longer relies on one single website but rather takes the form of a 'galaxy', with different 'planets' interacting with each other. A portal page as well as a common navigation bar on top of each page should help keep consistency between the different 'planets'.*

*When it comes to creating a 'one-stop shop' on European legislation, two directions are currently being explored and will result in concrete changes in the months to come:*

***Think tank page:** on the initiative of the Secretary-General, a Think tank page will be released. It will gather all non-legislative documents, i.e. documents that help Members in making decisions: Policy Departments & STOA studies, Impact Assessment documents, European added value documents,... A first phase of the project is the presentation of links to all sources of background documents on one single page, which should go online at the beginning of December 2012. A comprehensive website will follow.*

***Aggregation pages:** in the framework of the renewal of the EP news coverage the Media Directorate is looking into automatic aggregation of content. That would for example mean that, next to a press release on a given subject, there will be links to legislative documents, videos, streaming of the session, photos, etc. This approach may also be taken for the press kit for the European Elections 2014. The press kit will be exclusively online and will aggregate several types of content on a given topic of media interest.*

## **(d) Collective Parliamentary diplomacy through the web.**

*The European Parliament has a proven ability to reach beyond the executive governments in third countries and engage with a broad cross-section of political and civil society actors. This ability will become an increasingly important asset for the global relationships of the European Union as a whole, which is committed to remaining an influential power (as expressed in the Lisbon Treaty).*

*On a political level, Parliament should use its extensive contacts with third countries to persuade them of the merits (economic, political and democratic) of constructive policies on Internet-based media and social networks.*

## Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Further develop IT tools (e.g. a Legislative Knowledge Management Portal), facilitating Members and staff to find accurate links and background information, taking into consideration different user interests.*
- ➔ *Use a special EP web-based Legislative debate service to make virtual the work of all committees, and flesh-out the concept of virtual committees, with an integrated 'virtual committee' meeting application allowing participants to have access to all the documents needed for the meeting.*
- ➔ *Open directly specific 'channels' on popular (generic) and specialised social networks to allow people who are logged in to easily follow the proceedings of the committee as observers or to intervene as experts, when relevant to the discussion.*
- ➔ *Continue developing the EP website 'from Search to Find' functionality, allowing users to immediately find serious and usable content instead of having them search for it.*
- ➔ *Ensure that the richness of EP content and debates can be shared accurately, not least in participatory media.*
- ➔ *Ensure consistency and a complementary effect of the messages delivered by the different senders within the EP (MEPs, political groups, DG COMM, committees/ delegations, Policy Departments) and in other institutions on the same subject.*
- ➔ *Provide 'contributors' of information with tools empowering them to interact swiftly with their respective target audiences.*
- ➔ *Ensure that the target audience finds accurate and timely information for mutual interest in the legislative process.*
- ➔ *Create a section solely dedicated to European Legislation ('one-stop shop'), referring to other websites dealing with general information on European legislation (OEIL, Pre-lex, Eur-lex, summaries of EU legislation).*
- ➔ *Release a Think tank page, gathering all non-legislative documents helping Members in making their decisions.*
- ➔ *Consider and explore automatic aggregation of content in relation to EP news.*
- ➔ *Use EP's extensive contacts with third countries to persuade them of the merits (economic, political and democratic) of constructive policies on Internet-based media and social networks.*

### 3.1.3. How can the EP help internet journalists and bloggers better understand the EU legislative process, replacing myths with facts? How can it use internet based media to better streamline its communication on ongoing legislative procedures?

***A new category of social media communication specialists and/or journalists should be recruited** by the EPS communication services to promote the image and the activities of the EP on popular, as well as specialised social networks. These people would spend their time online participating in discussion forums, in order to disseminate information about the EPs work, as well as to stimulate the formation of EU-wide opinions on important EU legislative matters. They would in fact facilitate the creation of an EU-wide political sphere similar to the national one. The EP would put in place an adequate tool and would recruit the adequate personnel to follow up closely on social networks and specialised forums what is being said about its activities, MEPs and its role in general, especially during international crises and/or times of economic crisis. This information would be analysed on a daily basis and would be shared with all the EP services concerned. If needed, in case of severe reputational issues about its work, its people or its activities, the EP would then attempt to rectify or modify the public opinion and its image by passing the right messages to the public through the new generation of communication specialists recruited.*

The use of Twitter is very important in this respect as it allows instant reaction, 'killing' the rumours before they have time to spread. The online reputation of the Parliament is extremely important in order to build a legitimate discourse. Members and political groups could be a factor of success or controversy in the rebuttal process. *The development of internet-based journalism and citizen-journalism will make unavoidable the necessity to closely monitor what is going on online in order to: **react, re-establish facts and (re)present** the EP position, act as a 'gateway' to EP information and to relevant press officers (if needed).*

#### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ***Recruit a new category of social media communication specialists and/or journalists** for communication services to promote the image and the activities of the EP on popular, as well as specialised social networks.*
- *Develop **internet-based journalism and citizen-journalism** which will make unavoidable the necessity to **closely monitor what is going on online** in order to react, re-establish facts, (re)present the EP position and act as a 'gateway' to EP information and to relevant press officers (if needed).*

### 3.1.4. How will the EP arrest the use of the internet to spread false information and inaccurate facts?

*The EP needs to **spread the right information with sufficient strength, quantity and frequency** to avoid the propagation of false information. Social media journalists need to be hired specialising in the management of information on new web media.*

The fundamental characteristic of the internet is that any information can be published anywhere by anybody with the effect that it is instantly available worldwide.

This fundamental fact is well known to the serious part of media as well as to the general public. Accordingly, a very important manner in which EP can counter dissemination of false information and inaccurate facts is by adopting a proactive communication strategy, i.e. making sure that media as well as the general public can obtain correct information, including verification or repudiation as regards specific points of interest. Such information and verification service will already be an important part of the work of DG COMM.

EP should monitor the effectiveness of its own information and the accuracy of the reporting in the different (social) media. It is important that the EP reacts swiftly on its own portal to any misleading information about its activities. Experts on media dissemination could help the EP to become more effective.

In addition, while any legal response by its nature will remain reactive, it is evident that all usual legal means of redress are available also to Parliament. Legal steps against information on the internet may include cease-and-desist requests, injunction orders and, where applicable, filing of criminal or civil complaints. Although the legal means to address internet dissemination of false or defamatory information are becoming more easily accessible as public authorities, lawyers and judges are getting better acquainted with the particularities of the internet, important issues not solved by EU or national law as regards applicable law or even how to find the perpetrator means that the political advisability of any legal steps would still have to be assessed on a case-by-case basis in order to avoid the creation of even more negative publicity arising from the legal action in itself.

### 3.1.5. Could social networks and new internet-based tools help the EP to educate Citizens, organise outreach events and arrange activities?

*Social networks should be used to allow EU citizens to form their opinion on legislative issues, as well as to promote EP legislative activities. But it is important to note that there is still a significant digital divide in society (by age, social status and geography), meaning that communication has to be in the form most adapted to the target. Less digitally literate clusters of the opinion should not be forgotten. As a general rule the internet and social networks offer great opportunities to educate and mobilise citizens. Certain social networks can serve as platforms for debate between Members and the stakeholders and/or citizens. They can also be used to 'spread the word' about certain events, allowing for a multiplier effect that can be quite effective. Social media is currently used by the Parliament's communication services to increase outreach of the activities, in particular when targeting young people. However, in most Member States, it is **television** which is still by far more powerful medium than internet-based tools.*

***Educators** are opinion leaders. With appropriate pedagogical material, the European Parliament should transform any occasions it has to interact with European youth and teachers into hybrid projects, anchored at once in the digital and physical worlds.*

#### Key action point for the European Parliament:

- ➡ *Use social networks to allow EU citizens to form their opinion on legislative issues, as well as to promote EP legislative activities. **Certain social networks can serve as platforms for debate between Members and the stakeholders and/or citizens.***



### 3.1.6. Can the EP use the social media to map out public opinion trends and involve Citizens more in the EU democratic process?

Yes. Simple voting surveys could be put in place with a short video explanation about the possible voting choices. This technology is already available today. Specific software tools and Internet services also exist to ease the monitoring of public opinion on the most common social networks and Websites and forums. These specialised tools can be used to dramatically simplify and automate the work of professional communication services.

Internet, social media platforms and network-based communication technologies are widely considered potential democracy-enhancing and transparency-promoting tools. They do not only increase the speed of information, but also, perhaps more interestingly, seem to create or increase the demand for representativeness, citizen-involvement and more horizontal relationships (as opposed to vertical or hierarchical relationships) between political representatives and their electorate.

The EP needs to be innovative in its ways of using the possibilities offered by these technologies. In particular, the consultative possibilities of the internet should be used to its full potential. One could imagine the creation of a user-friendly consultation tool on the EP's website on which citizens would be invited to answer a certain number of questions and react or vote on certain 'hot' topics. One could also imagine the possibility of launching regular consultative exercises through which the peoples of Europe would be asked which issues should be considered as a priority by their political representatives. Obviously it would be necessary to consider how to oversee the representativeness of those participating in such an exercise.

A powerful internet presence and successful involvement of citizens via social media might be perceived by part of the public as promise of a greater influence. This would heighten public expectations and a potential failure to meet these expectations might undermine faith in Parliament as an institution. It is therefore important that Parliament's presence on the web and policy as regards social media go hand in hand with its true powers and real influence.

The use of social media is growing and there is little doubt that, by 2014 (and even more in 2019 and 2024), social networks will represent one of the main sources to get and share information about the next European elections and the European Parliament in general. Today, more than 80% of young people use social networks (70% of them do it daily) and more than one in two get news about European affairs through the Internet. Furthermore, *to the question: 'If you were looking for information on the European Parliament which of the following sources would you use?' 33% of citizens choose the internet* (news Web sites, Web site of EP, on-line networks, blogs), including 55% of the 15-24 years olds (Parlemeter, November 2011).

*In this context the European Parliament could more actively use its **monitoring of social media** to:*

- Feed the Institution in order to possibly refine some messages;*
- Imagine some specific actions in order to engage directly with Internet users on themes that truly matter to them;*
- Try to anticipate some public opinion moves and better understand how/why these opinions emerge;*
- Think about setting up crisis management systems to counter-balance any potential growing negativity on these new forms of media.*

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Put in place **simple voting surveys** with a short video explanation about the possible voting choices.*
- ➔ *Use already existing specific software tools and Internet services to ease the monitoring of public opinion on the most common social networks and websites and forums and thus simplify and make automatic the work of professional communication services.*
- ➔ *More actively use its monitoring of social media to:*
  - Feed the Institution in order to possibly refine some messages,*
  - Imagine some specific actions in order to engage directly with internet users on themes that truly matter to them,*
  - Try to anticipate some public opinion moves and better understand how these opinions emerge,*
  - Think about setting up crisis management systems to counter-balance any potential growing negativity on these new forms of media.*

### 3.1.7. Will digitalisation and the global information society affect access to information, knowledge and freedom of expression?

Lowering transaction costs and accessibility are the most important ways digitalisation in the global information society affects access to information, knowledge and freedom of expression. Transaction costs traditionally partitioned societies. ICT development puts these costs under considerable pressure allowing for more cooperative and faster societal and scientific developments. Relatively small costs of digitalising content are offset by benefits of making content available on the web to entire populations that benefits from access to the internet (approx. 350 million in Europe). Already today's web is offering free access to numerous resources such as:

- *Legislative processes and outcomes (European Parliament's website);*
- *Case law (Curia website);*
- *Information on administrative compliance (YourEurope portal);*
- *Public procurement (TED);*
- *Millions of cultural items (Europeana) and books (Google books);*
- *University courses (MITopencourseware);*
- *Basic education (Khan Academy), etc.*

This complex and rich information, generated mainly through public channels, became available for free in an unfragmented fashion, while in the past it was often costly and difficult to acquire. Open access is now complemented by market services where access to information is offered against payment. Market delivered information/content is available for significantly reduced costs, but also some hidden forms of payment such as PLI (Private Life Information - sometimes referred to as a new type of currency). These developments still suffer at present from strong fragmentation into national markets. They will continue to accelerate in the future with trends toward using mobile platforms and ubiquitous access to information and knowledge (access everywhere, anytime, to everything).

Around the globe there is also a rich community of digital activists, which have such an advanced superior technical knowledge that is openly shared. They may remain able to overcome the so called threat of 'Balkanisation' of the internet. By raising its ranking/profile via millions of 'Likes'<sup>27</sup> by users, the EP could play a vital role in making sure that citizens at least online are still able to keep their freedom of expression.

***More and more multimedia content*** should be produced by EP in order to allow citizens to form an opinion more easily, based on the widest range of evidence-based options available. Technologies exist that could allow citizens to effectively research the content of written, voice or video documents to extract the most relevant information and filter out unnecessary content. Access to original documents increases the available information, but not communication. The general public requires user-friendly and attractive explanations of complicated legislative issues. For the EP, ***multi-layer communication*** is the key word for the future.

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<sup>27</sup> "Barack Obama Facebook campaign sees 'likes' soar" <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-19895750>.

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Produce more and more multimedia content in order to allow citizens to form an opinion more easily, based on the widest range of evidence-based options available.*
- ➔ *Use existing technologies that could allow citizens to effectively research the content of written, voice or video documents to extract the most relevant information and filter out unnecessary content. Access to original documents increases the available information, but not communication. General public requires user-friendly and attractive explanations of complicated legislative issues.*

### 3.1.8. Will the access to original documents increase or diminish the role of communication with citizens from MEPs or institutions?

Access to documents and communication constitute two distinct facets of the information process that should be pursued in parallel at EP level and by European institutions in general. While access to documents, as an extrapolation of the principle of transparency, is aimed at citizens having specific interests, communication serves the purpose of presenting information to citizens with more general interests and those unaware of their specific stakes. Communication differs from access to documents with respect to its toolbox composed of press, audiovisual, Facebook and Twitter coverage, indicating that communication helps citizens to become interested and serves as guidance through 'information noise' that may later translate into consulting specific original documents.

The efforts to fine tune access to documents for citizens that demand such access are considerable. Each year European institutions become gradually more open and transparent to the public. Adoption of the Regulation No 1049/2001<sup>28</sup> on public access to the documents of all institutions gives effect to the citizen's right to information. Accordingly, all EU citizens have a right of access to European Parliaments', Council's and Commission's documents. The European Parliament provides direct access to the majority of its documents in electronic format, but also to original documents through historical archives<sup>29</sup> and grants more than 80% of the requests it receives, largely on account of the public nature of its proceedings<sup>30</sup>. The committee pages aggregation of official documents related to a same file (including from other EU and national institutions), accompanied with non-official documents (like press releases, background notes, leaflet presenting a list of studies available on a specific topic or ad-hoc publications, presentation of stakeholders during public hearings and workshop, audiovisual material) could help in giving a clearer and more comprehensive overview on the subject.

*But only the improvement of communication is a way that will help citizens to make use of their rights. Members and their staff have to play here a decisive role in **direct interaction** with citizens as US Congressmen and national Members of Parliaments do.*

#### Key action point for the European Parliament:

- ➡ *Improve communication as a way to help citizens making use of their rights. Members and their staff have to play an equally decisive role in direct interaction with citizens as Members of national Parliaments do.*

<sup>28</sup> Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2001 regarding public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents, OJ L 145, 31.5.2001, p. 43—48

<sup>29</sup> Ibid 1

<sup>30</sup> European Commission Green Paper on Public Access to Documents held by institutions of the European Community, available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/revision/docs/gp\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/revision/docs/gp_en.pdf)

### 3.1.9. What impact will new technological developments have on data protection and the right to personal privacy?

We live in a world with rapid technological changes. Such technological developments entail many opportunities. However, they have their "side-effects". The growth of a digitalised world firstly entails a vast increase in the sheer volume of exchanges of personal data. The hugely popular use of social networks (Facebook for example), shows that this phenomenon is not limited to business, but also reaches growing numbers of individuals, particularly young ones. This type of technological development also entails a sharp increase in the collection and further use of personal data, often without individuals being aware of it; much less controlling it. Delivery of services or content on the Internet is often linked to the collection of information about users and their habits and preferences. An increasingly technological world also brings other challenges. For example companies themselves are becoming more complex, working on an international or global scale. Significant tasks are often outsourced and, as a result, the legal entity does not always coincide with the body which is responsible in practice. It is necessary to ensure that data protection authorities across the EU can play their supervisory role on the basis of more harmonised rules about their independence and strong enforcement powers, to be exercised, where necessary, across borders.

Privacy is an essential element of a free society without which individuals would lose the ability to interact with one another in private and exchange ideas freely.<sup>31</sup> With the advancement in new technologies there has emerged a clash between an individual right to personal privacy and the possibility to use that information by companies, States or other individuals. **Europeans attach particular value to their privacy and data protection and have high expectations in this area** that may differ from expectations on other continents. According to the last Eurobarometer research 70% of EU citizens are worried about the misuse of their personal data and a majority (75%) wanted to delete personal information on a website whenever they decide to do so.<sup>32</sup>

The major challenges will probably arise in the areas of cloud computing which may give rise to jurisdictional questions, and in the increased reach of technologies allowing unstructured bodies of data to be organised in different ways. Such bodies of unstructured data are not necessarily documentary in form: they could be video footage to which facial recognition software is applied.

New technological developments such as social media and discussion groups, not already widely employed when the legislative framework applicable to the institutions was adopted (*inter alia* Regulation 45/2001) will accentuate the need to address the fact personal data may be re-usable for infinity with a much wider impact than ever imagined by the data subject.

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<sup>31</sup> Willis H. Ware, *Contemporary Privacy Issues*, available at: [http://www.southernct.edu/organizations/rccs/oldsite/text-only/resources\\_t/research\\_t/comp\\_and\\_priv\\_t/ware\\_t/intro.html](http://www.southernct.edu/organizations/rccs/oldsite/text-only/resources_t/research_t/comp_and_priv_t/ware_t/intro.html)

<sup>32</sup> Special Eurobarometer 359 / Wave 74.3 - TNS Opinion & Social: Attitudes on Data Protection and Electronic Identity in the European Union (July 2011), available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs\\_359\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_359_en.pdf)



Therefore, even if a data subject has expressly consented to the use of the personal data, it may be that given the impact of the new technological developments, the data subject might not wish for the continuous use of the data. Furthermore, it is not clear what should happen to personal data in the event that the data subject cannot be consulted, e.g. in the event of the data subject's death. The internal policies and procedures involving processing of personal data by Parliament could be designed to take account of such possible future challenges and reasonable concerns by data subjects and to include not only better remedies for the data subjects but also more specific instructions as regards the internal use of data.

Nowadays, Internet innovation and privacy are not in balance, with an increasing tendency to invade privacy associated with new emerging Internet technology. Internet innovations dominate over privacy protection<sup>33</sup> mainly because **technological innovation is so rapid that regulators have difficulty in grasping privacy and data protection issues triggered by it**. Among the most worrying developments are unauthorised location and tracking services, uncontrolled use of face recognition and other biometric information, illegitimate use of RFID technology, e-mail screening, screening of information made available through cloud computing based services, etc. Consumers and citizens are largely unaware of surveillance and commercial potential of information they leave when surfing on internet.

Most importantly, the **main developments are still ahead of us**. Numerous e-government services will be heading towards the cloud (among which registers and data bases on health have the biggest potential in generating positive economies of scale and privacy/data protection concerns at the same time) and increased complexity of different information networks may produce unexpected privacy concerns through their interoperability (Facebook photos and world-wide network of surveillance cameras being an example). **With the internet developing into a universal communication platform we may reach by 2025 'total traceability' of our activities.**

*These developments require **increased efforts of lawmakers in protecting citizens' privacy and data against illegitimate use while respecting personal informed choices in this area**. The current European regulatory framework on data protection is primarily based upon Directive 95/46/EC, which sets out the basic principles in relation to data protection, but also supplemented by other directives in more specific areas such as Directive 2003/98/EC on the re-use of public sector information, Directive 2002/58/EC dealing with inter alia cookies in the context of e-privacy and Directive 2009/136/EC on citizens' rights.<sup>34</sup> With the recent proposal of a new regulation and directive on the protection of individual's personal data, aimed at strengthening rights to access, change or delete personal data, the EU tries **to ensure a uniform and technologically neutral standard of protection everywhere in the EU**<sup>35</sup>.*

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<sup>33</sup> DG IPOL, Policy Department A: Economic and Scientific Policy study on "Does it help or hinder? Promotion of Innovation on the Internet and Citizens' Right to Privacy", p.87 available at:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/studiesdownload.html?languageDocument=EN&file=65871>

<sup>34</sup> DG IPOL, Policy Department A: Economic and Scientific Policy study on "Reforming the Data Protection Package", p.14 available at:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/studiesdownload.html?languageDocument=EN&file=75175>

<sup>35</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/justice/data-protection/index.en.htm>



*The European Parliament may further improve the proposal, among others in areas relating to internal market dimension, strengthening consumer rights and international data transfers<sup>36</sup>.*

#### Key action point for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Increase efforts of lawmakers in protecting citizens' privacy and data against illegitimate use while respecting personal informed choices in this area. The European Parliament should further improve the proposal, among others in areas relating to internal market dimension, strengthening consumer rights and international data transfers.*

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid. 13

### 3.2. How does one avoid the political 'middleman'" becoming marginalised?

#### 3.2.1. How can the EP ensure the growth in executive decision-making and initiatives organised by civil society and other stakeholders do not reduce the scope of parliamentarians?

Democratic scrutiny on the executive has to be enhanced in parallel with new responsibilities of the Union and progress in pan-European political life. A harmonized electoral law is an important step to a more accountable democracy. Presence and interaction of MEPs at constituency level is a key challenge. MEPs are the ambassadors of the pluralistic and democratic nature of the Union.

#### 3.2.2. What impact could future changes have on the structure and goals of the political groups, transnational political parties and other foundations?

Their complementary roles should all be enhanced. The relation with national parties is decisive. Branding and affiliation to a Pan-European party and support for its lead candidate should be encouraged ahead of European elections.

#### 3.2.3. Can the EP use its network of national and regional offices to help MEPs become more involved in campaigns and other outreach activities?

Constituency activities are the key. But they need an overall reform of European electoral Law to achieve a genuine bridge between MEPs and citizens and to grant them full autonomy from national party leadership. Designation of candidates with parties should ideally take place as close as possible to the field.

#### 3.2.4. What new patterns of communication could arise from the practice of direct democracy and how can the EP gain further democratic legitimacy?

Direct democracy is not the concept of the Union. It does not mean that MEPS should not give account on their mandate through all media and meetings possible, to specialised audiences as well as to the general public.

### 3.3. How can we stimulate coalition building at a transnational level?

**The electoral procedure would need to be reformed** with a view to **strengthen the role of Europarties** in the selection of candidates for the MEP mandate and to reduce their dependence of national leadership. Efforts would need to be made by the communication services and MEPs **to appear as often as possible in the media known to have a major impact on electoral outcome**, especially major TV channels. Remaining legal obstacles such as ruling out campaign financing through the European parties would also need to be removed. Another consideration would be to raise the degree of **cooperation between the policy-preparing services of the Parliament's assistance resources and the political foundations** created a few years ago. The objective would be to **develop common strategies to create a European public sphere** as the basis for real European election campaigns.

*Inside the same political family, **relations between MEPs and national parliamentarians** could be strengthened in order to better spread the actions of the corresponding EU political group and promote the transnational approach of policy-making. On that purpose national parliamentarians should be more often associated in events organised by the European political group of their party and, on the other hand, MEPs should also work more systematically in cooperation with the national parliamentarians elected in their constituency. More generally and beyond the political affiliation, national parliament members and MEPs should meet more regularly but maybe in a more restricted format, limited to those committed on closely related files for instance.*

In view of coalition building, beyond the undeniable value of direct contacts, notably within tough negotiations, the added-value of a **new spatial organisation** as a supportive strategy is not obvious. **Regular contacts** of EP representatives (Members or staff depending on the case) with potential partners, **permanent follow-up** and analysis of their activities and positions, **regular communication** of the EP activities and positions to well targeted actors (according to the issues at stake) and **sufficient support to the activities of inter-institutional services** are other means likely to support an inclusive and interactive cooperation between all actors.

The fast technological progress puts into question the way to work today and different parameters must be taken into account when thinking of the asset of the spatial organisation of the working progress. We must consider challenges created by the increased number of stakeholders involved, expectations of workers and investors regarding the possibilities created independently from workplaces and working time, security of data in view of mobile devices, a possible centrifugal effect and the correlated risk of power dilution.

