

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 30 December 2017 19:44
To: EO-CouncilConsultation
Subject: [EOWEB] Feedback on question 8

Nosūtītājs

Nosūtītājs [REDACTED]
Kam Council consultation - OI/2/2017
Datums Saturday, December 30, 2017 7:44:17 PM CET

Jūsu dati

1. sadaļa - Kontaktinformācija

Vārds	[REDACTED]
Uzvārds	[REDACTED]
Jūsu dzimums	[REDACTED]
E-pasta adrese	[REDACTED]
Valoda, kurā Jūs vēlaties saņemt atbildi	en - English
Cita valoda, kurā Jūs pieņemt atbildi (ja piemērojams)	fr - français

2. sadaļa - Dati

Kam Council consultation - OI/2/2017
Temats Feedback on question 8
Dear Sir/Madam,

My name is Iveta Kazoka, and I represent Center for Public Policy PROVIDUS (Latvia). In the name of PROVIDUS I would like to offer a short feedback on question 8:

"8. Bearing in mind that delegations' positions may evolve during the negotiations and that the Council must protect the effectiveness of its decision-making process, to what extent do you believe positions expressed by national delegations during negotiations in Council working parties/Coreper should be recorded? How important would it be for you to find out the position of the national delegation?"

Saturs In 2014 PROVIDUS together with two other think-tanks EUROPEUM Institute for European policy (Czech Republic) and Institute of Public Affairs (Poland) explored the opportunities for organized civil society to influence EU decision-making via national positions. The results of our research can be found here:
[REDACTED]

In our research we tried to ascertain the extent to which various EU member states manage to integrate their own civic society organisations (CSOs) into forming their national positions on EU legislative proposals and policy documents. The opportunities and experiences of three member states – the Czech Republic, Latvia, Poland – were covered in depth. In all three countries civic society organisations engage in the process of drafting national positions relatively rarely - lack of transparency on both the process of developing a national position and further deliberations in the Council are some of the reasons why civic society fails to engage.

One of our findings that is the most relevant to your consultation is the following (p.109): "In all the three countries CSOs hardly ever receive the final edition of the national position. They are also only rarely informed about the further developments in Brussels or the necessity to amend the national position.

Countries should consider changing such practice: ministries should inform the relevant CSOs on the results achieved at EU level regarding the most important national positions."

In neither of the three countries could civic society organisations rely on their national governments to disclose the content of discussions in Council working parties, COREPER and even the Council. As civic society actors we do not know whether and to what extent the national delegations stick with the mandate; we are also not able to evaluate whether the national positions have become outdated and we should push our government to prepare some updates. We are expected to have blind faith that: 1) the national delegation will consult with the civic society when it needs to develop or update a national position for the Council; 2) that the national positions will follow the mandate as outlined in the government/parliament-approved document during negotiations in the Council working parties/Coreper/Council.

There needs to be more transparency in order to motivate civic society organisations to engage in EU decision-making. Firstly, the agendas and documents for working parties/Coreper/Council should be as transparent as possible so that civil society organisations can see what's on the agenda and whether they were consulted by the national government on that specific issue. Secondly, there should be some way to find out the positions expressed by national delegations during negotiations - if the full transcripts are not feasible, it might be done in a summary fashion (summarizing which countries were in favour/against/abstained).

Best wishes,

Iveta Kazoka

Centre for Public Policy PROVIDUS, senior policy analyst

██████████

████████████████████