

COMMITTEE ON ECONOMICS, INNOVATION AND PUBLIC WORKS

Regulations

CHAPTER I

Name, composition, responsibilities and competences

Article 1

Denomination

1 – The Parliamentary Committee on Economics, Innovation and Public Works (“the Committee”) is a standing committee of the Assembly of the Republic.

2 – The Committee’s composition is determined by the Assembly of the Republic, in compliance with the provisions of Article 29(1) of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly of the Republic.

Article 2

Responsibilities

The Committee has the following responsibilities:

a) In the area of the economy, dealing with all matters relating to industry; innovation; the management of industrial property; trade and services; the oversight and regulation of economic activities; investment and company internationalisation, including economic diplomacy; models for attracting foreign investment; regional development; entrepreneurship and competitiveness; energy and geological resources, together with the Committee on Agriculture and the Sea regarding existing resources above and below ground in the national maritime space; tourism; competition; consumer protection, including appraisal of consumer rights in the law and oversight of economic activities (the Competition Authority and the Food and Economic Safety Authority – ASAE); the Europe 2020 Strategy; the National Strategic Frame of Reference (NSFR) and Structural Funds; and the National Reform Programme, within the Committee’s sphere of responsibility;

b) In the area of public works, dealing with issues regarding the construction, conservation, maintenance and operation of public works that are within the purview of the Secretary of State for Public Works; land (roads and railways) and river transport; maritime transport and ports (ports in conjunction with the Committee on Agriculture and the Sea); air transport and airports; mobility and accident prevention and road safety; communications and postal services.

Article 3

Competences

The Committee is responsible for:

a) Considering members’ and government bills, draft amendments, treaties and agreements that are submitted to the Assembly and producing the relevant opinions;

b) Voting on the details of texts that the Plenary has passed with respect to the general principles, as provided for and within the limits laid down in Article 168 of the Constitution and in the Rules of Procedure;

c) As laid down in the Constitution and the law, monitoring, considering and pronouncing on Portugal’s participation in the process of constructing the European Union and preparing reports on the information specified in Article 197(1)(i) of the Constitution, without prejudice to the competences of the Plenary;

d) Considering petitions submitted to the Assembly on matters that are within its area of competence;

e) Gathering information on political and administrative problems that fall within its area of competence and providing the Assembly, when it deems appropriate, with the elements necessary to consider the acts of the Government and the Public Administration;

f) Checking that the Government and the Public Administration comply with the AR’s laws and resolutions, in which respect the Committee may also suggest to the AR such measures as it deems appropriate;

g) Proposing to the President of the Assembly that the Plenary hold thematic debates on matters within the Committee’s area of competence so that the Conference of Leaders may decide whether or not they are

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opportune and of interest;

h) Preparing reports on matters within its area of competence;

i) Drawing up and passing its regulations;

j) Taking part in initiatives and international meetings of parliamentary scope that relate to matters within the Committee's area of competence;

k) Ensuring cooperation with parliamentary delegations and parliamentary friendship groups and other groups, pursuant to Article 36 of the Rules of Procedure;

l) Requesting a report on the qualitative monitoring of the regulation and application of any given legislation from the respective Member acting as rapporteur or, in his/her absence, from another member of the Committee, pursuant to Article 31(4) of the Rules of Procedure;

m) Drawing up the plan, report and budget for its activities for each legislative session, pursuant to Article 108 of the Rules of Procedure.

Article 4

Powers

1 – The Committee may ask for or undertake any measures needed to ensure the proper exercise of its functions, thus:

a) Carrying out studies;

b) Requesting information or opinions;

c) Asking any citizens to give evidence;

d) Holding parliamentary hearings in accordance with the Rules of Procedure;

e) Requisitioning or retaining specialists to assist it in its work;

f) Undertaking information or study missions.

2 – The Committee may ask members of the Government, officials from ministerial departments, senior managers or specialists from any public bodies to take part in its work and it may ask them for information or opinions.