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Strengthen, inside the same political family, relations between MEPs and national parliamentarians in order to better spread the actions of the corresponding EU political group and promote the transnational approach of policy-making.*
- ➔ *National parliamentarians should be more often associated in events organised by the European political group of their party.*
- ➔ *Enable MEPs to work more systematically in cooperation with the national parliamentarians elected in their constituency.*

### 3.3.1. How can the EP further increase the capabilities of the political groups, transnational political parties and their foundations, given EU enlargement and financial constraints?

As mentioned above (see *question 7 in point 1.2, and question 4 in point 2.2*), increased coordination between European political parties, their groups and foundations would prevent overlapping, increase capabilities and political impact in shaping the EU external policy, and create better value for money.

*DG COMM welcomes the proposal of the Commission on a European statute of political parties that will empower them to do transnational campaigns. The political guidelines for the institutional information and communication campaign adopted by the Bureau on 2 July 2012 highlight the importance of **enhanced cooperation with other institutions**. External communication partners should become a cornerstone, such as the 500 Europe Direct Information Offices, the Commission Spokesperson Service for the cost of non-Europe, the Council and National Directors, the Committee of the Regions with its network of regional and local authorities, the Economic and Social Committee providing platforms for dialogue with economic actors and the EU agencies.*

### 3.3.2. How could the EP improve and facilitate co-operation between MEPs and national politicians - perhaps by identifying shared legislative concerns?

*The EP is uniquely placed to help build coalitions between European and third-country politicians through the EP's interparliamentary delegations and multilateral parliamentary assemblies, which facilitate regular contact. There are numerous EP legislative dossiers of potential interest to third-country parliamentarians — for example, **consent procedures** on Association Agreements or trade agreements, codecision procedures on external financing instruments, and internal policy measures affecting third-country interests, such as visas.*

*Transnational coalitions between parliamentarians may be more useful to **control the executive's implementation of international agreements** or legislation affecting third countries. If information is shared between the EP and third country national parliaments, concerns may be raised simultaneously with both executives — with a greater impact than a unilateral response. In some cases, such as implementing development assistance, sharing information may also prompt developing country parliaments to examine the agreements signed by their executives with European authorities, encouraging greater parliamentary scrutiny. (This approach has been somewhat successful in the context of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly.) When international conferences have a parliamentary dimension, the EP should try to engage parliamentarians from third countries and develop a **common approach in advance of the conference**. A strong example is the High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (Busan, South Korea, Nov/Dec 2011): in this case, the OECD Development Assistance Committee, which was organising the event, expressed interest the ACP-EU JPA as a means of building this type of transnational coalition.*

#### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➡ *Help building coalitions between European and third-country politicians through the EP's interparliamentary delegations and multilateral parliamentary assemblies, which facilitate regular contact.*
- ➡ *Use transnational coalitions between parliamentarians to allow them to better control the executive's implementation of international agreements or legislation affecting third countries. If information is shared between the EP and third country national parliaments, concerns may be raised simultaneously with both executives — with a greater impact than a unilateral response.*

### 3.3.3. How should the EP work with other stakeholders like lobbyists, civil society and media to promote a transnational approach to policy-making?

*By 2025, the EP may increasingly rely on external partners' feedback and expertise in exercising its core functions. In the meantime, this will require a stronger interaction with external stakeholders than the current, haphazard approach. The EP should reach out to and collaborate with the civil society organisations (CSOs), epistemic communities (think tanks, academia) and media. Before 2025, the EP should create an internal code of conduct guiding the EP staff relations with these entities, to ensure that staff are aware of the best practices and possible pitfalls if interacting with this external actors. Training sessions for this should also be provided to all parliamentary staff.*

*The EP should create an internal database of contacts that would serve as a universal point of reference and allow the Parliament to reach out in an informed and balanced manner. This database should be updated by a dedicated EP structure. (The policy departments may be suitable for this task.) The EP's **proactive outreach to external actors** should continue through existing channels — for example, Committees and Delegations, which could invite external stakeholders more systematically to their meetings. Outreach should also be developed through less formal platforms (following the model of the 'Policy Hubs' now organised by the Policy Department of DG EXPO) to encourage creativity and intellectual cross-fertilisation, within the Parliamentary and externally.*

#### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- *Increasingly rely on external partners' feedback and expertise in exercising EP's core functions. In the meantime, this will require a stronger interaction with external stakeholders than the current, haphazard approach.*
- *Reach out to and collaborate with the civil society organisations (CSOs), epistemic communities (think tanks, academia) and media.*
- *Create an internal code of conduct guiding the EP staff relations with these entities, to ensure that staff are aware of the best practices and possible pitfalls if interacting with this external actors. Training sessions for this should also be provided to all parliamentary staff.*
- *Create an internal database of contacts that would serve as a universal point of reference and allow the Parliament to reach out in an informed and balanced manner. This database should be updated by a dedicated EP structure.*
- *Continue EP's proactive outreach to external actors should continue through existing channels, e.g. Committees and Delegations. Develop outreach also through less formal platforms to encourage creativity and intellectual cross-fertilisation.*



### 3.4. Will transnational EU policy-making and technical change require new legal outlooks?

*As the EP Handbook states, the need to scrutinise parliamentary amendments should not lead to a reduction in the scope of the legislative work of the EP. It must however continue to be carefully defined. In practice, some basic definitions and phases of the procedure (including deadlines) could be **clarified in the rules of procedure**, as it is now only included in the EP Handbook (in addition to a general provision in the Interinstitutional agreement). This would also allow the EP to invoke with more strength that own-amendments-check is only an option and not an obligation, and thus better respond to the Council rejecting EP amendments with the argument that their impact has not been assessed.*

*To face the consequences of technical change, such as the growth in use of the internet, new media and social networks, the EP will also have to adapt its legal resources.*

*In case it decides to favour free and **open source software**, public procurement procedures should be adapted to allow a **positive discrimination** enabling this choice as against other (proprietary) software. There have been some discussions, notably in the frame of the report on MEP environment 2025 (rapporteur Wieland), on the impact of the possible use of open source software on data security. The issues of privacy, liability and auditing linked to the use of these softwares might require new legal provisions.*

Regarding the calls for **impact assessments**, it is mainly an issue of **methodology**. A clear in-house list of indicators, adapted on a case-by-case basis, should be set up in order to evaluate the comprehensiveness and quality of the IAs. More common recourse could be made, as far as factual data is concerned, to statistics and instruments produced by **Eurostat**, which has also worked on instruments related to impact assessment, or to other tools used by the Commission, such as the Rains integrated assessment model used in the frame of the programme 'Clean Air for Europe' (by DG ENVI). It must be noted that **access to relevant and comparable data** is one of the main problems when dealing with studies at a European level.

#### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➡ *Invoke with more strength that own-amendments-check is only an option and not an obligation, and thus better respond to the Council rejecting EP amendments with the argument that their impact has not been assessed.*
- ➡ *Adapt EP's own legal resources to better face the consequences of technical change, such as the growth in use of the internet, new media and social networks.*
- ➡ *In case parliament decides to favour free and open source software, adapt public procurement procedures to allow a positive discrimination enabling this choice.*

### 3.4.1. What impact will relations with other international institutions, national parliaments and regional assemblies have on the EP's legislative capacity?

*Relations with national parliaments and regional assemblies can help the EP to better understand the needs at the respective level of administration, and thus better prepare EU legislation. It is important to **respect the autonomy of each level of administration** in the respective decision process (including the EP).*

The Parliament does not have legal capacity, not being a legal person. Nonetheless, the legislative activity of the EP cannot be considered as functioning in a vacuum, especially when other entities, composed of (elected) representatives also have legal competences. It could be proposed that it be the Commission that acts on behalf of the Union whatever the nature of the act, except if the case concerns a CFSP act.

*In principle, the resources for impact assessment and internal EP expertise have been increased since the entry into force of the Lisbon treaty. Yet they remain insufficient given the supranational nature of the EP, particularly in comparison to those of the EC and Council. The internal expertise in the EP should be better coordinated for greater efficiency, and **specific professional profiles** should be recruited (as is the case in the US' Congressional Research Service). External expertise is not always adapted for parliamentary work and must be closely scrutinised, which necessitates strong professional profiles at EP. The quality of external expertise depends in part on the EP services' own mastery of the subjects that they have been requested to monitor.*

Legislating in a globalised and interdependent world means that the practical effects of EU legislation do not solely rely on their intrinsic value, but depend upon a multitude of factors that are outside of the legislator's control. Put differently: the aims of the legislator may not be reached, and there may be very little that the legislator can do about it. This is a reality which is shared by national legislators.

The remedy for this ought to be an increasing support from the Commission in assessing the results of the application of legislation: if the aims are not being achieved, it must be clear why and what can be done about it.

However, this support must also be provided ex ante, in the form of the impact assessment of legislation at the moment it is proposed. Ideally, there should be a clear idea from the outset about the conditions in which legislation will be applied, whether these relate to broader political trends, or to the difficulties in transposing rules at a national level. Parliament also ought to purposefully collect information from national and regional parliaments, as well as international public and private institutions, in order to be fully aware of the complexities that inevitably surround much of its legislative activity.

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Improve relations with national parliaments and regional assemblies to better understand the needs at the respective level of administration.*
- ➔ *Improve coordination and thus greater efficiency of internal resources for impact assessment, develop specific professional profiles for recruitment, as the quality of external expertise depends in part on the EP services' own mastery of the subjects that they have been requested to monitor.*

### 3.4.2. How should the EP adapt its structures and working process to develop its own legislative initiative and to better scrutinise amendments?

The Parliament does not have the right of legislative initiative which is vested in the Commission. The possibilities offered by Articles TFEU 225 should however be explored further and all the competent Services could contribute when priority issues are concerned in the form of 'competence teams' or 'project teams'.

*Ensuring Connectivity, facilitating collaboration. The classic organisational response to complexity is increased size and **specialisation**. While this is a necessary response, which enables the organisation to cope with greater technicity and multiple challenges, it results in a corresponding loss of connection/ connectivity, coupled with accentuated competition within the organisation. Thus, changes in recent years in the European Parliament's committee apparatus (e.g. the Lisbon posts for Committee secretariats, the separate development of policy departments to channel expertise to Committees) have simultaneously brought about a greatly enhanced capacity to respond to the challenges of the legislative cycle and a reduced ability to cooperate either within or between organisational (mainly Directorate General) structures.*

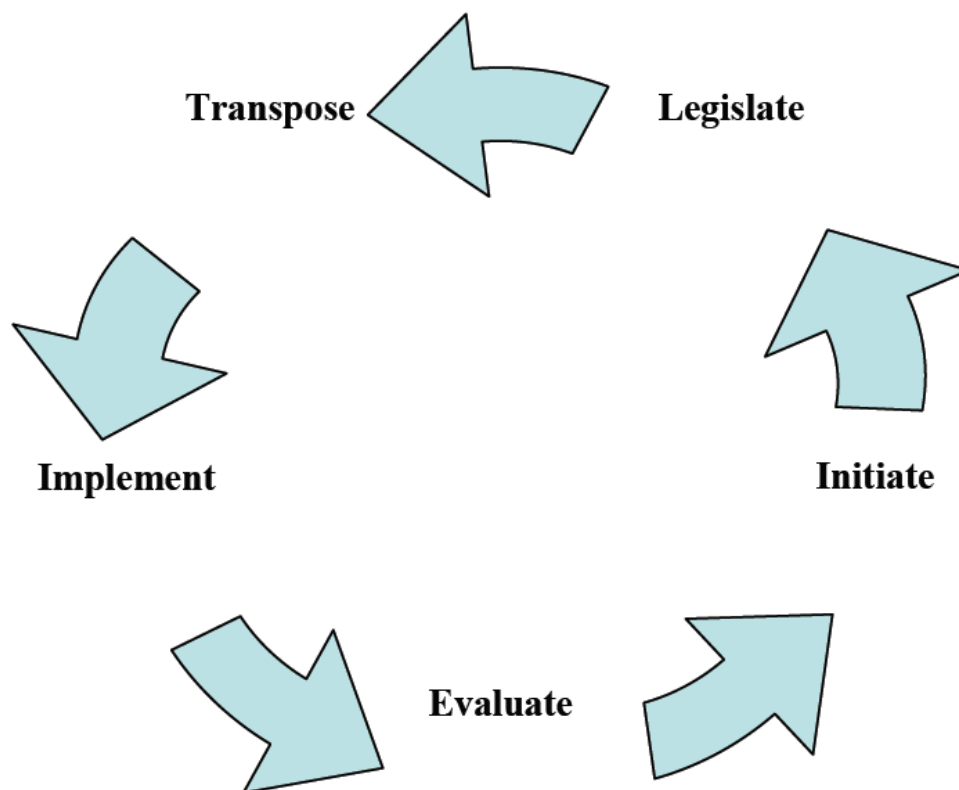
*More cross-cutting structures are accordingly necessary to offset these developments. **New horizontal structures** need to be complemented by the creation of correspondents in the operational units. In this way, designated officials in operational units like Committee secretariats, would, in addition to their front-line tasks, also have a shared responsibility for horizontal subjects such as communication, planning, policy development etc. Such a design would facilitate a holistic and **policy-cycle approach** which would give overall coherence to what would otherwise be a fragmented and uneven policy response.*

**Right of legislative initiative.** The European Commission still considers that its exclusive competence of legislative initiative maintains the institutional balance, allowing it to play its role as guardian of the Treaties and defender of the general interest, to ensure impartiality in the formulation of policy choices. It provides the foundation for its political role. The Commission's role is safeguarded by (a) the choice of **timing** for putting forward a legislative proposal and (b) formulating the **policy content** and legislative form, setting the parameters and the context in which the legislator can act. This legislative arrangement is unparalleled, as the right of initiative is traditionally a parliamentary right. In practice however, the formal right of the Commission has, over time, devolved to some extent to the Institutions with decision-making powers. From the Prodi Commission onwards, the political initiative has begun to pass to the Council, and the European Council, and in part towards the European Parliament. This swing is indicative of the democratic normalisation of a system of a union of States, and, as the Union becomes closer, should intensify.

*The European Parliament's right to initiate legislation under Article 225 TFEU remains indirect, by requesting a proposal from the Commission. A majority of component members must support the request. The novelty in the Lisbon Treaty is the obligation of the Commission to state*

its reasons if it refuses to submit a proposal. This addition is modelled on Article III-332 of the Constitutional Treaty, but is not new, given that the Commission had undertaken this in the Framework Agreement. Since the beginning of 2012, the EP has a dedicated unit whose principal role is to **incentivise Committees to use the right of legislative initiative** and provide a support mechanism, providing independent and proactive advice on policy choices and advice on legislative gaps or where revision of the framework might be necessary. It seeks in this way to promote a new and more proactive culture among the parliamentary committees. Without changing the Treaties, the Parliament can further exploit its role as initiator at two levels, the sectoral and the horizontal. The legislative initiatives taken by Committees at sectoral level can be subsumed into a **five-yearly 'government programme'**, demands for political initiatives which can be made of the incoming President of the European Commission when he is seeking nomination, and, equally commitments sought from individual Commissioners-designate at their Hearings, at the beginning of each legislative term.

The current organisational structure of the Parliament mirrors Commission and Council structures and is predominantly sectoral, matching the stages of the legislative cycle. **Better scrutiny** of the executive would be facilitated by a new transversal and **coordinating structure mirroring the policy cycle**. The component stages could range from (a) political and legislative initiative, both at the beginning of the parliamentary term and throughout, to (b) assessment of the impact of the proposals tabled by the Commission, through to (c) monitoring and evaluation of the transposition, implementation and enforcement of adopted legislation. The last stage of evaluation would inform and feed into the first stage (a), forming a policy loop.



As regards **legislative initiatives**, in the current discussions on strengthening the EU's democratic legitimacy, it is often proposed (most prominently) in the final report from the Future of Europe Group (eleven foreign ministers) that the European Parliament be given a genuine right of legislative initiative. This would require legislative support structures and in-house expertise both on subject matter and drafting support. In this context, the EP can be inspired by the US Congress experience (Congressional Research Service, Legislative Counsel).

As regards OLPs initiated by Commission proposal, the EP could more significantly exploit its right to adopt a whole text position at first reading under Article 294 TFEU, replacing the Commission proposal, and like the Council, take less into account the Commission's view concerning the restricted nature of Parliament's intervention as co-legislator (e.g. with regard to recasts).

As regards **amendments**, the plenary stage of a legislative dossier is corralled into a period of 6-8 working days (Tuesday of a pre-session week to Thursday of a session week). Potential admissibility or other problems with an amendment must be resolved before the vote in the plenary, either by correcting an amendment or ruling it inadmissible (i.e. not votable). The amendments are already available on the internet after the scrutiny by the services of DG Presidency, before debate and vote in the Plenary. It is desirable that admissibility or other problems are resolved already before publication on the internet.

A system of pre-tabling scrutiny for legislative amendments, whereby Members submit their amendments to DG PRES services, bound by professional confidentiality, on a voluntary basis before tabling, thereby gaining precious time in the pre-session week, is in the pipeline (DST).

There are two further possible ways of allowing more time for the various actors (Members, political groups, secretariat) to play their role in this process:

- Adopting, for all legislative dossiers, a system of amendment scrutiny similar to that applied to amendments to the Council's draft general budget, where plenary deadlines for tabling amendments are brought forward to before the committee stage, allowing the committee responsible to play its role in the scrutiny of amendments and to approve or reject all amendments before the plenary vote (this system is already applied in embryonic form through Rule 162 (committee consideration of plenary amendments));
- Completely reviewing the relationship between the various stages of committee, group and plenary consideration of a legislative proposal, possibly starting with a more political stage of group/plenary analysis, followed by a committee stage and then finally a second plenary stage.

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Ensure connectivity, facilitate collaboration. A classic organisational response to complexity - increase size and specialisation.*
- ➔ *Create more cross-cutting structures to offset these developments. New horizontal structures need to be complemented by the creation of 'correspondents' in the operational units. In this way, designated officials in operational units like Committee secretariats, would, in addition to their front-line tasks, would also have a shared responsibility for horizontal subjects such as communication, planning, policy development etc.*
- ➔ *Further exploit Parliament's role as initiator at two levels, the sectoral and the horizontal. The legislative initiatives taken by Committees at sectoral level can be subsumed into a five-yearly 'government programme', demands for political initiatives which can be made of the incoming President of the European Commission when he is seeking nomination, and, equally commitments sought from individual Commissioners-designate at their hearings at the beginning of each legislative term.*
- ➔ *Facilitate by a new transversal and coordinating structure mirroring the policy cycle better scrutiny of the executive. The component stages could range from (a) political and legislative initiative, both at the beginning of the parliamentary term and throughout, to (b) assessment of the impact of the proposals tabled by the Commission, through to (c) monitoring and evaluation of the transposition, implementation and enforcement of adopted legislation. The last stage of evaluation would inform and feed into the first stage (a), forming a policy loop.*



### 3.4.3. Does the EP have sufficient legal resources to respond to the growth in use of internet, new media, social networks and transparency?

In principle yes, but the question should be reformulated as follows: will the EP be able to **financially match the increasing needs** and the accelerated pace of technology?

*The response to the question on the level of resources to respond to the growth in use of the internet, new media, social networks and transparency is that these will certainly be areas of developing importance. A mix of internal and external expertise will be the favoured approach, and steps in this direction are already being taken with the recent appointment of a media law specialist and the development currently under way of a database of external lawyers. A similar **mix of internal and external expertise** will apply in the case of international agreements and calls for impact assessments. The interpretation or at least awareness of the most important case law and its evolution has to be integrated in the development of legislation and taken into account when fixing political priorities in policy areas.*

*Very often **case law** breathes new life into legislation and helps to identify trends and evolutions to come. All this information is to be integrated in the political and legislative work of an institution like the EP.*

This question concerns, inter alia, the impact of increased participation in digital platforms (more direct and immediate access to Members by interest groups and citizens, more pressure on Members and groups across more fora in less time) on the need to address legal questions and concerns in the legislative process.

It is clear that Members, as well as other EP services (e.g. Press Office), will increasingly need access to quick, basic legal information in the context of ongoing legislative procedures, for example to quickly dispel rumours or correct misinformation circulating rapidly around the internet (e.g. an incorrect viral rumour that 'all dogs will have to carry passports' under a proposed change to pet legislation). In contrast to detailed, formal legal opinions, this kind of legal information will have to be delivered informally at speed. Improved collaboration between services (particularly Legal Service and DLA) by way of project teams, enabling individual lawyers and legislative drafters to build up expertise on specific files in specific areas, and an official mission of the services to provide ad-hoc informal legal opinions towards each other in the context of legislative procedures would facilitate this type of speedy, unbureaucratic response. In this context, the EP can be inspired by the pattern of working relationships in the US Congress (e.g. as between Congressional Research Service, Legislative Counsel, committee staff).

The surveillance and reporting of malicious information on the internet, including a first response service or verification service is rather a matter of communication resources than of legal resources.

As regards legal resources, and in accordance with the Administrative Work Programme 2012/2014, the Legal Service is currently building up a media law section to reply *inter alia*

to challenges from dissemination of false or malicious information on the internet. This initiative will include the creation of a network of national lawyers which is fundamental in order to be able to rapidly response in the relevant jurisdiction. This initiative should be able to address the challenges which are foreseeable in the near future.

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➡ *Use a mix of internal and external expertise for responding to the growth in use of the internet. Apply a similar mix of internal and external expertise in the case of international agreements and calls for impact assessments.*
- ➡ *Use information also provided by case law into the political and legislative work to identify trends and evolutions to come.*

### 3.4.4. How can the EP better use European case law to achieve policy priorities and legislative objectives?

*The EP is already significantly strengthening its capacity to analyse the quality of Commission Impact Assessments (IA) and to undertake IA work of its own. The resources needed are not primarily legal, but rather administrative - to continue the process, already begun, of training staff in the necessary analytical and methodological skills and tools. More generally, the EP should continue to insist on the Commission adopting consistent standards across DGs in the way its IAs are drafted. It should also focus on ex post, as well as ex ante, work in this field, as part of a general attention to all phases of the policy cycle. See answer offered to Question 3.4.2 directly below).*

*The case law of the European Court of Justice (ECJ) has often acted as a driving force for completing the internal market and European integration, in particular in areas where secondary legislation is incomplete. The identification of regulatory gaps in ECJ jurisprudence could serve as a basis for new legislative initiatives by the Union. In that respect, **Parliament can increase its role as legislative initiator** by requesting the Commission to propose legislation in areas where (a) the ECJ has identified legal gaps, b) has based its rulings solely on treaty provisions due to lack of secondary legislation, and c) has given an interpretation of a legal act which is not necessarily compatible with the intentions of the co-legislator, in particular the Parliament. The latter is particularly relevant in view of an amendment of the legal act in question.*

*The EP legal service is closely monitoring the ECJ jurisprudence, but **summaries of case law** should become more **systematically available to other departments of the Parliament** (committee secretariats, Policy Departments, European added value unit) who can make a more political assessment for the need of new legislation and propose action to the political authority. To that end, closer synergy between all relevant departments should be established in this field. Parliament could ultimately propose to the Commission to take legislative initiatives, in areas where regulatory gaps have been identified, by means of legislative own-initiative reports, an instrument which is not currently widely used by the Parliament with the exception of few committees (e.g. Legal Affairs Committee, Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs).*

Case law is already used of course in the work of the Legal Service but the input in the work of committees could be reviewed, especially with a view to acquiring first-hand Information when the Court of Justice decides on important cases concerning the EP or its work. Moreover, case law may demonstrate unintended consequences of existing legislation, or show gaps in the legal landscape. The Legal Service could prepare guides to the case law in particular fields, for example, the Guide to the case-law on cross-border health-care of 2010 (SJ-672/10).

A review of relevant case law could also be prepared in the style of the 'weekly proceedings' of the ECJ with particular emphasis on the cases which are relevant for ongoing legislative files.

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Strengthen the EP's capacity to analyse the quality of Commission Impact Assessments and to undertake LA work of its own. The resources needed are not primarily legal, but rather administrative - to continue the process, already begun, of training staff in the necessary analytical and methodological skills and tools.*
- ➔ *Continue to insist on the Commission adopting consistent standards across DGs in the way its IAs are drafted. It should also focus on ex post, as well as ex ante, work in this field, as part of a general attention to all phases of the policy cycle.*
- ➔ *Monitor the ECJ jurisprudence and make available more systematically to other departments of the Parliament (committee secretariats, Policy Departments, European added value unit) who can make a more political assessment for the need of new legislation and propose action to the political authority.*
- ➔ *Establish closer synergy between all relevant departments in order to ultimately propose to the Commission to take legislative initiatives, in areas where regulatory gaps have been identified, by means of legislative own-initiative reports.*

### 3.4.5. What additional legal expertise might the EP need to support international agreements and to meet calls for impact assessments?

*Increase expertise in **comparative law** and case law as well as in private international law that plays a growing role for market actors and in standard setting.*

In light of experience with several highly controversial transatlantic agreements that the EP has debated and even rejected on several occasions in recent years, it would be advisable to enhance legal expertise in international law and comparative law, in particular the law and legal style used by the EU's main partners. Moreover, further resources could be attributed for a detailed advanced scrutiny of international agreements that substantially impact the fundamental rights of citizens as recognised in the EU.

#### Key action point for the European Parliament:

- ➡ *Increase expertise in comparative law and case law as well as in private international law that plays a growing role for market actors and in standard setting.*



## IV. Multi-tech accelerator

*Harnessing ever growing information flows with adequate tools is of crucial importance for an institution like the European Parliament that is basically and will increasingly be a provider of content. **Legislation is communication**, and this new 'legislation' has to adjust to the new opportunities offered for ubiquity, multilinguism and by the Global Open Data.*

*This is the reason why, in view of the ever larger amount of available information and the constant development of tools encouraging mobility and virtual exchanges, assessing both the opportunities and possible risks of technological changes is an **immediate common strategic challenge for all DGs**, and not just a technical issue.*

Fully endorsing the Lisbon Treaty also provides an opportunity to work on various ways of exchanging information with a much larger number of stakeholders (from civil society to other assemblies or lobbyists).

*Defining the data critically, proposing tools to disseminate, controlling and correcting the information exchanged will be complex (number of channels, number of subjects, number of stakeholders, and number of languages) and time consuming.*

*Which information (e.g. data, documents, images or videos) is provided by whom and to whom will be challenging to establish.*

*Which valuable information comes from whom and goes directly to whom may be an even more challenging issue with the need to adjust to the new **Global Open Data** scene, that is likely to cut out more and more the monopoly of experts and advisors.*

*With a view to the European Parliament as multilingual institution, it needs to be noted that technological change will also impact on the future organisation of interpretation precisely in response to the role of technologies in communication. This concerns not only videoconferencing facilities including possible **remote interpretation equipment**, which will allow for production, processing and transmission of high quality audio and video. Also closed captioning, automatic transcription and on-screen display could give more information to the interpreter on the job, as would technologically enabled interpreter booths for better supply of documentation.*

***Voice recognition** potentially coupled with machine translation could provide much better accessibility for deaf and hard-of hearing. On the other hand it seems unlikely that advances in speech translation will be so rapid that by 2025 this technology would be sufficiently developed to be used in complex multilingual settings such as the EP.*

*Full multilingualism will require the continued use of **efficient and effective demand management** practices and the application of strict rules, making sure that interpretation is deployed on a real needs basis. Technology may help to track real language use and tailor the use of resources in meetings accordingly.*



## 4.1. What impact will technological change have on the future organisation of translation?

### 4.1.1. Could new speech recognition and dictation programmes be used widely?

*Multilingualism is a necessity if the EP is to maintain and extend its rich exchanges with citizens. As Parliament's work should not only be understood by insiders and specialists, keeping records of parliamentary debates accessible for the wider public is of paramount democratic importance.*

*Speech recognition might indeed help in substantially **reducing current costs of transcription** of plenary debates (or of other events for which a Verbatim report is required: Commissioners hearings, Monetary Dialogues, Conference of Presidents open to Members...). Yet the software needed for automatic translation is still very young, whereas the hardware is already ready to support automatic translations.*

***Speech recognition for text** could be used by translators to dictate a translation instead of typing it. This technology is highly complex, as texts can contain any words, be spoken with any accent, including non-mother-tongue speakers, and can be spoken in different rhythms depending on how well the user knows what they wish to say. Speech recognition technology still has a long way to go before it is usable for a broad range of professional users, especially because it does not cover all the EU languages (some of which are and will most likely never be widely spoken in the future, so that there will not be a commercial interest in developing the relevant products). Currently speech recognition technology is available only in some 9 (more or less widely spread) EU languages. For some of these languages the speech recognition software available on the market does not yet guarantee good quality output. Users need to be willing to learn to speak differently - to dictate their input rather than just speak it or to train the software in order to obtain better output. Unless they wish to do a lot of post-editing, users also need to include the necessary punctuation and paragraph instructions.*

- *So although speech recognition and dictation programmes may start to be used more frequently, it may be more widespread for some languages than for others and might prove less efficient than **computer-aided translation (CAT)** tools.*
- *In case technological advances in the development of speech recognition software to a degree that a professional use in Parliamentary business would make sense, the European Parliament could consider contributing to maintaining Europe's cultural and linguistic heritage by using its resources to **support the development of speech recognition software also for the lesser spoken and therefore commercially less attractive languages.***
- *Speech recognition software could also be used to provide subtitles for the **benefit of people with hearing impairment.***

- Moreover, **transcription in near real time**, as a 'democratic' complement to live or on demand streaming is more readily accessible to citizens both considering the lower technical infrastructures and the lower degree of IT literacy needed.

### Key Action Points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ So although speech recognition and dictation programmes may start to be used more frequently, it may be more widespread for some languages than for others, and might prove less efficient than **computer-aided translation (CAT)** tools.
- ➔ In case technological advances in the development of speech recognition software to a degree that a professional use in Parliamentary business would make sense, the European Parliament could consider contributing to maintaining Europe's cultural and linguistic heritage by using its resources to **directly support the development of speech recognition software also for the lesser spoken and therefore commercially less attractive languages**.
- ➔ Use speech recognition software to provide subtitles for the **benefit of people with hearing impairment**.
- ➔ Develop **transcription in near real time** as a 'democratic' complement to live or on demand streaming, which is more readily accessible to citizens both considering the lower technical infrastructures and the lower degree of IT literacy needed.

#### 4.1.2. Could computer aided translation and translation machines be used more by international institutions as a way of ensuring more cost-efficient multilingualism?

*The EP must continue to respect all official languages regarding the legislative production of texts and ensure high-quality legal texts that are equitable between differential languages and understandable for every citizen, all guaranteeing high-quality products must remain at the top of the EP's agenda in this regard.*

The use of CAT tools, already in place in the European Institutions on a wide scale for over 15 years, will continue because of the reuse of existing translations (for example Euramis translation memories), making the translated text more consistent and coherent in terms of versioning and terminology, and the time-saving benefits.

*The European Institutions, including the EP, are currently **implementing machine translation on a trial basis**. It is very likely that a majority of documents could be translated from any of the EU official languages to any other EU official language using computer-aided translation and machine translation by 2025.*

A distinction should be made between translation-memory-based CAT tools and Machine Translation (MT) tools. The translation-memory-based CAT tools currently used in DG TRAD can only provide useful, partial, automatic translations based on existing translations, whereas MT can suggest translations for segments for which no matching text is found by the translation memories system. However, the major difficulty with machine translation mechanisms is the lack of semantics and context used.

Machine Translation should therefore be seen as a future addition to the available CAT tools, yet MT will not ensure perfectly accurate automatic translation from one language to another and will thus require appropriate quality assurance processes. Given the evolution of the processing power of information and technology, an extension of CAT and MT technologies would be one way to ensure more cost-efficient multilingualism, substantially altering the context for a multilingual organisation.

It has to be stressed, though, that the cognitive limits of the human brain will not be compensated by automation in the near future, not at least before the full rollout of Artificial Intelligence which some authors foresee as early as 2045. In addition, any cost savings must for some time yet be set against investment and maintenance costs.

The use of MT should provide:

- *Translators with pre-processed MT output as a basis for delivering high-quality translations (in addition to the output suggested by other translation-memory-based CAT tools); the objective is to allow translators to focus their attention on revising and translating texts requiring the highest level of quality;*
- *Translators with MT output for post-editing fit-for-purpose translations of less critical documents (depending on document types and intended use);*

- *Potentially material for packages produced for external translation;*
- *Other staff with a MT self-service for 'gisting' (raw MT could provide translations of usable quality where human translation is not possible at all because of lack of time or resources);*
- *Finally, systematically structuring data and documents (XML) allows greater reuse of translated elements, especially in the semi-automation context. The combination of these elements allows for a significant reduction in costs and change in the business model (working conditions, text revision and quality control).*

### Key Action Points for the European Parliament:

- ➡ *Use pre-processed Machine Translation (MT) output as a basis for delivering high-quality translations (in addition to the output suggested by other translation-memory-based CAT tools).*
- ➡ *Use MT output for post-editing fit-for-purpose translations of less critical documents (depending on document types and intended use).*
- ➡ *Finally, systematically structure data and documents (XML) to allow for greater reuse of translated elements, especially in the semi-automation context. The combination of these elements should allow for a significant reduction in costs and change in the business model (working conditions, text revision and quality control).*

#### 4.1.3. What are the benefits for translation of a greater automation?

Automation will cover the entire translation process, i.e. both the translation process itself as well as the workflow management process. The aim is the implementation of an integrated end-to-end solution for all the workflow, content management and CAT [Computer-Aided Translation] tools used in translation as well as translation proper: the so-called Integrated Translator's Desktop. The expected benefits both at the level of work distribution and translation processes include:

- *Better customer services (assurance of timely and high-quality translations);*
- *CAT tools contribute to a high consistency of the translated text;*
- *The use of CAT tools accelerates the translation process - allowing translators to concentrate on their speciality - translation - rather than spending time on setting up documents, 'copy-pasting' already existing texts from known sources and formatting text;*
- *Reduction of translation time due to a single access to one application contributing to an increase of capacity;*
- *Increase of productivity in monitoring and managerial tasks due to a single access to one workflow management system to process translation requests.*

#### Key Action Points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Use CAT tools to contribute to a high consistency of the translated text.*
- ➔ *Develop CAT tools to accelerate the translation process rather than spending time on setting up documents and 'copy-pasting' already existing texts from known sources.*
- ➔ *Reduce translation time through single access to one application.*
- ➔ *Increase productivity in monitoring and managerial tasks due to a single access to one workflow management system to process translation requests.*

#### 4.1.4. What future Staffing requirements do we expect and will the job profile need to change in response to changing tasks?

Whereas organisations must become more efficient with fewer staff at their disposal, while at the same time dealing with important internal changes such as the rise of retirement age, staff members will also have to react quickly to new technologies. It is foreseeable that as a result of new technologies, Parliament might need fewer staff, but this cannot be quantified, not least because it takes no account of the possible increase in demand and of future enlargements.

Organisations will require coaches to help staff to deal with new challenges. They will help employees to develop the necessary skills to maintain a high level of performance, while enhancing individual development. Regarding the specific translation needs, it is reasonable to think that translators will still need to translate into their mother tongue and to produce high quality texts as they do today.

*In the EP, the perfect scenario would be that translation requests are foreseeable, that MEPs and other requestors write in their mother tongue and that DG Translation receives guidelines from the political authorities on what to translate or not. This is probably a utopian view from the translators' side. Members and their staff are more and more eager to communicate directly in global English with the different stakeholders with which they interact on a daily basis. As automatic translation will become more accessible, they may even wish to do it for other relevant global languages. This is the reason why present skills and techniques may have to change:*

- *The **proof-reading and editing skills** will have to be developed since they will increasingly be required to detect mistakes in the texts provided by CAT or MT tools. A certain level of **IT skills** will also need to be part of their skills.*
- *Two **new profiles in IT-related support for translation** need to be created, clearly distinguished and with a specific skill-set: **product managers and product testers**. Both are becoming increasingly important with the complexity and the continuous evolution of our IT environment. Today these profiles only exist partially. There will be a need for:*
  - *Specialised staff to focus on one IT product and to follow its evolution, along with the needs of the users during its life-cycle;*
  - *Specialised staff to perform and document product-tests in a more formal and professional way;*
  - *These experts to have the know-how of how to manage, document and maintain these products/ tests.*
- *It is predictable that current working arrangements, such as **teleworking** or part time, will continue to develop and will most probably be combined with a scheme of flexible working hours or indeed an advanced working environment (e.g. results-oriented working environment).*

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ Develop the **proof-reading and editing skills** on texts provided by CAT or MT tools. Develop a certain level of **IT skills**.
- ➔ Clearly distinguish and with a specific skill-set: **for product managers and for product testers**. Both are becoming increasingly important with the complexity and the continuous evolution of our IT environment. Today these profiles only exist partially. There will be a need for:
  - specialised staff to focus on one IT product along with the needs of users,
  - specialised staff to perform and document product-tests in a more formal and professional way,
  - these experts to have the know-how of how to manage, document and maintain these products/ tests.
- ➔ **Combine teleworking** with a common scheme of flexible working hours and an advanced working environment (e.g. results-oriented working environment).



## 4.2. What are the consequences of technological change on the future organisation of interpretation?

As for translation, it is possible that by 2025 'automatic interpreters' will appear. Here also (and even more, given the constraints of 'real time'), the difficulty lies in the lack of semantic knowledge, context analysis and even non-verbal expressions. However, current research in these areas (sometimes with other goals, cf. CIA) should yield results in the medium term (before 2025).

*With today's techniques but taking into account the rapid evolution of communication speeds and flows, it is easily possible to imagine **off-site interpreters** for the EP, i.e. away from the place where the service is required but **present virtually (teleconferencing augmented reality, avatars, etc.)** — with simplified logistics and reduced costs associated with on-site presence.*

The possibility of virtual meetings is discussed more specifically in question 4.5.

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➡ *Develop off-side interpretation support by all means possible for virtual presence of members.*

#### 4.2.1. What technological developments are foreseen in the area of interpretation?

There will be considerable advances in the availability, reliability and quality of existing technologies which are already used today in meetings with interpretation. However, between now and 2025, it is not yet certain that technological change will lead to a paradigm shift in the way interpretation is provided.

- *In the area of **video conferencing technology**, which is of particular interest for inter-parliamentary and other types of meetings because of its cost-effectiveness in combination with the efficiency and environmental gains that can be achieved, further progress can be expected with respect to the availability of equipment allowing the production, processing and transmission of high quality audio and video.*
- *In addition, other types of technology such as closed-captioning are likely to become more reliable and accurate, allowing developments such as the **automatic transcription and display on-screen** of the audio part of the videoconference to be introduced as an aid for the interpreters. It is interesting to note that the use of **closed-captioning techniques, possibly in conjunction with machine translation**, may in the future considerably increase the inclusiveness of parliamentary meetings, by giving the deaf and hard-of-hearing instant access to parliamentary debates.*

*Similar technological progress can also be expected with respect to the **availability of high quality equipment for use in remote interpretation set-ups**, which might make it easier and more cost-effective to fulfil the technical requirements for the use of such setups in the EP environment.*

*The environment in which interpretation is provided in the European Parliament has already changed radically because of the fact that, through web streaming, the output of the interpreters is no longer available only to the participants in Committee and Plenary Sessions but to the public at large. Moreover, the interpreters' output has become semi-permanent as a result of the availability of Video on Demand.*

In this changed environment, **technological developments in the area of editing and post-production** will also be of a considerable relevance to interpretation. Further progress is also to be expected in the availability of **wireless technologies which can be used to provide simultaneous interpretation** in situations where simultaneous interpretation booths cannot be deployed. Such technologies are already in use today, but are still limited, particularly in the number of languages they allow covering and other functionalities they provide. Simultaneous interpretation using this type of lighter, more user-friendly equipment is likely to displace other forms of interpretation, such as consecutive interpretation, in most settings.

There is no doubt further **progress in the field of machine interpretation or speech translation** can also be expected. It is important to note that speech translation is more complex than text translation mainly because it requires solving two technical problems -

automatic speech recognition and machine translation, for which current technology is still far from providing fully satisfactory solutions. Several prominent research projects in this field have been conducted in recent years, both in Europe (TC-STAR, QUAERO) and the US (GALE). Although there has been considerable progress, it is currently largely limited to commercial applications of speech translation systems used in the fast expanding field of mobile technologies and smartphones (e.g. 'translators' used in the tourist domain, but also applications for military and humanitarian operations around the world).

- *It is to be expected that, as part of the above development in the field of machine interpretation, certain technologies used, such as **voice recognition and machine translation**, may become more mainstream and may become available for use in the interpretation booth in the form of computer tools for **supporting human interpretation or for multilingual chats** of the President and Vice Presidents. DGINTE is closely following developments in this area, cooperating in particular with the EU-Bridge project, which aims specifically at developing speech translation systems. This cooperation is currently focusing on tools for automatic terminology extraction, captioning of numbers/ names or even entire speeches.*
- ***Telephone interpretation** can be foreseen, but there will be a need for properly secured and equipped, reliable telephone lines.*
- *In general, further technological progress can also be expected with respect to the **supply of information and documentation to the interpreters in the booth**. This progress is likely to come in the shape of technologically-enabled interpretation booths, in which the information and documentation the interpreters need is supplied in a more user-friendly and interactive form than is currently the case.*
- *The above developments will lead to a need for a new, more **integrated approach to conference**.*
- ***Room design** and management. The procurement for and the management of the technologies used for the delivery of the different services offered will need to be increasingly coordinated and even gradually merged, in order to guarantee the most adequate and cost-effective integration and delivery of these services, avoiding the unnecessary duplication of installations and operational effort.*

In addition to the above changes in interpretation practice, technological developments should also allow further progress to be achieved in the area of interpreter training and testing. Recruiting suitably qualified and experienced interpreting staff, who can meet the extremely high standards required in our multilingual institution, is a major challenge in view of demographic developments and in the context of increasing cooperation with third countries as well as further enlargements. *To remedy the situation, DGINTE already cooperates closely with universities training interpreters, e.g. by organising multipoint and bilateral **virtual master classes** for interpreter trainees.*

## Key Action Points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ Upgrade and generalise **videoconferencing technology**, which is of particular interest for inter-parliamentary and other types of meetings because of its cost-effectiveness in combination with the efficiency and environmental gains that can be achieved, further progress can be expected with respect to the availability of equipment allowing the production, processing and transmission of high quality audio and video.
- ➔ Derive the best of other types of technology such as closed-captioning, which are likely to become more reliable and accurate, allowing developments such as the **automatic transcription, display on-screen**, of the audio part of the videoconference to be introduced as an aid for the interpreters. It is interesting to note that the use of **closed-captioning techniques, possibly in conjunction with machine translation**, may in the future considerably increase the inclusiveness of parliamentary meetings, by giving the deaf and hard-of-hearing instant access to parliamentary debates.
- ➔ It is to be expected that, as part of the above development in the field of machine interpretation, certain technologies used, such as **voice recognition and machine translation**, may become more mainstream and may become available for use in the interpretation booth in the form of computer tools for **supporting human interpretation**. Derive the best of available technologies to support **multilingual chats** of the President and Vice-Presidents. DGINTE is closely following developments in this area, cooperating in particular with the EU-Bridge project, which aims specifically at developing speech translation systems. This cooperation is currently focusing on tools for automatic terminology extraction, captioning of numbers/names or even entire speeches.
- ➔ **Telephone interpretation** can be foreseen, but there will be a need for properly secured and equipped, reliable telephone lines.
- ➔ In general, further technological progress can also be expected with respect to **supplying more information and documentation to the interpreters in the booth**. This progress is likely to come in the shape of technologically-enabled interpretation booths, in which the information and documentation the interpreters need is supplied in a more user-friendly and interactive form than is currently the case.
- ➔ Develop a more **integrated approach to conference room design** and management. The procurement for and the management of the technologies used for the delivery of the different services offered will need to be increasingly coordinated and even gradually merged in order to guarantee the most adequate and cost-effective integration and delivery of these services, avoiding the unnecessary duplication of installations and operational effort.

#### 4.2.2. Could the availability of new technologies allow MEPs to explain European policies more easily to larger numbers of Citizens across the EU by using people's own languages?

Harnessing new technologies to engage in direct dialogue with Citizens could be a key element in enhancing the process of coalition building at the EP level.

- *Introducing e-democracy in Committee and other EP meetings through the use of webcasting technology would be possible to allow active citizen participation. Used in conjunction with the existing multilingual web streaming infrastructure, this would make it possible to engage more directly with civil society and organise interactive participation of the citizens during the meetings in question, in the form of **multilingual chats, polling and surveys**.*
- ***Multilingual chats via social networks**, in particular, are a very direct form of communication. Although multilingual chats take place in written form, they are currently being developed using interpretation, since it is the instant transposition of information rather than the medium of expression which is the defining feature. For this early cooperation between DG COMM, DG ITEC and DG INTE is essential.*
- ***Advances in video conferencing with interpretation** make it increasingly possible for MEPs to be 'present' in different fora and locations while ensuring that linguistic diversity is guaranteed.*
- *Interpreters will increasingly need to be adept at new ways of retrieving and managing information, particularly in a paper smart environment and will need to be kept adequately informed about institutional and legislative developments. In addition, language profiles will shift; though the EP will continue to need conference interpreters in a meeting room setting, more flexible ways of communication with citizens and other stakeholders will require **more capacity for 2-way interpretation** (i.e. into and out of the mother tongue) as well as an extension of required combinations to **include non-official languages**.*

#### Key Action Points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Introducing e-democracy in Committee and other EP meetings through the use of webcasting technology would be possible to allow active citizen participation. Used in conjunction with the existing multilingual web streaming infrastructure, this would make it possible to engage more directly with civil society and organise interactive participation of the citizens during the meetings in question, offered to citizens in the form of **multilingual chats, polling and surveys**.*

- ➔ ***Multilingual chats via social networks**, in particular, are a very direct form of communication. Although multilingual chats take place in written form, they are currently being developed using Interpretation, since it is the instant transposition of information rather than the medium of expression which is the defining feature. Develop early Cooperation between DG COMM, DG ITEC and DG INTE on multilingual chat via social networks.*
- ➔ ***Combine technological advances in video conferencing with interpretation**, make it increasingly possible for MEPs to be 'present' in different fora and locations with advances in ensuring that linguistic diversity.*
- ➔ *Interpreters will increasingly need to be adept at new ways of retrieving and managing information, particularly in a paper smart environment and will need to be kept adequately informed about institutional and legislative developments. In addition, language profiles will shift; though the EP will continue to need conference interpreters in a meeting room setting, more flexible ways of communication with citizens and other stakeholders will define requirement **for 2-way interpretation** (i.e. into and out of the mother tongue) and inclusion of **non-official languages**.*

#### 4.2.3. How can interpretation remain cost effective in a Union of potentially 35 Member States, including some regional languages?

*Assuming the principle of full multilingualism and the right of MEPs to use the official language of their choice are both kept, maintaining cost-effectiveness of interpretation in the context of an enlarging Union will require the continued use of **efficient and effective demand management** practices and the application of common rules concerning the availability of interpretation for different parliamentary bodies **in accordance with the Parliamentary Calendar**. Every effort will have to be made to ensure that interpretation is deployed wherever possible on a real needs basis and with as much flexibility as possible.*

*With the generalizing English proficiency of Members and with its generalizing use between bloggers and social networkers it may well be the case that interpretation and translation will have to be redeployed from traditional in-house services supporting interaction of Members together to more and more outreach activities with citizens in the constituency.*

- *For this purpose, new methods could be developed, possible with the use of new technologies, to **track real language use** in meetings, in order to **set priorities more accurately** and to **tailor active and passive language use** more specifically to the needs of individual meetings.*
- *Considerable **discipline will also continue to be required** on the client side to **avoid wasteful practices** (such as requesting languages for MEPs whose presence is not confirmed, late cancellation of meetings, etc.), as well as the necessary flexibility in meeting planning to ensure the most resource-efficient use of interpretation capacity, in particular by making use of all the available interpretation slots.*
- ***Strategic training initiatives** will be needed to enhance the in-house capacity to cover any new language needs. DG INTE's engagement with universities training interpreters is of particular importance to secure the necessary human resources. Synergies among universities, including those of the neighbouring countries and in countries of strategically important languages, should be fostered to enhance and multiply the effect of DG INTE's involvement in this field.*

#### Key Action Points for the European Parliament:

- ➡ *For this purpose, new methods could be developed, possible with the use of new technologies, to **track real language use** in meetings in order to **set priorities more accurately** and to **tailor active and passive language use** more specifically to the needs of individual meetings.*



- ➔ Considerable **discipline will also continue to be required** on the client side to **avoid wasteful practices** (such as requesting languages for MEPs whose presence is not confirmed, late cancellation of meetings, etc.), as well as the necessary flexibility in meeting planning to ensure the most resource-efficient use of interpretation capacity, in particular by making use of all the available interpretation slots.
- ➔ **Develop strategic training initiatives** to cover any new language needs. DG INTE's engagement with universities training interpreters is of particular importance to secure the necessary human resources. Synergies among universities, including those of the neighbouring countries and in countries should be fostered to enhance and multiply the effect of DG INTE's involvement in this field.

#### 4.2.4. Should the EU institutions consider using non-European languages for some key international events?

*Yes, as this would not only facilitate communication with representatives of third countries, but would also acknowledge the fact that many people living in the EU have as a mother language the one of some of our strategic partners — Arabic, Chinese and Russian. In the European context, Turkish is also playing an increasing role.*

*We must also respect the rules governing multilateral assemblies in which the EP plays a role: third languages should be used when necessary and by courtesy. Joint assessment with third countries on what is actually needed should be compulsory to avoid an automatic inflation of linguistic costs associated with those assemblies. A trade-off should be established between more direct interaction between members of those assemblies (committee meetings, fact finding mission) in a global language or fewer meetings, more plenary style with full-fledged linguistic services.*

*Given the expected multi-polar nature of the world in 2025, non-European languages can be expected to take on an even greater importance. Promoting cultural diversity, defending European core interests and exporting European values compel the EU institutions to equip themselves with the ability to communicate effectively with emerging powers and the active middle class. What **effectiveness means here will deserve to be assessed**, according to target groups and channels. As global English proficiency is on the rise, one should nonetheless consider the possibility to use it in the context of direct interaction with specific groups (researchers, business communities, NGOs with a global dimension...). When it comes to international decisions (such as G20's) or legal texts transposed in third countries' legislation precision and accuracy may of course necessitate a careful interpretation with the adequate background. When it comes to reaching the masses, another language, with the appropriate semantics, has to be used. One size does not fit all.*

In addition, regionalisation and decentralisation trends noted in some Member States mean that the use of **regional languages** may in some cases also become necessary. One has to plan for the financing of those eventual additional requirements from MS.

*This being said, it needs to be noted that already non-European languages are used on a regular basis in Parliamentary meetings.*

*For instance, for Arabic and Russian DG INTE can rely on a **considerable pool of qualified interpreters** who are familiar with the European Parliament's work, while languages such those of candidate countries (e.g. Turkish) and Chinese are also increasingly used. Contacts with EURONEST countries might strengthen the need for the languages of the region.*

- ***Links** are already being forged **with training establishments** and international organisations, such as the HINTS<sup>37</sup> network, in these key areas, and training of interpreting staff in the use of non-European languages will continue, increasingly using e-learning and virtual training technologies.*

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<sup>37</sup> Heads of Interpreting Services

- *For the most frequently used non-European languages, depending on the level of demand, the **creation of a more extended in-house interpretation capacity** could become necessary.*
- *Different forms of **training on the specificities of the EP's institutional environment** could also be envisaged for external interpreters of these non-European languages in order to allow them to uphold quality requirements.*

### Key Action Points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ ***Develop links with training establishments** and international organisations, such as the HINTS<sup>38</sup> network, in these key areas and training of interpreting staff in the use of non-European languages will continue, increasingly using e-learning and virtual training technologies.*
- ➔ *For the most frequently used non-European languages, **create a more extended in-house interpretation capacity**.*
- ➔ ***Training on the specificities of the EP's institutional environment.***

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<sup>38</sup> Heads of Interpreting Services

#### 4.2.5. Can the EU institutions agree to work in considerably fewer languages for certain meetings?

*The EU institutions already work with considerably fewer than all the official languages in many of their meetings, with the European Parliament basing the management of the demand for interpretation resources on the principle of the **provision of interpretation in accordance with users' real needs**. New technologies could help monitor this more efficiently. In addition, many smaller EP meetings as well as all meetings outside the three working places are already making use of a limited number of languages. The issue of language in meetings has to remain a political choice balancing between many different constraints. Attractive training in the two working languages of the Union should remain a top investment priority to smooth the process. The issue has to be addressed according to content, targets groups and channels under a likely definite overall budget constraint. The need for arbitrage in language service use (in-house, outside) will increase as the European Parliament will develop its outreach towards citizens, which are more and more directly affected by decisions at the European level in their daily life.*

*Web streaming technologies and the recognised desire for greater transparency and involvement of the citizens in the decision-making process mean that the European Parliament in particular, as the directly elected representative of the people of Europe, has to communicate directly with those citizens if it is to maintain its relevance and democratic acceptability. Debate on the European project needs to be fostered amongst the entire population which is not uniformly equipped to use languages other than the mother tongue. (Eurobarometer special report 386).*

- *Parliament could thus draw a **distinction between use of its internal working languages**, which should be predicated on the actual needs of the institution and its Members, **and its parliamentary output**, which should be disseminated in all official languages.*
- *For example, legislative agreements reached in trilogue are regularly dealt with at committee stage in English only, where Committee members do not consider it expedient to wait for translations. One could imagine individual Members' amendments might be presented in **committee** in a similar way, so while **Members might table in whatever language they prefer, translation would as a matter of course only be into one or several committee working languages**.*
- *Moreover, the **EP might consider directing the Court of Justice to take account of the linguistic reality of its legislative intention**: whenever the EP adopts legislation, it is important that its political messages are clear and precise and that measures are implemented in the way they were intended. In a Union of 24 (and possibly more) official languages, it is often difficult to ensure exactly the same message in all languages. The way the Court interprets legislation would not seem to take sufficiently account of the way legislation is actually brought about today, i.e. through negotiations, as the Court attaches no specific importance to the language in which the negotiations were conducted. Parliament and Council could guide the Court in the way it interprets legislation by making explicit mention (e.g. through a recital) that negotiations were conducted in a specific language.*

### Key Action Points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Parliament could draw a **clearer distinction between use of its internal working languages**, which should be predicated on the actual needs of the institution and its Members, **and its parliamentary output**, which should be disseminated in all official languages.*
- ➔ *For example, legislative agreements reached in trilogue are regularly dealt with at committee stage in English only, where Committee members do not consider it expedient to wait for translations. One could imagine individual Members amendments might be presented in **committee** in a similar way, so while **Members might table in whatever language they prefer, translation would only be into one or several committee working languages.***
- ➔ *Parliament and Council could guide the Court in the way it interprets legislation by making explicit mention (e.g. through a recital) that negotiations were conducted in a specific language.*

### 4.3. How should the EP prepare Members to be "communication professionals"?

Already we observe a paradigm shift away from the media as sole intermediaries between politicians, politics and the public/citizens. Members are increasingly using the internet and other modern communication technologies to communicate with and respond to their voters, e.g. through social networks and blogs. Parliament is actively supporting them in these tasks e.g. by including links to their private blogs and social network pages on their web-page on the EP website.

- *To improve this process the EP could make their **official web pages more interactive**, e.g. by including a space for comments (which would however need to be moderated) to allow for **direct discussions between the MEP and his/her voters to take place on the web**.*
- *It could otherwise be envisaged, as a less time consuming option, to include the possibility of a **'twitter-wall'** during an EP event.*
- *The EP should enable communication in a more professional, quicker, clearer and appealing way primarily to the MEPs, but also to the outside world. It would help, therefore, inter alia, if the EP services (including the political groups) were to have **appropriate tools for the creation of newsletters** (for web + printing). Appropriate software could allow staff to efficiently and rapidly provide interesting and relevant information in an appealing way.*
- *Parliament should offer the **possibility of training** to those Members who want it, but above all should build the necessary infrastructure (physical and editorial) to support MEPs' own communication efforts.*
- *Conceptually, EP services should seek to marry the communications policy of the institution with the communications needs of the Members by offering a 'hub' through which MEPs can network with each other and with citizens.*
- *As Members are frequently travelling around the world to delegations or representations, **secure devices through secured suitcases** should be envisaged on top of procedural elements covered by the Safe Mission Data system in order to allow Members to retain their communication possibilities even while being 'on the move'.*

#### Key Action Points for the European Parliament:

- ➡ *Make Members' **official web pages more interactive**, to allow for **direct discussions between the MEP and his/her voters to take place on the web**.*

- *Consider the possibility of a **'twitter-wall'** during EP events.*
- *The EP should enable communication in a more professional, quicker, clearer and appealing way primarily to the MEPs, but also to the outside world.*
- *Acquire and make available **appropriate tools for the creation of state-of-the-art newsletters** (for web + printing). Appropriate software could allow staff to efficiently and rapidly provide interesting and relevant information in an appealing way.*
- *Offer the **possibility of training to those Members who want it.***
- *Offer a **'hub' through which MEPs can network** with each other and with citizens.*
- *Develop **secure devices through secured suitcases.***



#### 4.3.1. What sort of mobile ICT devices will MEPs use to communicate in the future?

Mobile, internet-enabled devices (tablets, smart phones) will become evermore powerful means of communication, using app-based interfaces and functionality. Members will expect to be able to use their own devices seamlessly with Parliament's systems and networks and to be able fully to exploit their functionalities. Parliament must accommodate this multi-device, multi-platform environment.

In general the following developments are expected:

1. Increased portability in size and weight: foldable equipment, flexible materials for touch screens.
  2. Further development of speech recognition, automatic translation or even interpretation.
  3. Merger of WiFi and mobile telecom networks towards a universal 'always online' world.
  4. Tablets and powerful smart phones.
  5. LTE communications (1000 times faster than actual networks).
- *As Parliament's work is inherently mobile, practically **all EP applications should be available on mobile devices.***
  - *Corresponding systems enabling **secure identification and digital signature** will be a must.*
  - *Members' ICT communication devices will follow the present trend and will be based on **ubiquitous computing**. They will be mobile, wireless and networked. They will allow users to be always connected to their offices, staff and voters. Members are already communicating with devices connected with WiFi, 3G, and soon 4G. These devices (mostly iPhones, iPad, and android phones and tablets) are capable of voice and video communication, internet browsing, and 'geo-location'. In the future the use of these devices will only increase.*

#### Key Action Points for the European Parliament:

- ➡ *As Parliament's work is inherently mobile, practically **all EP applications should be available on mobile devices.***
- ➡ *Corresponding systems enabling **secure identification and digital signature** will be a must.*

#### 4.3.2. Should the EP develop extra ICT training for Members?

*Yes, but the demand for extra trainings is likely to be decreasing as new generations of MEPs arrive. On the contrary, workshops with tech-savvier members might be necessary in order fully to understand the needs of early adopters.*

- An approach could be to identify Members' use of ICT, their presence in social networks, classify them accordingly and propose training where considered to be needed. A first evaluation could be envisaged in the framework of the **enhanced technical cooperation with EP political groups**.*
- Specific training for MEPs (IT, Communication, EU policies for the non-experts) should be organised, making use of both the Policy Departments' expertise and the Committee Secretariats' experience of EP practice.*
- As modern learning systems will no longer be based on classroom, session or paper presentation, this development will allow for a get-the-answer-when-you-need-it approach, where social media and fora will facilitate **knowledge exchange on a crowd-source basis**. The EP should concentrate on a facilitating role to provide the logical and physical infrastructure for these mechanisms.*
- At the same time the European Parliament should **develop applications** that will allow Members to easily use their ICT devices with a focus on the task to perform, without thinking about the tool. The aim would be **to make the technology effectively invisible** for the user.*

#### Key Action Points for the European Parliament:

- ➡ *Identify Members' use of ICT, their presence in social networks, classify them accordingly and propose training where considered, **enhance technical cooperation with EP political groups**.*
- ➡ *Provide specific training for MEPs (IT, Communication, EU policies for the non-experts) making use of both the Policy Departments' expertise and the Committee Secretariats' experience of EP practice.*
- ➡ *Develop a modern learning environment.*

### 4.3.3. Could customised search engines and targeted databases be harnessed for media monitoring and policy research?

*Global trends will put pressure on the EP to maintain appropriate and up-to-date ICT services for MEPs and parliamentary bodies, and to find innovative ways to use information and communication technologies to enhance Parliament's efficiency and visibility in a world where politics is increasingly defined by 24/7 news and social media. Both the administrative structures and the communication strategies of Parliament will likely need to be monitored and adapted in the future.*

*Considering the scope of the EP's current legislative powers — and the even wider political interests of MEPs — providing ICT-related information and communication services will always be a challenge. Yet new technologies should provide the EP with progressively better tools. The EP should explore specifically tailored search engines and databases to connect more directly with opinion makers in Europe. These tools could also be used within the EP for a variety of purposes, including policy research and policy advisory functions. The impact of the Global Open Data on every content and function should not be underestimated. A substantial part of the expertise used by Members and the Administration may be provided freely by on-line outside providers. By the same token, content provided by the EP and its members will be repackaged by a very large number of very heterogeneous actors. The new rule in the **Global Open Data** landscape seems likely to be that only providers of interesting and updated content will be able to receive and build upon contents of similar standards. The opportunities and challenges of G.O.D should be prepared at this stage by more agility with semantic technologies (data mining, capacity to communicate in conversation very sophisticated hyper-content, push function).*

- *An **Interinstitutional database for research work** should be devised and developed jointly by the EU Institutions.*
- *There is a need for **topical Research Networks** (similar to CIRCA), an increase of the EP participation in this collaborative workspace, and the creation of a common topically organised workspace between the EP and national parliaments.*
- *Parliament should increase the **usage of the IPEX database** or integrate this database with other collaborative tools to be used for exchange of information with national parliaments.*
- *The need for **real-time, targeted and localised monitoring of online conversation** is likely to grow. The technology is in its infancy, but will develop rapidly.*
- *Every Member should indeed receive directly and automatically articles of **media and research** on the issues they are following, especially when they have the role of rapporteur or shadow-rapporteur.*
- *As it is unlikely that inter-EP developments in this area will be as good as or even remotely close to the **market development** in this sector, the EP should concentrate on following these developments and harness whatever is useful as soon as the 'bleeding edge' period is over.*

### Key Action Points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Jointly develop an **Interinstitutional database for research work**.*
- ➔ *Increase EP's participation for **topical Research Networks** (similar to CIRCA) and other collaborative workspace.*
- ➔ *Support the creation of a common topically organised workspace between the EP and national parliaments.*
- ➔ *Increase the **usage of the IPEX database** or integrate this database with other collaborative tools.*
- ➔ *Follow technological development relating to **real-time, targeted and localised monitoring of online conversation**.*
- ➔ *Provide directly and automatically Members with **media and research** on the issues which they are following, especially when they have the role of rapporteur or shadow-rapporteur.*

#### 4.3.4. How can the internet allow Members to develop support networks and respond to new demands from voters?

*Arguably, Members will increasingly respond to online electorates or 'constituencies' with whom they are in direct and constant contact.*

*They will do this via a variety of networking tools, with their choices depending on their personal needs and circumstances. Inevitably, in order to manage large online networks, they will have recourse to various forms of crowd sourcing technology to receive usable input and automatic tools for outward communications.*

*The advantage of the internet network is in particular the capacity to react instantly on questions and comments. It is obviously a main tool to reach out to a wide range of citizens, to interact actively and respond directly. Internet can allow Members to develop support networks and respond to demands from voters through e-participation tools like wikis, blogs, online social networks, and in general web 2.0 applications. Internet petition websites can create a strong link between Members and their supporters. At the same time they can allow Members to receive requests from their voters and strengthen e-democracy.*

*However, the risk component of the internet is a possible event of overloading flows of information and requests, which would deprive Members of paying particular attention to individual inquiries. A key issue for Members will be how far to be personally engaged via technologies and how far to delegate to assistants.*

#### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *The practice may develop, as for the US Representatives, to distinguish between **field(net)work** activities, backed by (digital) field assistants, **social(net)work** activities on thematic specialization, and **casework** to treat individual demands.*
- ➔ *Devote more resources to work in constituency - be they digital or not - as most fieldwork and casework takes place at that level.*

#### 4.3.5. Are EP procedures and legislative content sufficiently accessible and understandable for MEPs to explain simply?

Given the increased (and in the future potentially even increasing) complexity of European legislative procedures and processes resulting thereof, user friendly communication on how legislation is effected is inevitable in any communication on Members' activities. Moreover, Parliament's legislative procedures must be considered - and explained - within the rather complex inter-institutional context. The ordinary legislative procedure (OLP) can be difficult to explain to external people ('outsiders') with little or no knowledge of the EU institutional and legislative framework.

The issue of a lack of transparency is often raised in the context of EU legislative procedures, particularly with reference to first-reading agreements. This lack of transparency is not caused simply by the lack of publicity given to the content and timing of informal trilogue negotiations but also the difficulty faced by outsiders in (re)constructing the political process from the documents and information available on the standard platforms (OEIL, Pre-lex etc.).

- *New editorial techniques like data visualisation, infographics, and interactive multimedia can be useful and will constitute a valuable service that the institution can provide to both Members and citizens.*
- *In particular, prior to a plenary vote, it is very difficult to ascertain from official parliamentary resources whether a deal has been reached with the Council. To address this, **documents could be more clearly annotated (both officially and informally)** to enable 'outsiders' to situate them better in the political process.*
- *Likewise, the EP's website should provide more general explanatory material, easily accessible from procedural databases. For example, in order to facilitate the understanding of the EP's role in the legislative procedure, the page explaining the OLP on the EP website should, in addition to the flowchart showing the procedure as a whole, contain an image or a flowchart that illustrates how the EP works in this procedure. This would make it easier for MEPs to explain to their constituents and voters what happens in the EP legislative process. Clearly, the input from the EP and the importance of the institution within the decision-making process should be stressed here.*
- *More could also be done in simplifying the way the activity of an MEP is presented on the EP website. Instead of simply listing the reports and interventions, there should first be some short explanation of what a report or a rapporteur is, or what a motion for resolution or a written declaration entails and the impact that it can have. Also, more emphasis must be put on explaining procedures, which when quantified can illustrate the activity of an MEP in the EP, such as the catch-the-eye, blue card, one-minute speeches, and interventions in committee.*
- *This approach could be complemented by internal **training for MEPs** who wish to have special guidance in how to explain the procedures in an easily understandable way.*

- *As regards legislative content, the EP's contribution to legislation is often not sufficiently visible. Currently, as the pre-Lisbon traditions still prevail to a large extent, it is still very important for Parliament to indicate where it disagrees with the Commission on legislative proposals, but more attention should be given as to how Parliament could indicate the points of disagreement with the Council.*
- *Using advanced IT solutions and exploiting **the potentials of xml in the new eParliament** project, it would be possible to provide various types of (unofficial?) parliamentary documents which, for example, could show the similarities between Parliament's negotiation mandate and any agreement ultimately reached.*
- *As regards 'amending acts', it is often extremely difficult for Members to grasp and explain the impact of opaque amending acts on basic substantive legislation.*
- *As is already practice in the US Congress, the EP secretariat could consider providing consolidations of proposed amendments to underlying acts to improve transparency of legislation.*
- *As part of its engagement in the legislative simplification endeavour, Parliament could push for an **increased use of recasts** over amending acts, while at the same time making clear that its ownership extends to the whole text.*

### Key Action Points for the European Parliament:

- *New editorial techniques like data visualisation, infographics, and interactive multimedia can be useful and will constitute a valuable service that the institution can provide to both Members and citizens.*
- *In particular, prior to a plenary vote, it is very difficult to ascertain from official parliamentary resources whether a deal has been reached with the Council. Produce more systematically annotated **documents** to enable 'outsiders' to situate them better in the political process.*
- *Likewise, the EP's website should provide more general explanatory material, easily accessible from procedural databases. For example, in order to facilitate the understanding of the EP's role in the legislative procedure, the page explaining the OLP on the EP website should show the procedure as a whole through easy to read flow charts showing the procedure as a whole, containing an image or a flowchart that illustrates how the EP works in this procedure. This would make it easier for MEPs to explain to their constituents and voters what happens in the EP legislative process. Clearly, the input from the EP and the importance of the institution within the decision-making process should be stressed here.*



- ➔ *Provide internal **training for MEPs who wish to have special guidance in how to explain the procedures in an easily understandable way.***
- ➔ *As regards legislative content, the EP's contribution to legislation is often not sufficiently visible. Currently, as the pre-Lisbon traditions still prevail to a large extent, it is still very important for Parliament to indicate where it disagrees with the Commission on legislative proposals, but **more attention should be given as to how Parliament could indicate the points of disagreement with the Council.***
- ➔ *Exploit **the potentials of xml in the new eParliament project.***
- ➔ *Parliament could push for an **increased use of recasts** over amending acts, while at the same time making clear that its ownership extends to the whole text.*

## 4.4. How can we make legislation/ communication involve EU Citizens?

*To make EU Citizens feel more involved in EU legislation, a better understanding of Parliament's role in the decision making processes needs to be provided. At present the European Parliament is not fully able to explain in an understandable way to the average EU Citizen the often intricate ways of law-making in the European Union. The 'legislative observatory', for instance, makes procedures and content accessible to experts, however not to citizens.*

*Citizens thus firstly need to be aware of and informed about the functioning of the EP, its democratic acting on behalf of the citizens and the impact of its actions on citizens' life. In this case again, when the work of the EP is being transmitted to the outside world, the message should be shorter and simpler, with concrete facts on the EP's work and the direct influence on citizens' daily living conditions.*

*Providing some key findings of impact assessment may prove a great value for citizens, NGOs, committed groups interested in one element of legislation.*

### 4.4.1. How can the EP improve its ability to explain EU legislative processes from conception to conclusion?

The objective of 'explaining legislative processes from conception to conclusion' may be over-ambitious for all sections of the population. A target-group approach is likely to be more effective. In view of the highly complex EU legislative processes, Parliament should rather focus on the issues at stake and the legislative output than on the process. In general, communication from Members and the EP to citizens remains important but will not be sufficient. With various interactive tools, citizens will be able to question, express demands and give input during a legislative process. This will put a lot of pressure on Members to manage the input and interaction, and hence a demand for appropriate tools.

The consensual (cross-party) approach the Parliament often takes in order to be able to get things through against the Council makes it difficult to 'sell' interesting and controversial debates to the public. Parliament's political nature in view of its enhanced role and powers under the Lisbon Treaty has to become even more visible and take on greater significance. To this aim, awareness on political debates and differences at both committee and Plenary stage needs to be raised, as already outlined in Parliament's updated Communication Strategy. There is room of improvement by showing the possible and concrete impact in the field and on citizens' lives as well as the political debate itself.

- *Parliament should develop a shared understanding with the other EU institutions of the **usage of social media**, and then use it to design **courses on communication** (internal and external), as well as devise communication campaigns using different channels (Internet, TV, Schools) centred on the added value of the EU in the Member States.*

- *Basic principles of good communication like **simplicity, relevance and focus on persons/actions** are more relevant than ever to reach the broad audience of non-EU specialists. Jargon, focus on procedure and avoidance of controversial perspectives are potential obstacles to effective communication.*
- *In a complex environment with fragmenting political forces and families and with the emergence of a new populism, it is important that the **EP continues to communicate on values**, translated through legislation. In the future, probably unstable, political context, the institution should underline its role as a defender of human rights and other matters of permanent value.*
- *On a local level, the **EPIOs** need to take advantage of their national, regional and local networks to increase the outreach and better communicate EU legislation to stakeholders.*
- *A strong tool to increase transparency are **the webstreaming facilities** (of Plenary sessions, committee meetings etc.). This could be further developed e.g. with interactive options to engage citizens and on-screen links to e.g. Legislative Observatory. It could be envisaged to further elaborate the search options, finding swiftly Members' moment of intervention and the specific topic of interest being debated.*
- *New **online communications techniques** have a clear role to play (multimedia, infographics, etc.) as do all the direct access/transparency techniques already used by the EP (webstreaming, open data). A good possibility online could also be a '**curated**' newsflow, whereby editors would assemble on a quasi real-time basis all sources of information on a legislative procedure as it happens. The result would be an aggregation of primary and secondary level content, interpreted and explained by the editor (intermediation).*
- *The EP should favour putting Members closely involved in procedures in touch with citizens directly via social networks.*
- *Tools should be in place to cater for very different audience needs. It is difficult to imagine that a broad public will follow lengthy legislative procedures closely throughout, so low-engagement, simplifying tools should be deployed alongside **specialist mechanisms** such as the legislative observatory.*
- *Additionally new tools should be developed **to extract information** from more specialist tools to feed information flows for more general audiences.*
- *ICT technology should enable a closer collaboration also with other international institutions, national parliaments, etc. **Common virtual workspaces** will be needed, although growth in this type of collaboration does not seem to advance very quickly for political and practical reasons.*
- *We should promote the **dissemination of information on Europe via internet pin-boards** (simple fact sheets with permanent updates).*

## Key Action Points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Basic principles of good communication like **simplicity, relevance and focus on persons/actions** are more relevant than ever to reach the broad audience of non-EU specialists. Jargon, focus on procedure and avoidance of controversial perspectives are potential obstacles to effective communication.*
- ➔ *In a complex environment with fragmenting political forces and families and with the emergence of a new populism, it is important that the **EP continues to communicate on values**, translated through legislation.*
- ➔ ***EPIOs** need to take advantage of their national, regional and local networks to increase the outreach.*
- ➔ *Use more **the web streaming facilities** (of Plenary sessions, committee meetings etc.).*
- ➔ *Tools should be in place to cater for very different audience needs. Develop both simplifying tools, such as internet pin-boards etc. alongside with **mechanisms for specialists such as the legislative observatory**.*
- ➔ *We should promote the **dissemination of information on Europe via internet pin-boards** (simple fact sheets with permanent updates).*
- ➔ *Additionally new tools should be developed **to extract information**.*
- ➔ *ICT technology should enable a closer collaboration also with other international institutions, national parliaments, etc. **Common virtual workspaces** will be needed.*

#### 4.4.2. Can the EP involve those who draft and produce EU legislation more in the process of explaining and communicating European legislative output?

*The plurality of point of views on legislation should be made available to the public at the different stage of the political process. **A consolidated political statement** of the main political groups on the text finally voted would prove very useful.*

*The Parliament should become able to disseminate information on the implementation of legislation adopted at national (and even regional) level. Comments should be provided on the **outcome of comitology**. Information should be fully available on **correlation tables** and on any possible reservation made at local level.*

*The possibility of actively participating in the legislative process, instead of being passive receivers, makes citizens more interested in proactively being informed about topics that can directly impact their lives.*

*Organisations are being developed to master the technology of e-polling (computer polling). An opinion can therefore be arrived at by Members of Parliament thanks to the results of e-lobbying and e-polling.*

*A specific server with menus by subject (e.g. wikis) and by lobbying and marketing organisation (unions, associations, consortia, etc., that are active in the 'cloud) could be needed in order to practice e-lobbying and e-polling.*

#### 4.4.3. Could customised search engines and targeted databases be harnessed by the EP for media monitoring throughout the legislative process?

Global trends will undoubtedly place pressure on the EP to maintain appropriate and up-to-date ICT services for MEPs and parliamentary bodies, and to find innovative ways to use information and communication technologies to enhance Parliament's efficiency and visibility in a world where politics is increasingly defined by 24/7 news and social media. Both the administrative structures and the communication strategies of Parliament will likely need to be monitored and adapted in the future.

- *The EP should indeed explore **specifically tailored search engines and databases** to connect more directly with opinion makers in Europe. These tools could also be used within the EP for a variety of purposes, including policy research and policy advisory functions.*
- *The creation of searchable databases will make it possible to **monitor the development of a specific legislative dossier** throughout the legislative procedure.*
- *Externalising the **media monitoring activities of the Information Offices**, while developing a special interface through which news summaries and clippings can be stored, would allow the creation of a searchable database containing all the relevant news from all the Member States, accessible at any time.*

#### Key Action Points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ ***Specifically tailored search engines and databases** to connect more directly with opinion makers in Europe.*
- ➔ *Improve databases to make it possible to **monitor the development of a specific legislative dossier** throughout the legislative procedure.*
- ➔ *Externalise the **media monitoring activities of the Information Offices**, while developing a special interface through which news summaries and clippings can be stored and be accessible at any time.*

#### 4.4.4. Can new ICT developments enable the EP to reach specific groups of voters and facilitators with targeted information?

Yes, but in order to achieve this, more should be done to develop and/or adapt specific e-voting and other suitable IT solutions, as well as a much deeper integrated involvement of Parliament in the different social networks, allowing for the planning and implementation of **targeted campaigns**.

- *Powerful, local, real-time **social media monitoring tools** would allow for the identification of niche groups and influencers. This needs to be combined with resources necessary to interact directly with the groups and individuals thus identified and/or to create the connection with relevant MEPs.*
- *No new ICT developments are necessary to achieve this, as this is already done widely by commercial players on the internet that manage presentation of their materials via user profiles, behaviour, location, etc. However, some **software for CMS should be created and/or adapted** to our specific needs.*
- ***Personalisation technology** can enable the European Parliament to reach specific groups of voters and facilitators. This can be based on:*
  - *User's profile: the user inserts information that allows the program to deliver the information which is relevant for that particular profile;*
  - *User's behaviour: the behaviour of a user navigating a site is monitored in order to provide or suggest tailor-made information;*
  - ***Collaborative filtering:** the target user is defined by an algorithm that calculates his or her interests based on the interests of similar users.*

#### Key Action Points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Acquiring and maintaining powerful, local, **real-time social media monitoring tools** would allow for the identification of niche groups and influencers.*
- ➔ ***Create or adapt software for CMS.***
- ➔ ***Be a frontrunner in personalisation technologies** (user's profile, user's behaviour, collaborative filtering).*



#### 4.4.5. How should the document management evolve in order to ensure conservation of both legislative and non legislative documents and information?

*Preservation of all kinds of documents in a permanent, useful and cost-effective electronic form means that the entire document chain needs to be planned and implemented with both short- and long-term use in mind. Documents should be created from their 'electronic birth' in standards-based formats and with appropriate tools to allow their archiving in electronic systems.*

*Yet already today, finding information is no longer an issue. The real challenge is to select the information that can be found regarding quantity, reliability and other criteria for the specific purpose. Conservation is only useful in the context of future use but it may be in the very far future so compatibility **along different generations of ICT technology is a must**. Of course, IT evolves rapidly as does media storage. The question is whether the choice of media storage medium in year 'n' will still be valid and 'readable' in year 'n' + 10, and even 'n' + 20.*

*The **EP's Electronic Register of References** (ERR) is a facilitator of access to European Parliament documents. This should be taken into account when developing new IT technologies for creating and preserving documents (especially if an evolution towards a paperless Parliament is considered). When creating a document, it is essential that all the references are included so that the citizens can find it and also all the related documents in the ERR. Moreover, documents should be in an open format, directly 'exploitable' by the citizen. In addition, a document stored without added value (such as metadata, inventory, and classification) is of much less interest.*

- *As regards texts, produced as **part of the legislative process** (such as draft reports, amendments, final committee reports negotiation mandates, plenary texts adopted etc.):*
  - *The notion of 'document' management should be replaced/supplemented by that of 'content' management, so, for example, an individual Member's amendments could be stored individually in relation to the legislative proposal, rather than in long documents covering all Members' amendments across an entire legislative text. This would enable far more dynamic retrieval by the citizen: by clicking on an article in the Commission proposal or final legislative text, it would be possible to retrieve all EP content effecting/trying to effect a change to that article (individual Member's amendments, negotiation mandate etc.) and compare each stage with a final outcome.*
  - *Legislative information (widely construed, including e.g. press releases briefings etc.) should be more clearly linked to, and retrievable from, platforms dealing with legislative texts/procedures (e.g. by COD number) as it is already done in the ERR.*
- *An **extensive document management and archiving strategy**, as exists in the European Commission, would help deciding systematically on conservation according to a classification of documents. In the opinion of the House of European History, conservation should go much beyond official documents, but include also, as a matter of example, **archives of personalities** (EP Members and officials) involved in important decision-making*

*procedures, in order to avoid losing precious historical documents. The House of European History team could contribute in developing criteria for such documentation and archiving strategy.*

- *Conservation should evolve to take better consideration of **audiovisual materials as well as digital content**.*

### Key Action Points for the European Parliament:

- ➡ *As regards texts, produced as **part of the legislative process** (such as draft reports, amendments, final committee reports negotiation mandates, plenary texts adopted etc.):*
  - *Replace the notion of 'document' management by that of 'content' management to enable far more dynamic retrieval by the citizen.*
  - *Link more clearly legislative information (widely construed, including e.g. press releases briefings etc.) to platforms dealing with legislative texts/procedures (e.g. by COD number).*
- ➡ *Conceptualize and implement **extensive and comprehensive document management and archiving strategy**, as exists in the European Commission, develop **archives of personalities** (EP Members and officials) involved in important decision making procedures, in order to avoid precious historical documents to get lost.*
- ➡ *Involve the House of European History team.*
- ➡ *Conservation to take better consideration of **audiovisual materials as well as digital content** on changing supports.*

#### 4.4.6. What potential synergies exist for the EP to work with other international institutions, national parliaments and regional assemblies in communicating campaign messages based on shared transnational policy objectives?

Synergies exist, so do shared transnational policy objectives. Whereas these should be highlighted to promote the idea of shared values and European integration, EP's added-value should always be transmitted simultaneously, in the form of information on EP's impact. The inter-institutional dynamics at the EU level often set the EP in opposition to the Council (see the example of the FTT, the development of own resources or other legislation). In reality, the message that the EP sends in a given time X would be different from that of the EC (see ACTA - one of the greatest success stories of the EP when it comes to 'listening to the citizen' or 'projecting its influence' through the most influential media outlets all over the world) or the Council. **Yet, the question remains if the European Parliament does not have its own communication niche to fill (brand to build) in the future world when democratic accountability is getting scarcer but remains in high demand by citizens.**

- *Special attention could however be paid to **national parliaments**, which are part of the EU decision making process. One could think of developing synergies when a national debate is starting about an issue which is in reality the result of EU legislation. It would be interesting to see Members from the country taking part in debates in their national parliaments regarding European issues.*

Synergies could also be found in jointly communicating the value of parliamentary democracy. Here are some actions that could possibly be undertaken:

- *National parliaments could be a vector of our communication campaigns and should be a preferential partner of the EPIOs.*
- *Networking with press/ communications departments should be enhanced.*
- *Joint debates of MEPs and MPs in different media platforms could be generalised.*

On political level the Inter-institutional Group of Information (IGI) defines a joint communication strategy and inter-institutional communication priorities on which the three institutions communicate. On operational level the main co-operation takes place with the Commission: DGs COMM of EP and EC set plans, monitor and evaluate actions and organise joint working parties to develop these actions; on the local level the Information Offices and the Commission Representation (ECRs) manage daily work in the member states and adapt guidelines to local circumstances. The European Public Spaces (EPS) are a concrete example of a project jointly run by the EPIOs and the ECRs in selected locations with the aim of encouraging dialogue and democratic debate by creating public spaces and interacting with society, with an emphasis on politics, culture, education and civil society. Currently there are 17 EPS operating in EU capitals.

### Key Action Points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Establish national parliaments as a vector of our communication campaigns and as preferential partners of the EPIOs.*
- ➔ *Generalize joint debates of MEPs and MPs in different media platforms.*

## 4.5. What kind of premises and facilities does the EP need in the future given further technological change?

Changing workspace concepts is an area where many studies have been carried out, dating back to the impact of IT in 1970 (Palo Alto, 'paperless office', 'ubiquitous computer', etc.). While some of the trends predicted in these studies were achieved (and sometimes went far beyond), others were reversed. If one were to simply extrapolate current trends, it is likely that by 2025 sufficient technical progress might make physical presence less necessary for some tasks and more needed for others (direct consultancy, face-to-face negotiations, actual meetings of digital communities and working groups), leading in consequence to a more intensive use of tele-working and teleconferencing but also, possibly, to a more important need of digitally equipped meeting spaces.

Technological change might thus facilitate a **certain 'dematerialisation' of the parliamentary activity** (and of the assistance to the latter), provided the necessary confidentiality is ensured. Thus it should allow a diminishing of the logistic constraints if the proper tools (cloud computing, knowledge management) and working methods are developed. This dematerialisation of the parliamentary activity might well be **politically beneficial to the Members**, who could be more available in their constituency.

The advent of **cloud computing** in this context is an opportunity both externally as well as internally.

Externally it means flexible use of resources and could imply also significant savings. The US government shifted [usa.gov](http://usa.gov) (with about 100.000 daily unique visitors) on cloud recently in order to manage flexibly the peak demands (especially during natural catastrophes, increases of unemployment) by outsourcing the server power and saving costs (80-90% of overall costs for ICT infrastructure). This makes sense mainly for smaller structures with lack of resources or large companies or executive agencies that deliver services to number of citizens/clients (internal or external). Here all will depend on whether the EP wants to become a hub of information and interaction for citizens. This also implies taking into account necessary security risks (services are outsourced to a private operator) that have to be put in check.

A second aspect - the internal cloud management - opens up the use of a number of collaborative tools, plus for deploying them across a number of terminals (PC, tablet, phone, computer, irrespective of the operating system or platform) indiscriminately, with minimum need for adaptation. It can also usefully streamline the information directly to the clients according to their interest (e.g. seamless synchronization of all committee meeting documents) and help with the genuine advent of paperless work.

It goes without saying that these methods require powerful data processing and fast communication systems that are not yet sufficiently available today but will be in 2025 if current trends continue.

Quality of the work place is likely to remain similar and to retain a high level of legitimacy: the over-crowding, which resulted mainly from the enlargement and the strengthening of the EP, is a challenge that needs to be addressed in offices, in elevators as well as in common spaces, so that every one can benefit from a peaceful, well ventilated, well lighted workspace where adequate connectivity, privacy (security of documents) and meeting space is to be found. It remains too early to decide if new technologies will definitively abolish the need for individual offices in favour of generalised open spaces. Flexibility of use will have to remain a core concept for interior architecture and office design. Experimental work spaces might be provided for units and teams to decide, when possible, the most relevant layout for their work. The introduction of innovation should not create new divides according to positions in the hierarchy, seniority or status. Allocation and organisation of space/connectivity should be transparent and based on job requirements.

*The present over-crowding of many central spaces in Brussels and Strasbourg is not sustainable for security, health and work comfort reasons. It does not provide a dignified image of the European Parliament. **More precise functional zoning** as well as diversified security and access requirements may help alleviate this issue.*

*Despite the success of telework, **proximity is still granted with a strong value added when interactions are very frequent, not to be fully planned in advance, and high quality concerning content and output** (consultancy, negotiation). In that context, **bringing Members and their immediate collaborators closer together** (be they assistants, political group administrators or EP officials) may lead to substantial untapped productivity gains. This applies more specifically to chairs and coordinators, who, in other legislative bodies, are usually immediately surrounded by their support team(s).*

*Proximity between the different sites of the EP in Brussels, Strasbourg and Luxembourg has to be reviewed in the same perspective. The issue of three places of work for the EP, a situation that comes with environmental, social and symbolic costs in a period of scarce resource, cannot remain a taboo for the political leadership of the Institution. The earlier political directions are set, the easier it will be to phase-in and phase-out changes.*

*The Parliament may derive the best of its close relations with other institutions present in the same working places to optimize the concentration of activity as well as the user friendly and EMAS complying management of its different sites.*

The possibility of *telework* from home will create new challenges. The EP services may have to get ready to be involved in advising on the proper organisation of private home working spaces of Members, staff, contractors... Measures to make people feel 'at home' when they have no fixed workplace should be considered and their effect measured. If *telework* and flexitime are to become commonplace there will be an increased need for flexible workplaces, meeting rooms of different sizes and state-of-the-art videoconferencing facilities.

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Continue to invest in quality of the workplace (acceptable light density, space, privacy, proximity, connectivity, availability of services).*
- ➔ *Develop functional zoning. Regroup staff around prime users.*
- ➔ *Provide more meeting space for members.*
- ➔ *Develop assistance for offices at home supporting teleworking.*
- ➔ *Revise the issue of three workplaces.*



#### 4.5.1. What will be the impact on the provision of catering and other services - including security, mobility and healthcare?

In using services available on the premises of the EP, MEPs, officials and visitors will expose behaviours that reflect profound change in the current social, demographic and economic situation resulting from the explosion of **access to information** and **increased awareness**. Among the most important concerns in 2025 will be work efficiency, well being and improvement of health, and slowing aging.<sup>39</sup>

Parliament's future catering services must duly reflect the changes which the Institution will face in the coming decades. Against the background of this study, this means in particular that the catering services must become much more flexible and move away from the classical notion of 'collective catering'. In that sense the offer (service providers, catering outlets) as well as the availability (choice, opening hours) must be considerably diversified and be ready to adapt quickly to individual needs.

Consequently, also the architectural concepts for areas where food and drinks are being consumed (canteens, restaurants and bars) need to reflect the increased demand of flexibility and the changes which come along with the expected fusion of different activities (for example: eating while working). In addition also the technical installations (kitchens) and the layouts and designs of the future canteens and restaurants need to take the notion of flexibility and the fusion of activities into account. Also, installations for take away food and catering possibilities at late hours need to be foreseen. This also calls for fundamental changes in the communication of the restaurant services with the clients.

When managing provision of on and off premises services the EP could use as a guideline the Europe 2020 strategy on smart, inclusive and sustainable growth, and set an example for national legislators and administrations on how to implement it in practice.

In terms of catering services this could mean:

- *in the smart growth bracket: **more flexible services** reflecting flexi-time, prolonged or modified working hours;*
- *in the inclusiveness bracket: shifting away from single multinational provider towards a multitude of SME providers that will open up economic possibilities to **SME service providers with a focus on quality of service and respect for social inclusion criteria;***
- *in the sustainability bracket: **more informed and health conscious options with precise information on ingredients** that would allow customers to follow their individual dietary programmes or embark on programmes offered by particular service providers in an electronically enabled way; **monitoring if offer of service providers meets sustainability criteria; elimination of high sugar beverages and snacks***

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<sup>39</sup> Briefing note prepared for European Parliament's Committee on Internal Market and Consumer Protection on "Trends and key policy issues in the area of consumer protection 2009-2019,  
<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/document/activities/cont/201108/20110825ATT25280/20110825ATT25280EN.pdf>

*currently widely available in automatic distributors and **replacing them with sustainable options adapted to more flexible working time**;*

- *The ever-growing attention to well-being and natural living will have to be taken into account when making decisions on catering and healthcare (food and beverage products from sustainable sources, contribution to CO2 reduction, fair trade aspects, reduction of food waste as well as the responsible way of disposing of the food waste).*

**Security services** have always been ancillary to the main functions of Parliament and should retain their important, albeit complementary, role in the future.

Progress in computerisation and digitalisation will certainly affect new spheres of Parliament's activities and one can only speculate on where such developments will be by 2025. It will certainly call for greater synergy between security in its traditional, 'physical' sense, and information security, particularly the IT or cyber security component. These two domains will continue to become even more entwined, therefore making the appropriate administrative reorganisation of those Parliament services concerned essential.

Other security challenges facing Parliament within the next ten to fifteen years concern those of mobility and access to Parliament's premises. Security will be enhanced with new high performance control equipment at the entrances of buildings. New technologies for recognition of persons and vehicles may be developed to further increase security at all points of entry. Such technology will most probably be based on biometrical data, therefore entailing issues related to data protection. As a result, a profound reflection will be essential on how best to balance effective and necessary security measures with what could be considered acceptable to the institution's end-users.

- ***Cyber security** needs to be improved, in order to create secure access to data. The issue will be particularly important if teleworking is widely used and when mobile devices are increasingly used.*
- *Health and IT services should ensure that **colleagues with a disability** can work properly. To this end, flexible working hour schemes and teleworking need to be encouraged, and solutions developed to facilitate remote cooperation.*
- ***Teleconferences**, with Skype or similar services, would provide one solution; another might be '**assembly**' days, when all the staff of one DG are present at the EP. These days could be organised in rotation in order to optimise the use of facilities, such as offices, the canteen and the parking garage. If a significant number of staff work via teleworking, then other services could be downsized.*
- *Administrative aspects of the currently available **health insurance facility** seem outdated and involve heavy administrative burdens during periods of illness.*
- *A revolution in the approach to personal mobility, caused by growing petrol prices and lagging alternative fuel solutions will possibly **reduce the need for car parking space**, although this could happen only in the long-term. This will result in more agreements with local public transport companies, as well as initiatives to encourage other personal mobility options, such as **car-sharing schemes**, with the vehicle made available and maintained by the Institution.*

### Key Action Points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ Create **more flexible services** reflecting flexi-time, prolonged or modified working hours.
- ➔ Shift away from single multinational provider towards a multitude of SME providers that will open up economic possibilities to **SME service providers with stronger focus on quality of service and respect of social inclusion criteria under cost-efficiency constraints.**
- ➔ Develop an even **more informed and health conscious offer with precise information on ingredients** that would allow customers to exert their freedom of choice and follow, if they wish so, their individual dietary programmes.
- ➔ **Improve dramatically cyber security** in order to create secure access to data. The issue will be particularly important if teleworking is widely used and when mobile devices are increasingly used.
- ➔ Ensure through cooperation between health and IT services that **colleagues with a disability** can work properly, with flexible working hour schemes and teleworking and new solutions to facilitate remote cooperation.
- ➔ **Accompany telework with teleconferences and 'assembly days'.**
- ➔ Rethink some administrative aspects of the currently available **health insurance.**
- ➔ Develop agreements with local public transport companies, as well as initiatives to encourage different personal mobility options, such as **car-sharing schemes**, with vehicles made available and maintained by the Institution.

#### 4.5.2. How will buildings change between now and 2025, and how can one make good use of it to rearrange the working organisation?

It is essential to answer the question ‘which will be the new technologies in the field of buildings and the new methods of work in the future?’ in order to give an estimation on the possible developments of the buildings occupied by the European Parliament in the next decade. However, several key parameters with major impact on buildings change have been identified, namely:

##### **The activities of the European Parliament**

The evolution of the infrastructures will depend on:

- a. *The political activity* (the accession of new Member states; the new responsibilities of the EP; the growth in the number of Members, assistants and staffs numbers);
- b. *The places of work* (the choice of the seat of the EP: a seat and two places of work or a cyber-parliament; mobility in places of work where the infrastructure is the size of a small town);
- c. The importance put on constituency work as the offices there can be considered as EPIOs or EPLOs as work places of the European Parliament

##### **Infrastructure ownership**

The EP will continue to own its real estate resources. The ‘sell and lease back’ policy is a possible choice in major operations.

##### **Building renovation**

The infrastructure must be gradually renovated and adapted to the needs of the Institution. In order to achieve this purpose, a long-term multi-annual plan should be developed starting now. Experience in this area shows that users do not have a long-term vision. Requirements are usually expressed during the previous year which currently offers no prospect of planning building policy for the long term.

The necessary budgetary resources should be allocated to the renovation in accordance with the long-term multi-annual plan.

The renovation of buildings will block a part of the building stock; the authorities should thus be aware that there will be a need for buffer buildings.

##### **Infrastructure as a communication tool to citizens**

A choice has to be made between the Parliament as a public place or as a secure location. An increase in the number of "Houses of Europe" all over Europe is foreseeable notably in the offices in important regional cities of the Member States.

## New technologies

It is already clear that technological developments will have a very strong influence in terms of office areas, mainly because of the decrease in the size of computer equipment (and therefore of furniture and offices), electronic exchanges (less paper and therefore less space for storage and archiving), increasing the use of videoconferencing systems, etc.

According to the **EU 2020 targets**, primary energy consumption in the EU should be reduced by 20% compared to projections. In order to reach this target, i.a. public buildings will have to comply with certain energy efficiency standards. The EP has committed itself i.a. to stimulating the efficient use of energy, water and paper. Although the EP obtained the Environmental Management System (EMAS) - Certification in the past, it might well be that the energy efficiency standards of its buildings will have to be increased in the future. Refurbishments of existing buildings, e.g. better isolation, might become necessary.

- *In this context it should be noted that the possibility to open windows and to get some fresh air while working should be maintained as an important element of working efficiency and personal comfort in the offices. Also, a maximum of natural lightning should be ensured and windows should be kept as big as possible. Outdoor noise should be kept to a minimum and efficient noise isolation between offices should allow for maximum concentration. 'Greening' of the work places (and their surroundings) in terms of plants, trees and flowers, should also be a priority.*
- *Buildings should be multifunctional. Meeting rooms will, of course, remain meeting rooms, but office space needs to become more flexible. Open plan offices would allow teleworking colleagues to work while present in the EP. These offices will have to be purpose-built, with the appropriate lighting, acoustic protection and aeration.*
- *The staff restaurant should be flexible in size, so that parts of the kitchen, the till area and the eating areas can be added or removed according to the business of the day; this will allow energy to be saved on calmer days.*
- *More video-conferencing facilities are needed. Some underused public areas may be devoted to this. In general, underused public areas — mostly wide corridors, some lacking natural light — should be reduced as much as possible.*
- *The staircases should be opened as much as possible, just as they are in schools, to reduce the use of lifts, saving energy and money and making staff fitter. (Cardiac diseases can be prevented simply by using the stairs regularly.) At the moment, multiple staircases in a number of buildings are accessed only through two fire doors, which effectively hinders colleagues from using the staircases.*
- *Energy savings contracting needs to be done for all buildings. New buildings should be planned with natural ventilation in order to reduce the use of fossil energy for cooling on hot days. New and old buildings should also use rain water to flush the toilets. One further possibility is the installation of green roofs — perhaps even with rooftop gardens producing fresh vegetables for the EP's restaurants.*

### Key Action Points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Maintain the possibility to open windows and to get some fresh air while working.*
- ➔ *Favour solutions offering a maximum of natural lightning.*
- ➔ *Enhance efficient noise isolation from outside and between offices.*
- ➔ *Introduce more flexible staff restaurants, so that parts of the kitchen, the till area and the eating areas can be added or removed according to the business of the day; this will allow energy to be saved on calmer days.*
- ➔ *More video-conferencing facilities.*
- ➔ *Make the staircases more attractive.*
- ➔ *Develop energy savings contracting in a spirit of innovation.*

#### 4.5.3. Is it feasible for the EP to reduce its number of working locations and to concentrate facilities into one primary area of physical and virtual activity?

The present economic climate, coupled with concerns about CO2 emissions, might ensure that this concept becomes a reality in the very near future. As mentioned before, technological developments (decrease in the size of computer equipment, electronic exchanges), new working methods (common workspaces, telecommuting, video conferencing) as well as new contractual relations between the EP and its officials and other contract staff (work from home) will decrease the office space necessary for users of its own infrastructure. Adequate teleconference and video-conference equipment should further diminish the need for travel between sites.

On the other hand, the impact of a more active social networking by Members may increase the need for meeting spaces, as usually people part of digital communities or workshops are eager to meet face to face at a certain point. The same need may arise from more interaction with other key legislators and for an increased role of Members in policy networks in pre-legislative phases. Scrutiny, inquiry functions may also require additional specific meeting spaces.

- *The future working space must therefore reflect these requirements both through the general design of working areas (intelligent and individual open-space solutions for different units depending on the character of the work done by the unit/ DG and combining the joint working areas with small private places for more individual work) as well as the furniture and its layout.*
- *At the same time, Members and staff will wish to have a certain amount of privacy and personal effects attached to their working locations, another trend which must be reflected in the future policy for office space and furniture.*
- *Develop compelling solutions for the premises which the EP would leave behind. If it were to reduce or recalibrate its present workplaces a research facility or university on the model of MIT (the Massachusetts Institute of Technology) — an 'EIT' (a European Institute of Technology), among others — come to mind.*

#### Key Action Points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Change working space and working areas according to new requirements.*
- ➔ *At the same time, Members and staff will wish to have a certain amount of privacy and personal effects attached to their working locations, another trend which must be reflected in the future policy for office space and furniture.*
- ➔ *Develop compelling solutions for the premises which the EP would leave behind. If it were to reduce or recalibrate its present workplaces, a research facility or university on the model of MIT (the Massachusetts Institute of Technology) — an 'EIT' (a European Institute of Technology), among others — come to mind.*

#### 4.5.4. What will be the material, infrastructure, security and technical requirements for new buildings, particularly if "hot desking" is considered as an option?

As regards new buildings, in the future the EP could consider whether, unlike today, each building could be 'reserved' for an exclusive EP activity. Nowadays, EP follows a 'mixed' approach for its premises. In other words, each building can be used for different purposes. This marks the EP's specific nature, but also raises security concerns, which will be tackled by means of the 'Zoning' concept.

For new buildings, the main requirements in terms of infrastructure can be described as follows:

##### **Intelligent and accessible buildings**

The current trends see the advent of 'intelligent buildings', where IT technologies are used to control the built environment in order to optimise energy savings while offering users a high level of comfort. To support the concept of 'intelligent building' and its holistic approach to infrastructure, security and building services, new IT networks and architectures, capable of handling the increased amount of data required by these processes, will be needed.

Furthermore, the EP should continue to implement for its new premises the concept of 'Design for all', in order to make them accessible to people with limited mobility, or impaired sight or hearing.

##### **Energy performance**

The EP must be an example in the implementation of innovation in real estate development, reducing its energy needs so as to reduce its environmental impact.

Existing buildings will achieve better energy efficiency by means of new technical installations and new materials for the building structure capable of reducing thermal exchange. The permanent reduction of the carbon footprint will remain an important goal.

It must be noted that new information and communication technologies have an important impact on energy consumption.

##### **Environment-friendly infrastructure**

Respect for the environment is no longer a question of communication but a way of thinking and working, shared by all stakeholders. Consequently, the EMAS policy is likely to continue in a more intensive way. As a result, more environment-friendly and low-carbon footprint materials will be used and technical installations will be less polluting.

Building users should work differently by adapting their activities (i.e. waste management to be included in all contracts for the supply of Directorates-General and Political Groups).



## Hot-desking

If sharing offices (hot-desking) is thought to be an option, a thorough study on the design of workspaces is essential. Indeed, a workspace consisting of self-service stations must be designed to ensure ‘acoustic autonomy’ for each worker, an appropriate level of confidentiality, to avoid unexpected disturbance of persons and allow some sense of ‘ownership’ of the place of work. In this context, the influence of factors such as acoustic capabilities, phonic and ease of maintenance of the flooring, walls and ceilings, furniture, air conditioning, heating and lighting, must necessarily be taken into consideration. Otherwise, a negative impact in terms of cost of functioning and maintenance and a possible additional stress for users might be unavoidable consequences.

The concept of ‘hot desking’ in its current sense should not entail any major issues for what is traditionally defined by ‘physical’ security. However should ‘teleworking’ be considered as a viable option for Parliament, information security and in particular its IT or cyber security component will be to ensuring that all connections between Parliament and workstations located outside the premises are safe.

### Key Action Points for the European Parliament under precise budget constraints:

- ➔ *Intelligent and accessible buildings with full up-to-date connectivity everywhere.*
- ➔ *Increase dramatically energy performance everywhere according to front running standards already to be applied in new buildings.*
- ➔ *Prepare for hot-desking that is to accompany the growth of telework.*

#### 4.5.5. How can new technologies improve the EP workplace and working conditions - and produce cost savings, particularly in the area of energy efficiency?

Mobility inside the buildings and between working sites will be easier, as the working post will not be connected to the working medium any more. As a consequence, there will be more remote work/teleworking and the working space will be more multi-functional.

- Video-conference technology and remote or automatic interpretation will change the use and shape of meeting rooms.
- The shift in the working medium from paper to computers continues and the use of paper will decline significantly during the coming years. The consequences will be less space needed for paper filing and archiving and greater capacity for computer storage.
- Increasing the energy efficiency of buildings will result in cost savings that will be proportional to energy costs. Wide use of information and communication technologies in intelligent buildings will increase productivity.

#### Key Action Points for the European Parliament:

- ➡ *Video-conference technology and remote interpretation to change the use and shape of meeting rooms.*
- ➡ *Shift swiftly in the working medium from paper to digital documents in most fields related to administration. The consequences will be less space needed for paper filing and archiving and greater capacity for computer storage.*
- ➡ *Increasing the energy efficiency of buildings.*

#### 4.5.6. How will institutional and technological change impact on MEPs' activities and those of their private offices?

*These and other ICT related questions have been raised and covered by the study 'MEP 2025: Preparing the Future Work Environment for Members of the European Parliament'<sup>40</sup> commissioned by the Policy Department for Budgetary Affairs, for Vice-President Rainer Wieland on behalf of the Bureau [of the European Parliament]:*

- *Members will use every new development to their advantage without always taking into account the possible long-term consequences from the point of view of security, continuity, confidentiality, etc. It will be the Secretariat's task to ensure a correct use of new tools. **There is need for a common approach steered at the central level** with the highest level of political backing.*
- *The changes that will be adopted in relation to the development of new technologies and new ways of working will enable **better design and distribution of the office space among Members, staff under their direct supervision and EP staff.***

#### Key Action Points for the European Parliament:

- ➡ *Develop **a common approach steered at the central level.***
- ➡ *The changes that will be adopted in relation to the development of new technologies and new ways of working will enable **better design and distribute the office space among Members, staff under their direct supervision and EP staff.***

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<sup>40</sup> See at: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/fr/studiesdownload.html?languageDocument=EN&file=74051>

#### 4.5.7. How might 'cloud computing' affect the way information is disseminated to MEPs?

Cloud computing by definition enables ubiquitous on-demand network access to a shared pool of computing resources such as software, platforms and infrastructure. Given the actual development of the 'cloud' and the indiscriminate way it will be used by many Members, it seems once again important to follow these developments and stay on board. Since this will be impossible with private development in the EP, a solution of private cloud computing from third parties should be considered.

*Cloud computing can produce the following benefits to MEPs and Parliament:*

- *administrative benefits through delivery of e-mail, file storage, content and information sharing, video conferencing and streaming services, office tools, project management and custom collaboration applications useful for the European Parliament;*
- *e-governance benefits through delivery of platforms allowing for ubiquitous exchange of information with constituency;<sup>41</sup>*
- ***Work from anywhere** should be the main benefit associated with the move to cloud computing that has to be seen as an opportunity when it is seen as a threat. As long as there is internet access, EP staff and Members can access the necessary information to work wherever they are;*
- *Environmentally friendly. Reducing the amount of hardware required, the EP could significantly reduce carbon emissions. In addition, cloud computing can be planned with greener sources of energy and **energy saving data centres**;*
- *Cloud computing may be a new field of inter-institutional cooperation with the **'Euro-cloud server project'** financed by the European Commission.<sup>42</sup>*

The impact of cloud computing on information dissemination is enabled by the collaborative and ubiquitous character of cloud based data centres which allows for information to be fed into database and then to be made available or to be actively distributed to targeted audience for numerous purposes without further human intervention according to pre-established criteria. Information can be distributed to multitude platforms and devices, in particular mobile devices, based on e-identification serving as a principal instrument of management of rights of access. This means that information is shared by many users instantly; it is attributed to predefined individuals, groups or communities (e.g. constituency or political groups) and made available regardless of MEP's location. Information abundance enabled by cloud computing requires filtering precisely to needs and interests of particular MEP.

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<sup>41</sup> Study prepared for European Parliament's Committee on Internal Market and Consumer Protection: "Cloud computing", p. 8; See at:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/studiesdownload.html?languageDocument=EN&file=73411>

<sup>42</sup> See at: [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-12-1014\\_en.htm?locale=en](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-12-1014_en.htm?locale=en)

Cloud Computing services cannot be seen in isolation but rather considered with other enabling factors such as: internet connectivity both on and off premises (with significant roaming barriers), interoperability of platforms and devices, as well as access to information/content.

Although predominantly positive in its impact, cloud computing generates risks that need to be tackled such as: Issues related to data ownership, an increase in threats to data confidentiality due to the concentration of data on common cloud infrastructure, the loss of IT control (and control of the infrastructure) and governance of cloud services and an increased risk of data interception in authentication and transmission procedures, as well as the inadequacy of current legislation, especially in the area of data protection and in general the difficulty of ensuring that legislation keeps up with technological advancements.

*These vulnerabilities may be addressed by the differentiation of the level of security needed by sensitivity of data or use of a **'private cloud' managed by the European Parliament itself** or a provider, systematic auditing and certification of cloud services.*

Another important aspect is that today the online world is moving towards what can be called **'Platformisation'**: i.e. access to content, games, apps is being channelled through portals whereby users need to sign-up/log-in. This system allows a 360° tracking of users' activities, and it is used to tailor experience according to users' preference, creating vast returns in term of fidelization and branding - on top of advertising-driven revenue. In other words, today online companies like Google, Facebook, Twitter, Amazon, Apple etc. all aim to become 'the one-stop-shop' with the promise of being able to handle users' requests with only one 'fun' click.

*Today the **European Parliament** has a unique opportunity to adopt/adapt to this model and become a truly social portal. Some positive effects would be:*

- *Fidelization via better citizen engagement to what the EP does;*
- *The EP could gain a real time insight of what citizens want;*
- *Legislative proposal in the midst of the EP scrutiny - but also forward looking strategic issues - could be matched with the tracked citizens' mood<sup>43</sup>. Theoretically this would represent an optimum from the point of view of public policy.*

**'Gamifying citizenship' is not a game.** *It is a new form of communication that should also fit into the new one-stop shop EP online platform. Many behavioural studies show that real world objectives, and not only pure entertainment, can be accomplished by transforming tasks into fun, engaging and rewarding games. The use of game elements, designs and strategies to encourage certain kinds of desired actions has been described as 'gamification'. Gamification has been applied in a wide array of areas and to attain different sorts of objectives: reducing energy consumption, increasing work productivity, boosting TV audiences, ameliorating urban transportation systems, etc. The idea is to leverage new technologies and sources of data to apply game design principles and mechanics to non-game contexts, creating incentives and motivations for people (customers, workers, patients, users) to change their behaviour.*

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<sup>43</sup>"An Exhaustive Study of Twitter Users Across the World" <http://www.beevolve.com/twitter-statistics/>

*Such techniques are quickly spreading to more and more domains. There is growing interest among policy-makers to leverage gamification strategies and related behavioural economic methods to improve policy outcomes in areas such as health, education, environment, and so forth. The goal is to induce in citizens certain type of behaviours, rendering the exercise of their citizenship more engaging and rewarding through game-like approaches. This means using gamification as a policy and service delivery tool. Gamification techniques involve the use of new technologies like real-time data analytics, cloud services and social media platforms. It also involves the tracking, collection and analysis of behavioural data.*

A first pilot project could be a 2.0 section of the European Parliament website, where EU Citizens could keep track of broadband deployment (the key enabling technology for online activities) and compare differences of speeds, prices, and services. The user should be invited to actively contribute by declaring the effective performance of their broadband subscription and price paid. The initiative could help enhance competition and availability of broadband offers by means of demand pooling and increased user-switching to more competitive offers, further to providing better information to the citizen. On the other hand the EP would gain in terms of reputation while also actively contributing indirectly to the achievement of existing policy objective (EU2020, Digital Agenda for Europe).

*For the EP and MEPs a 'digital move' can only provide a win-win situation:*

- *Better control over information about what happens in Brussels<sup>44</sup>;*
- *Closer to the citizen, with the citizens perceiving that their voices have a stronger value;*
- *Better data on citizens' 'mood';*
- *Clear contribution to increasing e-literacy and adoption of new technologies by citizens;*
- *Clear contribution to knowledge sharing on a vast range of areas, also thanks to a substantial amount of publications<sup>45</sup>;*
- *Overall increase in citizens' trust for the EP.*

*Just as the EP would start to adopt consistently ICT technologies such as the Cloud, and which requires higher-speed broadband, the EP could set an example by become a driver for investment and a viable business case. The economics of broadband indeed suggest that once a backbone of high capacity is built to connect to a server farm and/or to an international backbone, within a certain perimeter also the surrounding area becomes a profitable business case for investment.*

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<sup>44</sup>"But here's where the bad news starts. People use their TV's differently than they did in the past. Specifically, they spend less time watching traditional "TV" and more time watching streaming video, watching time-shifted video (DVR)[...]. " "For Whom The Bell Tolls? It Tolls For TV..." <http://www.businessinsider.com/for-whom-the-bell-tolls-it-tolls-for-tv-2012-10>

<sup>45</sup> "Knowing something is probably an obsolete idea, " says Sugata Mitra, Professor of Educational Technology at Newcastle University. "You don't actually need to know anything, you can find out at the point you need to know it. It's the teacher's job to point young minds towards the right kinds of questions. The teacher doesn't need to give any answers, the answers are everywhere. And we know now from years of measurements, that learners who find the answers for themselves, retain it better than if they're told the answer. " "What's the future of learning in a networked society?" <http://thenextweb.com/insider/2012/10/22/the-future-of-learning-video/>

*From the operational point of view:*

- *the EP should identify people with vision but also with the right technical knowledge to prepare an operational plan, acknowledging that DG COMM may not be the right place to find this professional figure. Indeed only policy experts (because of the necessary business knowledge required to work on legislation) are the ones fully able to understand the impact of technology, technology implementation/transition and technological change;*
- *[the EP should] list and assess existing initiatives and pilot projects (eg. Policy Departments social media project);*
- *[the EP should] look outside: the EP could call for a CEO plenary gathering together with all relevant stakeholders, to learn from business, but above all to build consensus and branding/good marketing effect around a serious digital transition inside and outside the EP - i.e. the gain for the citizen should be at the centre of the project.*

### Key Action Points for the European Parliament:

- ➡ *Develop **'work from anywhere''** for all.*
- ➡ ***Develop energy saving data centres.***
- ➡ *Take part in the inter-institutional cooperation with the **'Euro cloud Server project'** financed by the European Commission.<sup>46</sup>*
- ➡ *Profile the EP as a strong content provider for Global Open Data.*
- ➡ *The EP should identify people with vision but also with the right technical knowledge to prepare a long-term operational strategic action for digital transmission.*
- ➡ *Don't reinvent the wheel: already list and assess existing initiatives and pilot projects (eg. Policy Departments social media project).*
- ➡ *Look outside to learn from business to build the serious digital transition inside and outside the EP with gains for the citizens as centre of the project.*

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<sup>46</sup> See at: [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-12-1014\\_en.htm?locale=en](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-12-1014_en.htm?locale=en)



#### 4.5.8. Will ICT developments allow debates, decision making and voting to take place in virtual rather than physical space?

*Certainly - this is indeed a very interesting development that could allow the **EP to act as pioneer in taking democracy to the next level.***

*Videoconference is an efficient tool to spur discussions with partners abroad. Compared to travelling it saves time, money and carbon emissions. There are, however, caveats involved: a videoconference meetings should be shorter than physical meetings (limited to about one hour, after which it becomes tiring) and are most efficient when only a small number of people participate on each side.*

*In any case, the current **number of rooms with videoconference facilities** in the EP is insufficient.*

#### 4.5.9. Could new technologies speed up the time absorbed by decision making processes within the EP and increase the number of virtual meetings?

This would require organisational change.

Together with the already existing technology this might be an option - but the limiting factor today is not technology.

#### 4.5.10. Should inter-institutional databases and shared online platform be created for to follow legislative implementation and assess policy results?

*Although monitoring implementation and compliance is mainly a competence of the Commission, Parliament has every interest in following closely the Commissions (and also the Member States') action in this area. Ex-post impact assessment is one of the directions in which the EPs scrutiny may develop.*

*As regards the assessment of policy results (or of the effects) of legislation, this is an area of particular interest to Parliament, as it concerns Parliament's legislative function.*

*It is thus of great importance to Parliament, in the exercise of its legislative function, to have reliable information on the effects of EU legislation, and, to a lesser extent, on its transposition.*

*An **inter-institutional database may thus indeed be very useful** and may be built up in such a way as to harness data available online as well as the individual databases created internally within the different institutions: they could then be adapted to the needs of each institution. Nevertheless, creating inter-institutional databases or shared online platforms would only make sense if all institutions fed information into it at the same pace and with the same level of impartiality.*



*In general, the Parliament, as a Legislator, has much to gain in being identified with its main final output: the European Law and its impact. The inter-institutional data base could be the basis for a dedicated portal on European Law in practice, including questions, comments, digital petitions, initiatives aiming at collective action... The move of citizens towards an enhanced ownership and a better knowledge of European Law should be encouraged. A dedicated building - a **Tabularium** - such as the one of the Ancient Rome - could accommodate physical access to the portal close to the Parliament, as part of a series of other buildings aiming at enhancing citizens' awareness. Collaboration with the other Legislator, the Council, should be sought in priority. Synergies between Eur-Lex, Pre-Lex and OEIL might be appropriate, and the objective of achieving a one-stop-shop should be pursued.*

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Although monitoring implementation and compliance is mainly a competence of the Commission, Parliament has every interest in following closely the Commissions (and also the Member States') action in this area. Ex-post impact assessment is one of the directions in which the EP's scrutiny may develop.*
- ➔ *Create a digital **Tabularium**.*
- ➔ *Use opportunities provided by inter-institutional database.*
- ➔ *Law Portal for European Citizens (ELPC).*

#### 4.5.11. Could usage of electronic signatures both for legal and marketing reasons be encouraged more?

A move towards electronic signatures for Members is essential to reflect current de facto practice, in which it is the electronic version of tabled documents which initiates the preparation and publication process.

*The introduction of **AT4AM** has been an enormous step* in facilitating MEPs (and their assistants) tabling amendments, and committee secretariats handling amendments in an efficient and cost-effective manner. This new IT tool has not been so far accompanied by an electronic signature system. Copies of amendments continue to be manually signed and faxed to the committee secretariats, which causes unnecessary waste of resources (wasted paper, blocked fax machines, manpower needed to check the signed copies against the AMs tabled on AT4AM). This obsolete and un-economical practice is particularly inconvenient for handling large numbers of amendments, of which we have seen more and more. For this reason, it is imperative to introduce a new system of electronic signature which would be beneficial both for Members and committee secretariats. Biometric identification at large scale is possible (login based on iris recognition) and will provide the EP with an advantage as next technologies are all likely to be piloted by eye-tracking. The **early introduction of electronic signature** should start to become generalized as soon as possible - after carefully studied pilot tests - starting with financial services, public procurement and human resources.

#### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➡ *Derive the best from AT4AM.*
- ➡ *Introduce swiftly electronic signature.*

#### 4.5.12. How will Parliament have to archive documents, and will paperless replace paper-based systems?

*Official documents will not only exist on paper.*

*Electronic files containing text, photos, images, films and audio — 'media rich' documents — will constitute admissible information. Archiving documents requires collecting, physically storing, securing and maintaining access to the data, as well as controlling access with suitable protection and authentication.*

*The institution will have to develop modern records management with **dual** (paper codex format and **digital** format) **curation** (preservation, management and access) **of documents and records** (which can take multiple physical and electronic forms) as its focus.*

*Since 2000, the production of documents in paper inside the EP has strongly decreased; the native electronic files are now the general rule. Therefore, managing digital archives is not an option but a real necessity.*

*The electronic management of the documents requires identifying the database containing the data and files to acquire; transferring data and files to an archival electronic tool; converting data files to the correct format; organising and describing the different levels of the archival aggregations; inserting them in a data base, possibly available on line.*

*Electronic archiving allows for a dramatic reduction of space needed to store paper archives. Nevertheless, not only certain legislative documents have to be kept in paper, but also certain administrative documents can generate problems of authentication, if kept in an electronic form, without a digital signature.*

*Electronic archiving allows also for substantial financial savings: at the moment, up to 14% of the costs have been eliminated by the management of the electronic files, compared to the classic management of paper documents. In the future, even more savings could be made.*

*With regard to IT tools, new and more appropriate IT hardware and software will be necessary to manage electronic archives as well as advanced electronic documents management system technologies. Moreover, a continuous evolution of the IT tools supporting the documentary stocks will be necessary, with a transfer of data and files towards the new supporting solutions.*

*A general risk of the digitisation consists in missing out on records that would not have been automatically kept in electronic registers or have been kept in support difficult to read under new standards. The solution should be to introduce a very **stringent system of registration** and the classification of all the important categories of the documents.*

*Another problem that can be caused by virtual archiving is the loss of legal and historical evidence, due to the fact that the authentication of a document supported by an electronic file is not possible, except in case of a digital signature. This system, aiming to certify all the production process of a document, should therefore be introduced in order both to maintain legal evidence and to allow historical archives services to provide authenticated documents.*

The EP should assess **carefully the costs, benefits and risks linked to the externalised management of electronic records** that goes with cloud computing: financial risks (bankruptcy of the hosting entity), as well as network security risks, especially with regard to sensitive or personal data.

Finally, electronic records management is drastically **changing the role of archivists and documentalists**. Both of them should be able to deal with systems capable of assuring the long term preservation of records and historical archives in a digital form too. They should be able to deal not only with the international rules in the field of archives and documents management, but also with the requirements in the fields of documentary application, as full-fledged **IT actors**.

Multiple support X multiple channel of access X multiple use + full security = the multi-tech challenge for the new data format standardisation.

The data should be archived and indexed to allow for various methods of access — for example, structured data (by author, date, subject, etc), free text (multilingual), free spoken word, image or automated or manually inserted links from other documents.

The archive should be available wherever a suitable communication channel is available (WiFi, 3G, 4G, '5G').

The archive should be ready to be printed, screen projected, forwarded by mail, phone, lunettes...

**Data format standardisation** should allow even media-rich documents to be accessed by many different devices (through HTML 5).

Security access can be assured in various ways: with tokens, electronic cards, PIN numbers or biometrics. The immanent release of the first Microsoft Windows 8 tablet will now allow IT units to implement security policies uniformly over a range of devices, including smart phones, laptops, tablets and remote terminals, all over the world.

**Full-fledged paperless registers** are technically feasible and cost-effective. But the main issue is the appropriate phasing-in. As financial management is likely to use mainly digital files and electronic signatures, many of the documents related to that field may be subject to only paperless registration in shorter period of time. This effort can be pursued in close cooperation with other European institutions to avoid duplication of standards and procedures.

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➡ In order to enable a full-fledged 'digital curation of' all documents and records change the role and train the archivists.
- ➡ Develop data format standardisation. Full-fledged paperless register.

#### 4.5.13. How will public procurement procedures and financial regulations change?

Paperless procedures and electronic signature could at the end be applied to public procurement by the European Parliament in line with private sector evolution and with the vision of simplifying procedures for contractors. A priori, within the current FR framework there is little importance given to the type of media used (paper or electronic); therefore, the use of an electronic medium should be possible without major effort on the regulatory side. The investment will be more technical, procedural and at the security level (encryption, digital signature, etc.). Pre-award and post-award procedures may soon go digital. More transparency vis-à-vis suppliers, but also greater bargaining power on the part of institutions may be achieved: e.g. the possibility to negotiate the results of open tender after receipt of tender but before awarding the contract, by a second round of competitive bids, e.g. regarding price. In that respect, a **common inter-institutional data base** with a **common register** of ear-marked (potential) contractors could be time saving for them as well as for the institutions.

The **financial regulation should be adapted** and more flexibility should be introduced in line with technological change. Each potential contractor could develop a **unique contractor's digital profile with a complete track record**.

**The change should happen swiftly to reverse a negative trend.** Our current procurement procedures and financial regulations are ill suited to today's world. Our paper-based procurement procedures are slow, cumbersome and too complicated to comply with practices in private companies. The number and length of procurement documents are continuously increasing. We talk about simplification, but in practice we do the opposite. Companies do not read the Official Journal, and information concerning ongoing tenders is difficult to find on the EP website. As a result, competition is poor. It is high time to reverse the trend. If the last 10 years are any indication, our financial procedures, including procurement procedures, may become even more cumbersome and exacting. The gap between our rules and the practices of the world beyond the EU institutions will also increase.

Not only the technologies but the **procedures** that they support have **to become more efficient** — with **greater responsibility assigned managers, more delegation permitted for lower levels, fewer stages included on routing slips and assessments** more focused on added value rather than on the number of activities — for the public procurement at EP level to yield better results.

Developments in ICT evolution may stimulate **e-tendering**. Private companies may develop new offer practices, as has been the case for individual needs in the last 10 years. What is possible for hotels and flight reservations might be available for air freight procurements or restaurant meal reservations. For later-stage briefings, calls of tender could be launched on the basis of a series of keywords, dates or names.

**Outsourcing procurements** will also be an option. Private companies may develop procurement services that adhere to regulations. They would report to the authorising officer, who would evaluate reports on according to pre defined criteria and decide to award or reject the contract. Efforts will probably be made to simplify the participation of small and medium-sized enterprises in all member states.

For financial procedures, the rules on budgetary transfers will have to become more flexible (to meet changing priorities and deadlines) and payments will have to be made more rapidly (in line with established practices in the private sector).

*Based on the Financial Regulation and the rules governing its application including the legal opinions issued on specific files, Court judgments and all information (technical specifications) provided by the operational services, **an IT based pre-evaluation** of the public procurement procedures might be possible indicating clearly what kind of contracts are most appropriate by taking into account all the indicators and risk profiles which were introduced into the database. The result may not only facilitate control by the ex-ante service but also a deeper analysis by the Contracts and Procurement Unit lawyers via this pre-selection process. Such an IT application will need, as pre-conditions, a thorough analysis of the whole process, the setting up of a sophisticated database and close cooperation between the services concerned.*

*How to communicate the results of public procurement procedures and contracts concluded would be a further element to consider. The idea would be to create **a common IT space** which opens the possibility to **‘advertise’ the outcome of procurement procedures** by communicating the results.*

*It can be anticipated that there will be an increased emphasis **on accounting Systems designed to show the true cost of activities, and budgetary planning** will increasingly take into account Information available in real time, with a consequent shortening of decision cycles.*

*In the framework of the priority actions set out in the Single Market Act adopted in April 2011 (IP/11/469), the Commission launched a reflection on the reform of legislation on public procurement, including a large public consultation, which resulted in a draft new Directive on public procurement (COM(2011)896 final, dated 20.12.2011). The general objectives of the reform refer to making the award of contracts more flexible, enabling public contracts to be put to better use in support of other policies, increasing the efficiency of public spending and allowing procurers to make better use of public procurement. In order to reach those objectives, the Commission proposes some key actions in the following areas:*

- simplification and flexibilisation of procurement procedures, such as for example the possibility of increased recourse to negotiation, which should be accompanied by clear transparency rules;*
- strategic use of public procurement in response to new challenges;*
- better access to the market for SMEs and start-ups;*
- sound procedures;*
- and governance.*

### Key action points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Adapt financial regulation.*
- ➔ *Decentralize part of procurement operation.*
- ➔ *Use common IT space to advertise the outcome of procurement procedures.*
- ➔ *Use IT-based pre-evaluation.*
- ➔ *Create common register.*

#### 4.5.14. What are the future trends in planning, financial and management accounting, and financial reporting practices?

The new financial information system, expected to go live in 2014, will provide an important momentum for change: financial processes are currently being analysed to decide whether they can be mapped into the standard application or whether the base application needs to be adapted to special requirements of the Parliament. This exercise of analysing existing financial processes provides the opportunity to critically rethink and improve those where necessary.

The following major improvements on this field can be expected based on the current situation of the project:

- electronic workflow for payments, more harmonisation across DGs,
- integration between procurement and budgetary workflows,
- implementation of a cost accounting system with reporting,
- implementation of a strategic planning and reporting cycle that comprises and enlarges the presently existing annual budget planning and reporting.

The cost accounting stream would require as a critical success factor some cultural changes within the EP, for instance a greater openness towards sharing business and financial information across DGs.

- *A successful strategic planning and reporting stream would require a growing maturity of the EP as organisation meaning that the stakeholders would understand and endorse the concept and its implementation. It could be assumed that a few years' time could be needed after the implementation of the first modules of SAP to reach a maturity that will enable strategic planning and reporting to deliver the expected advantages.*
- *A successful implementation of the project would allow for a more professional management of financial as well as human resources at all levels of the organisation by providing one of the necessary conditions, namely management information and IT tools.*
- *One option for the future is multi-annual financial planning — for example, five-year plans consistent with the financial perspectives and tight budgetary constraints.*
- *Annual planning is also necessary during the preparatory phase for budgets, as are clear priorities that would permit important, but unforeseen, requests to be privileged over low-priority plans.*
- *Authorising officers would refrain from foreseeing margins in their budget if they were reasonably certain that they would receive additional funds when necessary.*
- *In the future, an integrated financial system will provide management and MEPs a better basis for planning, budgeting and following up activities. For management accounting, the system will probably include a follow up of more quantified results of activities, compared with the actual total cost, objectives and budget. Reporting on results and the total cost of activities will occur more regularly, and the information will also be available online.*



- *Given the current economic and financial crisis, the financial and information system in the EP will likely become one that instils an awareness of costs at all levels, including MEPs. For example, all payments to MEPs and staff for non-personal reasons (family, or sickness) may be made public.*
- *The increased availability of ICT and information sources already leads to an increased demand for reporting and accounting. Although it seems easy to do so, in reality this leads to a considerable extra workload without necessarily providing real benefits. Proportional deployment of this approach seems to be key, otherwise we will have increased reporting and accounting with an ever limited amount of real content.*

### Key Action Points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Electronic workflow for payments, more harmonisation across DGs.*
- ➔ *Integrate between procurement and budgetary workflows.*
- ➔ *Implement a common cost accounting.*
- ➔ *Implement a strategic planning and reporting cycle that comprises and enlarges the presently existing annual budget planning and reporting.*

#### 4.5.15. How can Parliament develop financial competences of MEPs and EP staff to promote the exchange of knowledge in financial matters?

Financial competence means having the skill, knowledge and ability to perform activities with a financial impact in compliance with the Financial Regulation, Implementing Rules as well as Internal Rules. It also means that MEPs and EP staff need to understand that their actions may have a financial impact and that they have the duty to perform those actions in a competent manner.

Extensive training programmes on budget, audit and accounting are available for EP staff and parliamentary assistants. Specific training for MEPs has not been developed yet and should be envisaged. However, detailed information on the EU and Parliament budget as well as on financial management is available (inter/intranet) for everybody.

Hence, the problem is that there is ‘too much information’, i.e. too much quantity but not tailor made, specifically oriented to the target groups, Members on the one hand, staff on the other. The Secretariat-General of the Parliament has to develop new ways of communicating the content, budgetary and financial issues alike. Up-to-date means should be used, interactive electronic means but also personal coaching could be envisaged. In this respect, the following services could be developed:

- *At the beginning of each legislative period, a **seminar** on the EU budget could be organised for new MEPs in the CONT and BUDG as well as a **one-to-one personal coaching** upon request. This personal coaching should be concentrated on practical aspects (general principles of expenditure).*
- *A **glossary** on the EU/EP budget could be set up - it should be available both on paper (to distribute together with the handbook for Members) as well as within an interactive tool: Members and staff should have access within two-clicks to the answer of their precise question.*
- *Finally, to **facilitate the knowledge transfer**, unit-specific guides could be developed to ensure that each staff member is aware of financial implications in the context of its activities and has the necessary information to successfully perform this task. Also, a **mentoring-system** could be set up for new staff members as well as **handovers** become mandatory in order to prevent the loss of knowledge due to mobility.*
- *For MEPs and parliamentary assistants, informational campaigns (perhaps in video format, or resembling advertisements) about the financial rules and their significance could be organised.*
- *By regularly reporting the total cost of their activities — including in particular the cost of last-minute changes — MEPs could become more aware of costs.*
- *It is vital to improve the in-house transfer of information in a structured manner. The main tools for this purpose should be the development of networks of experts and the structured exchange of information. Information and exchange tools — such as the Yammer network — already exist in the private sector.*

- *There are also already a number of existing ways of acquiring knowledge, including thematic departments, briefings, libraries, hearings, etc., but the exploitation of in-house expertise should be improved by other means, such as by thematic conferences.*

### Key Action Points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *At the beginning of each legislative period, organize a **seminar** on the EU budget for new MEPs in the CONT and BUDG, and provide **one-to-one personal coaching** upon request. This personal coaching should be concentrated on practical aspects (general principles of expenditure).*
- ➔ *Set up a **glossary on the EU/EP budget** - it should be available both on paper (to distribute together with the handbook for Members) as well as within an interactive tool: Members and staff should have access within two-clicks to the answer of their precise question.*
- ➔ ***Facilitate the knowledge transfer:** unit-specific guides could be developed to ensure that each staff member is aware of financial implications in the context of its activities. Establish a **mentoring-system** for new staff members, **handovers** in order to prevent the loss of knowledge due to mobility.*
- ➔ *Organize better informational campaigns about the financial rules and their significance.*
- ➔ *Report on the total cost of Members' activities — including in particular the cost of last-minute changes — MEPs could become more aware of costs they imply.*

## 4.6. How will institutional and technological change impact on EP job profiles?

The European Parliament is by nature an assembly of parliamentarians.

- *Consequently, all ADs starting to work in the administration of the Parliament should **start with working in a Committee or in a service enabling contacts with MEPs**, or have a previous experience in this respect.*
- ***More interdisciplinary training** is also necessary in order to ensure that all staff can fully understand the multiple implications of their work. Thus, for instance, basic training on economic principles could be offered to lawyers, and vice versa. In a world that becomes increasingly complex, and where any decision can have broad repercussions, staff should be able to apprehend (at least superficially) a maximum of the implications of their work.*
- *Additionally, in a changing world, it is essential to promote mutual understanding between the European institutions and the external reality: **it might be profitable to facilitate periods of external activity of civil servants** (in national administrations, in the private sector or in NGOs), for instance by taking them adequately into consideration in the pension scheme and for career development.*
- *The increasing use and improvement of computer-based information and online collaboration tools represents an attractive alternative in many administrative settings. The technological evolution will doubtless accelerate with the ubiquitous and real-time access to information entailed by mobile access to the internet.*
- *The European Parliament is a recognised leader in the field of software development and adaptation. However, many services still consider IT issues as a playground for geeks and not something which might really improve their own work capacity. Technological change requires a better understanding on the part of all staff members of the advantages but also of the risks of new technologies. For instance, should the EP decide to support and make use of free and open source software, this would require a high level training of all staff, so as to ensure a smooth transition to new software systems.*
- *The long-term objective of knowledge management and many other EP systems (such as AT4AM or e-meeting) must be to strike a balance between grand ideas and practical usability. One essential condition for this is to acquire critical manpower which **both** knows how a parliament functions and has up-to-date technology expertise.*
- *The balance between **pull** (user has to look up information somewhere) and **push** (user is provided with information through intelligent delivery services) will be tilted even more towards push. This is of course a major challenge for the Parliament as an information provider.*
- *From the point of view of DG INTE, new interpreters must know the new working environment. This puts the engagement of DG INTE with universities training interpreters in the spotlight. Developments in e-learning can be of particular importance to ensure the right input for a new generation of well-trained interpreters. Investment in contacts with universities must make sure that new colleagues can be operational.*

- *Life- long learning should be a normal fact. All services should offer targeted training, including training for trainers.*
- *The supply of high-quality interpreting and conference services is the work of colleagues with many different job profiles. All should find a motivational environment that entices them to bring in their knowledge, skills and commitment, including modern ways of balancing work and private life.*
- *Changes will have relatively little influence on the recruitment needs because available technologies will be adopted by businesses, other organisations and training. It is therefore likely that the recruited staff will be familiar with the techniques used. The challenge lies rather in the ongoing training of existing staff to enable them to adapt to changes which always seem to take place at a faster pace; significant investment should be made in this area.*
- *It is important that the European civil service remains attractive by dint of its reputation and working conditions; otherwise there is a danger that it will evolve towards less efficient models sometimes encountered in national or regional civil services, where the best staff choose to leave and join the private sector.*

### Key Action Points for the European Parliament:

- ➡ *Foresee to have all ADs **start working in a Committee.***
- ➡ ***Profitable to facilitate periods of external activity of civil servants** (in national administrations, in the private sector or in NGOs).*
- ➡ *The European Parliament is not only a recognised leader in the field of software development and adaptation, but should make sure that technological change is accompanied also by a better understanding on the part of all staff members of the advantages but also of the risks of new technologies. For instance, should the EP decide to support and make use of free and open source software, this would require a high level training of all staff **ensure by training a smooth transition to new software systems.***
- ➡ *Profile the European Parliament's content provider.*
- ➡ *Life-long learning should be a normal fact. All services should offer targeted training, including training for trainers.*
- ➡ *Introduce all modern options of balancing work and private life.*
- ➡ *Maintain attractiveness by reputation, working conditions and competitive compensation in line with market standards at all levels.*

#### 4.6.1. In what ways will working requirements change in the EP?

**Working methods:** According to research on the different types of generations, generation Y (born between approx. 1980 and 1990) is now coming onto the labour market and generation Z (born between approx. 1990 and 2000) will probably hit the labour market sometime around 2025. Companies in the private sector are already examining their organisational cultures and working methods in order to be able to cater for a highly technological generation that may, on the other hand, lack skills in other areas. However, information is still very vague with many variables un-known and too many conflicting opinions. It is however clear that working methods will have to change long before the arrival of generation Z.

**Job profiles:** The change in working methods and consequent change in skill requirements will certainly also have an impact on job profiles. Therefore, a working group could be put in place which analyses trends in two areas:

What would be the ‘approach to work’ of those entering the labour market of officials in 2025 (i.e. the cohort that is currently between 15 and 20 years of age)? We should consider to what extent new technologies will influence administration's traditional ways of operating in 15 or 20 years time. Do any studies exist that point to core trends in European countries?

What would be DG's levels of adaptability faced with the arrival of staff who have a different approach to work? Considering this question would require examining the extent to which processes and tasks are adapted and would still allow Parliament to attract and retain highly qualified staff in a competitive labour market. DG Personnel could take part in a monitoring mechanism, given its role as a regular interface with the DGs that recruit laureates from reserve lists, and in order to determine whether DGs are still interested in particular job profiles.

- *The EP should rapidly design and implement a comprehensive staff policy that allows its personnel to specialise, by following specific training on a regular basis. The economic crisis will require more budget cuts and, consequently, reduced permanent staff. In this context, it is vital to streamline and simplify the administrative work*
- *Knowing how to use ICT will become more and more a standard and less and less a specialist issue. Crowd-sourcing for helpdesks, training and application of ICT may well replace the traditional helpdesk approach. Social media and wiki approaches can replace the traditional way of working using telephone and email.*
- *Barriers existing between units involved in legislative work should be reduced, in order to foster a more integrated working environment between staff involved in a given EP file.*
- *From an organisational point of view, ‘sectoral units’ could be set up (e.g. a unit specialised in agricultural and rural development matters). Within these units, some administrators could specialise on the analysis and research tasks, while others would specialise on procedural aspects.*

- *Technological changes will increase the number of technical staff required to monitor and maintain teleconference and video conference equipment. A suitable number of experts on cyber security will also have to guarantee the safety of data produced when teleworking or using videoconference facilities.*
- *Technological changes in translation will also likely lead to reductions in translation services and an increase in automated translating facilities. With these advances in technology and the EP's greater dependence on it, a much greater degree of IT knowledge will be required of all staff. Current staff will require training to remain up to date.*
- *On a practical level, more flexible working hours will be required — not simply offered — and staff will have to become accustomed to sharing their offices and communicating electronically/virtually, rather than in person.*
- *Coping with technological developments and social behaviours, communication has to be adjusted to the contract.*
- *The technical managers have to be permanent officials in order to ensure a minimum control of the outsourced services. To achieve that, the EP should offer attractive careers to high-level experts and efficient professional training throughout their career.*
- *In the future, DG FINS will increasingly need to recruit new specialists taking into account the evolution of new working methods, tools and techniques.*
- *With regard to the work life balance it should be mentioned that some important changes in the organisation of work are taking place nowadays. The multi-tech environment and constant improvements of digital devices allow the staff members to work outside the office. With the use of laptops, smart phones and other electronic devices staff members are able to communicate and exchange information after the end of the office hours or being outside the workplace. These technological developments allow a higher degree of flexibility and responsiveness and could lead to new ways to combine professional and personal life. However, such a different mode of integration of private life and work area needs a high willingness of staff members to adapt to new requirements. Therefore, to maintain efficient work of staff members it is important to provide them with incentives and find new ways of encouragement.*
- *Independent of time and place of work, effective communication between people is a core element of an efficient working environment. Thus, the modern information and communication technologies should be widely used, but at the same time, priority should be given to enhance 'real world' communication (promote group discussions, brainstorming sessions and a live exchange of ideas), which could generate higher added value.*
- *The new institutional and technological environment is likely to provide a significant impact on the functioning of DG Finance in particular, and of the Parliament in general, with new possibilities for the use of digital devices and tools, creating further synergies between different levels across the DG. However, some changes of working conditions should be provided in order to keep staff fully engaged, give them necessary professional and technical skills (importance of appropriate training) to adapt to the new environment and face complex change.*



## Key Action Points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Rapidly design and implement a comprehensive staff policy allowing personnel to specialise by following specific training on a regular basis. It is vital to streamline and simplify the administrative work.*
- ➔ *Ensure that correct use of ICT becomes standard for staff. Prepare for possible replacement of helpdesk approach by crowd-sourcing for helpdesks, training and application of ICT.*
- ➔ *Reduce barriers existing between units involved in legislative work, in order to foster a more integrated working environment between staff involved in a given EP file.*
- ➔ *Set-up ad-hoc 'sectoral units'.*
- ➔ *Increase number of technical staff required to monitor and maintain teleconference and video conference equipment as well as experts on cyber security.*
- ➔ *Technological changes in translation will lead to an increase in automated translating facilities. Prepare for a much greater degree of IT knowledge required of all staff and ensuing need for training.*
- ➔ *More flexible working hours required — not simply offered — and staff will have to become accustomed to communicating electronically virtually.*
- ➔ *Offer attractive careers to high-level experts and efficient professional training throughout their career.*
- ➔ *The multi-tech environment and constant improvements of digital devices allow the staff members to work outside the office, allowing for a higher degree of flexibility and responsiveness and possibly leading to new ways to combine professional and personal life. Prepare to encourage staff members to adapt to these new requirements and to provide them with incentives.*
- ➔ *The new institutional and technological environment is likely to provide a significant impact on the functioning of DG Finance in particular, and of the Parliament in general, with new possibilities for the use of digital devices and tools, creating further synergies between different levels across the DG. However, some changes of working conditions should be provided in order to keep staff fully engaged.*



#### 4.6.2. How can we develop a culture of networking, with constantly changing constellations, both within and beyond the Parliament Services?

Parliament already has a strong culture of networking which is largely dependant on individual and service needs. The networking culture is very informal and based on individually constructed networks, something which is unlikely to change. However, the existing culture will very probably be complemented by a new way of IT networking. Even in this new IT-driven context, it is however difficult to conceive of one-to-one contact disappearing.

A networking culture with constellations (i.e. inter-personal contacts facilitated by direct or indirect participation based on interests, knowledge and experience) will become established on a large scale thanks to the secure treatment of information and communications, respecting the confidentiality of private data.

- *This being a question of **staff management**, DG PERS together with the Resources Directorates should develop ways to foster a **common identity** in a sense of belonging.*
- *With the increased use of IT and social networks, **ethics and compliance with obligations** will have to change and develop considerably, and that development will have to start long before 2025.*
- *Parliament might have increasingly to take into account the natural tendency of organisations, and in particular the 'reluctance' of the 'older' generations, to view changes which they do not fully understand with suspicion or even as threats.*
- *Apparently some enterprises experience **new forms of internal communication abandoning email communication**. The so-called Web 2.0-Technologies (Enterprise 2.0 (E2.0)) seem to be more efficient and transparent for communication, exchange on projects, sharing of knowledge, and archiving of documents than the traditional ones. The first experience shows that it may change the character of communication and the relationship between the boss and his or her collaborators: sharing information, competition of the best arguments, participative structures in managing teams, etc. will lead to another management style which is more open, transparent and team-oriented.*

### Key Action Points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ *Prepare to change and considerably develop ethics and compliance with obligations following the increased use of IT and social networks.*
- ➔ *Take into account the natural tendency of organisations, and in particular the 'reluctance' of the 'older' generations to adjust to the change.*
- ➔ *Investigate already existing and tested new forms of internal communication moving away from email communication, being more efficient and transparent for communication, exchange on projects, sharing of knowledge, and archiving of documents. Take into account the possible change of character of communication and the relationship between the manager and collaborators: sharing information, competition of the best arguments, participative structures in managing teams, etc. may lead to another management style which is more open, transparent and team-oriented.*

#### 4.6.3. Should the EP develop specific topic teams that cross the Directorates divides, combining various in-house skills to create fresh synergies and focussing on project teams?

*Synergies need to be created which could take the form of structurally defined dialogue or project teams.*

*The EP is in a position to benefit from a huge variety of, possibly latent, in-house skills and expertise. Previously acquired skills and valuable experiences, both prior to recruitment in the EP and elsewhere after recruitment, should be taken up in a staff database: e.g. expertise on climate change, nanotechnology, innovation, transport, the ageing society, energy etc.*

*As such, staff could share knowledge and skills following specific expertise when needed, such as skills in communication, specific IT applications or social media management.*

*Two types of **cross-Directorate 'topic teams'** can be envisaged: long-term teams that would coordinate staff members from different Directorates (such as interservice groups or task forces), and short-term teams that would address concrete targets (such as project teams assisting rapporteurs).*

*To bridge the divides created by the (necessary) administrative divisions, **long-term coordination teams** would work to improve coordination (for example between the sometimes-overlapping agendas of different EP entities), to effectively divide workloads (to avoid overlaps in research or meetings) and to brainstorm for new ideas and to stimulate bottom-up initiatives.*

*The advantage of these informal settings lays in their flexibility (horizontality, meetings on an ad hoc basis according to needs...).*

*There are already examples of effective inter-DG project teams dealing with particular topics (such as the task force for the Sakharov prize) or specific types of legislation (such as comitology and MFF-related legislation: in both these cases, the teams were established on an ad-hoc basis to assist Parliament in presenting a coherent response across a range of procedures in which many committees, Members and negotiating teams are involved). These project teams and task forces usually work well because of the specific skills and variety of perspectives, brought to the team by the various units across a number of DGs.*

*However, while these large-scale examples clearly demonstrate the efficacy of topic teams and the value of establishing formal, as well as purely informal, networks across services and DGs, they alone are not enough to counter the 'silo effect' of a relatively rigid DG structure within the EP.*

*EP-wide project teams or **task forces**, formally established to address specific issues or procedures (e.g. issues where there is a clear common interest, legislative procedures, legislative initiatives, etc.), in which each service participant is both mandated and required to exchange service-specific expertise with other project team members, would enable qualitatively better support to Members and speedier response times. It would also ensure a more coherent advisory service to Members and better output, both in terms of formal and informal product (for example, better drafted legislation or, say, more comprehensive press releases, which could more competently cover issues such as the legal aspects of an EP position). Members, and their offices, would benefit not only in terms of the quality of the support*

*they tangibly receive, but also the perceived support available to them, simply by knowing specifically who they could contact in the various specialised services at their disposal.*

***Permanent info channels organised by topics** would also allow for a more targeted information flow and knowledge management. Finally, such topic teams could even integrate interested colleagues with a relevant background or experience who are currently assigned to other duties, widening the pool of expertise and open up avenues for meaningful mobility.*

*The last point above illustrates one very important characteristic -possibly the key aspect - of topic teams as envisaged here: They would be, and need to remain, a **virtual work structure ‘behind’ the existing organisational structure**, without prejudice to the latter. Indeed, in order to provide added value, cross-cutting innovation must not carry the risk of under-cutting existing DGs, directorates, secretariats and policy departments: These have been established over time along well-considered functional lines, and generate their own set of proven synergies.*

*The question to be asked would be: To what extent would this new organisation lead to more efficiency and better work results? In principle non-formal collaboration within the EP is a constant, producing ad hoc topic teams, and so this step would mostly formalise something that already exists. We need to bear in mind that formalisation always carries costs.*

### Key Action Points for the European Parliament:

- ➡ *Foster synergies and rapid reaction.*
- ➡ *Favour cross-directorate, cross-committee, topical and long-term cooperation teams, task forces, permanent info-channels by topic.*

#### 4.6.4. How can the EP help staff to balance longer working times and new demands with their private life?

In a context in which the vast majority of staff live away from their native countries and therefore without the usual support networks, the challenge of balancing professional and personal commitments takes on a different dimension for EU officials. The foreseeable increase in both working hours and workload, added to the pressure from a possible reduction in human resources, are likely to make that challenge even greater for a majority of staff in the EP. At the same time, the nature of work in the EP, together with technological progress, will likely mean an ever-increasing reliance on a more knowledgeable workforce, as opposed to manual labour or staff who undertake simpler, more repetitive actions.

***The time is ripe for a significant modernisation of working conditions*** within the Parliament, adopting the best modern practice in creative and productive working environments which favour connections and networking, combined with greater flexibility as to working time and location typical in the wider professional environment enabled by technology. This requires a cultural shift and significant adaptation from both staff and management.

**Managing generation gaps:** It is fair to say that most senior management comes from the Baby Boom generation and they are used to managing other Baby Boomers or Generation X staff. The values shared by each generation need to be taken into consideration when managing members of staff. Both generations X (born 1965-1980) and Y (born 1980-1994) put family before their jobs, contrary to work-centric Baby boomers. GenX is independent, adaptable and pragmatic. GenY is online focused, achievement-oriented and more averse to structured work hours than GenX; socially skilled and teamwork-oriented, it requires instant feedback and constant support. It emphasises sharing information and is averse to strongly bureaucratic management models. GenY is taking more time to have children than other generations, and then go back to work with demands for flexitime and teleworking options. This is clear from the individual contributions below. A high rate of retirements is likely to occur in the next decade given the current average age of staff.

- *In view of the increasing recruitment of GenY, it is likely that human resources management will need to adapt to increasing staff demands such as flexible work hours and output-based system of assessment. Introducing training in values throughout generations would also help managers to motivate the younger generation. Furthermore, colleagues requesting part-time work in preparation for retirement (Baby boomers) could be valuable trainers and mentors to new officials, transferring their skills and experience. This could also be a strategy to motivate them at the final stretch of their career in the EP.*

In today's society, workers have to struggle to find a balance between the two lives they lead: the one at work and the one at home. This is especially true for women who still very often must combine their new work-related obligations with their traditional home/family obligations. The densification of urban centres combined with the rarefaction of housing possibilities leads more and more workers and their families to living in places that are more remote from their workplace, thus necessitating a longer commute to the workplace, which also impacts upon quality family time. It thus seems necessary that the EP becomes more flexible in allocating working times.

- *One possibility is to define **core times** when officials are expected at the workplace (e.g. 9:30-12:00 and 14:00-16:00) but otherwise, they can freely choose their own working times together with their head of unit.*
- *Another possibility is to introduce some form of flexitime, which should be based on a voluntary participation of staff. This would allow people to 'bank' additional work they have done and exchange it against some free time, thus allowing flexibility to go both ways: if staff are flexible to work longer hours if necessary, they can be sure to get back their time if there is less work.*
- *A third possibility is to introduce **teleworking** at the EP. This would allow people either structurally or occasionally to work from home, being especially helpful for parents of sick kids or staff living outside of Brussels and relying on trains to get to work in case of a strike.*
- *The EP could do a lot to **enable remote working**, which need not necessarily happen from home, but could also e.g. happen while travelling to STR. Managers and (AD) staff alike could be equipped with the **necessary IT tools** (laptop computers, tokens, tablets, web-cams and electronic cards to record time worked) that would allow them to work from anywhere. Additionally staff (mostly ADs) desks could be equipped with **docking stations** for this laptop. The EP should insist on developing legislative measures which ensure that consumers can use their **data flat rate** not only in their country of origin but in all European countries, thus enabling staff travelling to STR to be connected to the internet and thus to their workplace during office hours.*
- *Using their laptop computers, staff members would be able to work from wherever they are, and staff would always be available by telephone during working hours, as if at the office, even for external calls to the person's landline - indeed automatic call-transferring systems already exist to divert calls from landlines to mobiles.*
- *The threat of an invasion of privacy by modern communication channels (iPhone, iPads, email, teleworking, etc.) is real, and could lead to additional stress and a lack of rest and relaxation. It could be necessary at some point to adopt, for example, a code of conduct for these systems also in the EP as it is done in some important companies.*
- *Further, the **assessment of officials' work** should be done on an **output-based system** instead of a fixed presence at work, as it would allow staff to do their work (and do it well) even if not present at the workplace; it does not matter whether they do it at 8am or at 8pm.*

- The role of **staff representatives** is crucial. The EP authorities should heed the legitimate voice of staff representatives expressing the views of staff on this matter, offering them adequate opportunities to participate in and influence related decisions.

Tele-working and 'hot-desking' on a large scale would also represent major savings in terms of office space, as well as reducing significantly the environmental impact of the EP's activities (EMAS). Cutting out commuting time from daily routines of a larger number of staff should also help them to improve their work-life balance. As well as these environmental and social aspects, such measures would have a clear economic benefit. Indeed, a recommendation stemming from this proposal would be that rather than building new offices, existing space should be optimised - and it may even be possible to give some office space back.

### Key Action Points for the European Parliament:

- ➔ Adapt to increasing staff demands such as flexible work hours and output-based system of assessment.
- ➔ Organize skills transfer between colleagues requesting part-time work in preparation for retirement and collaborators, could be valuable trainers and mentors to new officials, transferring their skills and experience. This could also be a strategy to motivate them at the final stretch of their career in the EP.
- ➔ Develop a common scheme to introduce **flexitime**, allowing staff to 'bank' additional work done and exchange it against free time, thus allowing flexibility to go both ways.
- ➔ Develop a common scheme for **teleworking** at the EP.
- ➔ Adopt, if necessary, a code of conduct to protect privacy from the invasion of professional communication.
- ➔ Prepare to change **assessment of work** from a fixed presence at work to an **output-based system**.
- ➔ Continue to offer staff representatives adequate opportunities to participate in and influence decisions.



#### 4.6.5. How should the EP adapt and manage developments in teleworking and job-sharing?

It is in the Institution's best interest to offer attractive up-to-date working conditions, in line with emerging social demand, to attract and retain the talents in an increasingly competitive global job market for employers as for employees. Building attractiveness of purpose, image, work atmosphere may be as important as communicating about staff regulation and advantages associated with the European civil service.

##### a) Teleworking

**Teleworking** could offer an ecological and economical way of approaching changing patterns of tomorrow's work-life balance. On the one hand, it would do away with the need that people travel to their workplace daily and would thus be beneficial from an **ecological point of view**. On the other hand, from an **economic point of view**, it saves an enormous amount of time which can be spent productively instead of on the road. In addition, experiences with tele-working at other European institutions have shown that people are better able to work in the quietness of their own home without constantly being interrupted as is often the case at the office. Finally, it would be a real boost to staff motivation and thus also in the economic interest of the EP.

The vast majority of homes today are already adequately equipped to permit teleworking without further financial outlay. IT support is, of course, essential for tele-working to be a feasible option. Ensuring that colleagues have access to shared files and online planning tools from anywhere must be a priority, as must IT security.

While not all jobs types are suitable for teleworking, jobs that are should have teleworking offered as an option, as it reduces commuting and the need of office space. That said, the choice to work (at least part-time) outside the premises could be viewed by some as disadvantageous, due to a lack of social interaction and diminished sense of involvement. If teleworking is approved by the line manager, it should be entirely optional for the staff member, and his or her adaptability should be regularly followed.

A high degree of flexibility in those entities where Service does not require a time-bound presence should be the norm. Therefore, **tele-working** should become a normal way of working for a good number of staff in the EP.

A first step could be to envisage it **on an occasional basis** in case of strikes of public transportation/exceptional personal circumstances such as illness of children. Experiences with occasional tele-working could then inform a later decision about **structural tele-working**. However, many posts at the PE involve assisting MEPs in their work, which regularly requires the presence of staff even if only for a few hours. If the service thus requires such presence often at short notice and thus a high degree of flexibility of staff to desist from tele-working on a specific day, conversely, this high flexibility should also apply to staff who wish to work from home other days when their presence is not required.

One issue to be kept in mind is the danger of ‘frazzling’ the work week in a unit; there need to be some **time slots where all members of a team are present at work** and meetings can be held. Each unit could thus define e.g. two half-days where tele-working will not be possible.

Tele-working also engenders that assessment of staff performance cannot be oriented solely to presence at the workplace but must shift to an **output-based system** where staff are assessed according to the quality of their ‘products’ and ‘client’ satisfaction.

At the same time, such an output-based system needs some safeguards: on the one hand, heads of unit need to know who works on what, and on the other hand, staff need safeguards that no unrealistic outputs are required which would make them work evenings and week-ends, thus annihilating the flexibility telework offers. A high degree of transparency is thus required within a team so tasks can be allocated on an equal basis and it also becomes apparent if the existing posts are not enough to cover the work-load and the situation can be remedied.

In addition, there could be rules that **staff need to be available on the phone during core times** if they practice tele-work.

## **b) Flexitime**

Another seemingly obvious avenue to a better work-life balance is ***flexitime***, as practiced by the European Commission and discussed by Parliament for a number of years. It would appear to be well-suited to administrations, particularly ones like the Commission that have little or no direct interaction with the public, and thus do not require full presence for set opening hours. It is also relatively easy to implement in technical terms, as the electronic badges carried by all staff constitute a ready tool for clocking in and out. However, the concept would seem considerably more difficult to implement in the unique work environment of a deliberative body such as the European Parliament, where numerous meetings of extended and sometimes unpredictable duration, as well as the intense preparations that precede them, simply make it impractical to apply a rigid clocking system and account for every minute spent at the workplace. Nor does the monthly work rhythm of Parliament easily accommodate compensation time. Despite its apparent advantages then, classical flexi-time would seem to be less than ideally suited to Parliament's specific circumstances.

## **c) Flexible access hours**

Allowing for ***more flexible access hours*** to offices and infrastructure however would go some way towards acknowledging the reality of the Institution's workload and helping staff cope with it: What is common practice with universities, where libraries and canteens stay open very late, and sometimes 24/7, should be possible for an important political institution such as ours. This would involve keeping secondary entrances open for longer to minimise time lost navigating the ever-growing building complex, and maintaining at least one sales point for food and beverages until late, not just on plenary days, and possibly on weekends.

It would also include unbureaucratically opening the premises on weekends for stagiaires, as they are often involved in the preparations for key events.

#### **d) Job-sharing/Part-time work**

Job-sharing, that is in effect *part-time work*, is another option often presented as allowing officials to better balance their professional and personal commitments. The Statute already provides for various formulas, and a larger number of posts (of all grades) than so far could be opened up for it given their profile.

One practical tool would be to reserve a limited number of posts for the purpose of *job-sharing*. Vacancy notices should clearly state whether a job is to be shared. Managers should be trained in order to be able to deal with the particular issues that may arise from having two colleagues sharing a job (continuity of operations; transfer of knowledge). And in particular, job-sharing should in no way be penalised, either formally or informally, during performance evaluation exercises. Job sharing should also be considered in light of a potential increase in the number of staff members asking to work part-time, in preparation for retirement (Staff Regulations Article 55a(e)). Especially for staff going to work in or returning from a posting in one of the EP Information Offices in the Member States, job sharing should actively be proposed as an option, in order to make it easier to attract staff whose family situation would otherwise make it impossible for them to contemplate a move abroad. It is however not entirely cost-neutral for the Institution, and definitely not for the official given the cut in net income it entails. It may provide the solution for a given situation (e.g. raising small children, or looking after elderly parents), but will in most cases be temporary in nature.

#### **e) Co-working spaces**

Digitalisation has profoundly altered the working environment with the creation of new professions, work processes and work places. The new trend to be observed worldwide is *co-working spaces*, i.e. spaces where mobile workers from knowledge-intensive service sectors come together in a community to work in a cooperative atmosphere. It might be an alternative to simple tele-working alone at home which already would enable a better work-life balance and lead to positive impacts on the environment (less transport and commuting) and infrastructure (less office space needed).

These co-working spaces might be rented by one or several institutions being close to the home of a considerable number of staff. For example, concerning Luxembourg, these locations could be close to Arlon, Thionville and Trier. These co-working spaces have several advantages: less time needed for daily commuting, fast and high-security IT connections with the EP and the possibility to share contacts and projects with colleagues. This might also have a positive impact on the property policy of Parliament in terms of costs per square metre.

#### 4.6.6. What qualifications, education and professional / technical skills should staff have?

Several factors will stimulate demand for better, adapted skills: globalisation, increased international trade, the application of new technologies and developments in work organisation. To better face tomorrow's global trends and challenges, it is crucial to invest in human capital and well-designed lifelong learning systems. Staff should come, as today, from varied backgrounds and provide a full spectrum of experiences and skills. There should be no limits imposed according to individuals' backgrounds of those employed, with the exception of certain profiles (for example, lawyers).

##### a) Staff skills and competences

- *For the EP staff to remain competitive and innovative, several competences should be privileged, including a commitment to the new ideas, judgement in analysing and evaluating problems, decision making, and the ability to apply knowledge to manage complex professional activities and projects. As far as skills are concerned, the focus should be placed on analytical skills, intuitive and creative thinking, self-management and linguistic skills. Last but not least, knowledge and experience should be combined with social competences, as the ability to work with others will be crucial.*
- *Staff need to master all **mechanisms of modern business administration** in order to ensure that the organisation develops efficiently and effectively.*
- *Technical change will require that staff significantly increase their **technological and networking skills**, as well as virtual communication capacity. '**Digital natives**' will be the next generation, yet the requested basic skills will be the same as ever: strong organisational skills, a business oriented attitude (cost/benefit of ICT), common skills and excellent communicators.*
- *Staff will need to **embrace change** and complexity as daily catalysing and energising factors, rather than as a disturbing and disruptive factor. The workplace culture will need to further evolve towards one where curiosity and creativity is actively promoted. Staff will increasingly become solution and problem solvers. Staff will need to work from vision rather than from instruction.*
- *Staff will need to focus more on **promoting ethics** in an administrative environment.*
- *Finally, greater emphasis should be made on managers' being able to **motivate** and fully develop their staffs potential; competences centring on people management should be at the core of the Head of Unit job, and managers' performance measured accordingly. Therefore, more training in this area would need to be available.*

##### b) Parliament's Human Resources

- *It will be necessary for Parliament to put in place mechanisms which allow for the **early detection and implementation of new skill needs**, both for recruiters and those in learning and development services. Fast transformation processes for skill development are needed.*

- For the **learning function** it means that skills must be delivered in a variety of ways, sometimes as options and choices, sometimes as informal discussions, using social media and discussion platforms. In the multilayer working day, 'bite-sized learning' is more interesting than 'slow learning' involving whole days out of the office: indeed, the latter will probably increasingly become a particular luxury to attend.
- Parliament must increasingly count on staff **willingness to work more flexibly**. Reward structures for performance must evolve as well, to recognise flexibility as an asset.
- Forms of flexible working require much greater focus on results and work produced. This is a huge cultural shift because today staff are primarily measured by presence and hours worked. Acceptance of **assessment by results** is set up via flexible IT environments and again, via trust. It also relates to the management culture.
- The creation of the **'expert' career profile** would be very useful, as it could afford the EP real **independence with regard to European Commission** expertise. Furthermore, 'senior experts' could perform 'peer reviews' of relevant studies, as well as training for newly recruited experts - taking on a role of tutors.
- Current staff should be encouraged to go **back to school**. To encourage staff to benefit from learning opportunities throughout their lives, colleagues should more easily be allowed to take 6-12 months off on unpaid leave in order to obtain degrees and qualifications.
- Colleagues should be encouraged to enrol in **advanced drafting courses in English, French and German**, the main languages of the administration.
- **Professional communication** should be treated as a highly specialised field: professional training adapted to this specific field has to go beyond the traditional offer.
- Parliament's administration might be asked to incorporate in its working culture and ethics **change management** leading to a smooth adaptation of mentalities, working styles, methodologies to the requested changes without putting at risk its main parliamentary activities - legislation and democratic control and scrutiny. For that purpose, so-called **change agents** are recruited in order to communicate the changes decided so far; these change agents belong often to the middle management level; they are perceived as neutral and their speech is close to that of the collaborators.
- **'Cloud working'**. First experiences in globally acting companies have shown that this kind of outsourcing requires new IT profiles, in particular software developers and IT system integrators whose role is to integrate new software and hardware applications into the IT of a company. This requires new skills and might lead to less permeability within IT jobs. This tendency will certainly have an impact on the IT development in Parliament and the timely reflection on new job profiles for the recruitment and selection of future staff in the field of IT.

## Key Action Points for the European Parliament:

### **a) Staff skills and competences**

- ➔ Focus on customer service orientation, high productivity and cost-effectiveness as key factors of success in a period of scarce resources and potentially smaller teams.
- ➔ Enable staff to master all **mechanisms of modern business administration**.
- ➔ Enable staff to significantly increase their **technological and networking skills**, as well as virtual communication capacity.
- ➔ Encourage staff to **embrace change** and complexity as daily catalysing and energising factors.
- ➔ Focus more on **promoting ethics** in an administrative environment.
- ➔ Put greater emphasis on managers' being able to **motivate** and fully develop their collaborators and suppliers.

### **b) Parliament's Human Resources**

- ➔ Put in place mechanisms for **early detection and implementation of new skill needs**, as well as for fast transformation processes for skill development.
- ➔ Develop the **learning function** to deliver skills in a variety of ways, sometimes as options and choices, sometimes using social media and discussion platforms.
- ➔ Increasingly count on staff **willingness to work more flexibly**, evolving reward structures for performance and recognising flexibility as an asset.
- ➔ Strengthen much greater focus on results and work produced due to development of flexible working, fostering **acceptance of assessment by results**.
- ➔ Create an **'expert' career profile** to afford the EP real **independence with regard to European Commission** expertise.
- ➔ Encourage current staff to go **back to school**, i.e. availing them of easier taking up learning opportunities throughout their lives.
- ➔ Encourage staff to enrol in **advanced drafting courses in English, French and German**.
- ➔ Treat **professional communication** as highly specialised field.
- ➔ Incorporate **change management** in Parliament's working culture and ethics.

#### 4.6.7. Can EP professional training help to keep staff fully engaged and give them the necessary skills to face complex change?

Continuing vocational training based not only on the interests, departmental needs and objectives set by Parliament but also on the individual's interests is essential for staff motivation. This training approach will enable staff to have a more positive and relaxed attitude to any complex changes which may occur in the future. Continuing training enables staff to have more open-minded and flexible responses and attitudes and hence a more positive outlook which enables them to adapt more easily to changes.

Giving people the necessary tools to face the challenges of their professional lives is one factor that influences staff motivation. Nevertheless, good management is essential to fostering staff engagement. Training should not be seen as a substitute for good management.

No amount of training can make up for a person's not being empowered or recognised in their workplace on a daily basis. Indeed, training staff and then not allowing them to develop and use the skills they have acquired may be even counter-productive in terms of the investment the Institution makes in training, as well as the risk of disillusioning staff. So a first and major investment should be made to ensure that anyone who is given responsibility for managing people will be able to motivate them and foster staff engagement.

EP professional training will help, but it is unlikely to suffice on its own.

- *Current staff should thus be encouraged to **return to school**. While unpaid leave for educational pursuits may be the norm, some exceptions may also be instituted: if the staff member obtains a degree in a field of interest for the EP, some financial contribution to the studies — a reduced salary and course fees, for example — could be applied.*

Moreover, change is something that cannot be embraced by training alone. A wiser approach would incorporate multiple approaches, including training. The approaches to be embraced include:

- involving all stakeholders and remaining open to their suggestions,
- adopting targeted communication strategies that react rapidly to criticism and problematic developments,
- responding quickly to resistance,
- offering personal counselling and coaching.
- *Training should be offered once it becomes clear which skills a staff member lacks for the future. At that point, **training strategies** should be also defined globally for staff and personal training programmes should be established individually for each staff member.*
- *There is need of a **fit for purpose training**, encouraging emerging talents. A re-examination of the evaluation procedure and the career development should be implied.*
- *Training should be a **constant presence in the life** of all staff.*



- The EP should indeed continue to make a **significant investment in the continuous training** of its staff. However, training should be more targeted to specific skills necessary in the workplace, and there should be evaluation measures in place to determine whether the training actions have actually had a positive impact on the staff members' performance and that of his/her team.
- More **courses** should be **offered for entire teams or units**, in order to ensure that all members of the team speak the same language and master the same techniques/ tools.
- Training should be used more broadly as a way to **close gaps in potential**. Instead of looking for candidates with a very specific profile as regards knowledge of EP-internal tools/procedures/working methods, candidates with potential should be recruited and a tailor-made training plan developed to bring them up the desired level of knowledge in as short a time as possible.
- Far more **training should be mandatory**, i.e. the institution should determine what skills and knowledge are essential to fulfil certain functions/ needs, and staff should then be required to follow the necessary training if they do not already have the necessary skills and knowledge.
- Being the owner of its buildings, the EP should ensure the **high specialization of its teams in charge of the infrastructures**. As adequate professional training in this field cannot be ensured within the EP, outsourcing to highly specialized public and private organisms throughout Europe is necessary.

### Key Action Points for the European Parliament:

- ➞ Respond quickly to resistance.
- ➞ Offer personal counselling and coaching.
- ➞ Establish personal training programmes for each staff member, as well as for temporary collaborators and suppliers.
- ➞ Offer **courses for entire teams or units**, in order to ensure that all members of the team speak the same language and master the same techniques/ tools.
- ➞ Make far more **training mandatory**, i.e. determine what skills and knowledge are essential to fulfil certain functions/ needs, consequently requiring staff to follow training if necessary.
- ➞ Ensure a **high professional specialization of teams in charge of the infrastructures or digital equipment**. As adequate professional training in this field cannot be ensured within the EP, outsourcing to highly specialized public and private organisms throughout Europe is necessary.