3 – In the exercise of its functions the Committee also has the following powers:

a) Proposing the setting up of subcommittees;

b) Setting up working groups to monitor specific matters;

c) Organising meetings and seminars on topics the Committee deems opportune;

d) Undertaking visits to institutions and bodies related to its sphere of action;

e) Conducting hearings with persons appointed to senior state offices, pursuant to Article 231 of the Rules of Procedure.

4 – The proceedings established in this Article must be authorised by the President of the Assembly of the Republic whenever they involve expenses and are not mentioned in the Committee's budget.

CHAPTER II

Committee Bureau

Article 5

Committee Bureau

The Bureau is made up of the Chairperson and two Vice-Chairpersons, pursuant to Article 32 of the Rules of Procedure.

Article 6

Competences of the Bureau

In addition to the competences that are specifically entrusted to it by the Committee, the Bureau is responsible for organising and managing the Committee's work.

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Article 7

Chairperson of the Committee

- 1 – The Chairperson represents the Committee and manages and coordinates its work.
- 2 – The Chairperson is responsible for:
 - a) After first consulting the coordinators of the parliamentary groups, convening Committee meetings and setting the order of business;
 - b) Directing the Committee's work;
 - c) Convening meetings with the coordinators of the parliamentary groups;
 - d) Coordinating the work of the standing subcommittees and taking part therein whenever he/she deems appropriate;
 - e) Informing the Assembly about the progress of the Committee's work in accordance with the provisions of the Rules of Procedure;
 - f) Validating failures to attend by full members of the Committee;
 - g) Discharging the Committee's normal day-to-day business.

Article 8

Vice- Chairpersons' competences

The Vice- Chairpersons shall deputise for the Chairperson whenever he/she is absent or unable to perform his/her functions, and exercise any competences the latter may delegate to them.

CHAPTER III

Functioning of the Committee

Article 9

Parliamentary group coordinators

Each parliamentary group shall appoint one of the full members to be coordinator and duly inform the Chairperson of the Committee.

Article 10

Scheduling and convening meetings

- 1 – Meetings are scheduled by the Committee itself or by the Chairperson acting on his/her own initiative.
- 2 – Unless scheduled at the previous meeting, the Chairperson shall convene the meetings he/she schedules by email, through the appropriate services, at least 48 hours in advance. The notification must include the order of business.
- 3 – Notifications of meetings shall be sent to the full members of the Committee, and the information that a meeting has been convened shall be sent to the alternate members.

Article 11

Quorum

- 1 – The Committee may only function and make decisions if more than half the Committee members in full exercise of their office are present, including for this purpose those alternate members who may be substituting for full members.
- 2 – The lack of a quorum 30 minutes after the time for which the meeting has been scheduled to start shall allow the Chairperson of the Committee or his/her deputy to declare the meeting closed once the attendance record has been taken.
- 3 – In the circumstances envisaged in the previous paragraph, a new meeting with the same order of business shall be scheduled, after the parliamentary group coordinators have been consulted.

Article 12

Order of business

- 1 – The order of business of each meeting is set at the previous meeting or by the Chairperson if the meeting is convened by him/her.
- 2 – The order of business may be changed during the meeting itself if there is a justified reason for doing so and

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no member of the Committee opposes it.

Article 13

Breaks

1 – Any parliamentary group may potestatively request a break in the Committee's work of not more than 30 minutes once during the course of each meeting.

2 – Only one break under the terms of the previous paragraph is permitted per meeting.

Article 14

Speeches

1 – As a rule, speeches by Committee members are not subject to a time limit.

2 – Without prejudice to the previous paragraph, the Chairperson may propose that rules be adopted for a discussion so as to foster and ensure the efficacy of the work.

Article 15

Consideration of members' and government bills

1 – When the Committee receives any members' or government bill and the Committee is understood to be competent to consider it, a Member shall be appointed to draw up the Committee's opinion.

2 – The author or one of the authors of the bill has the right to present it to the Committee, and there is then time for the author or authors to provide clarifications to the Members who are present.

Article 16

Opinions

1 – For each subject that is to be submitted to the Plenary, the Committee may appoint one or more Members to be responsible for drawing up opinions, pursuant to the Rules of Procedure.

2 – When performing this appointment, in addition to the specific competences of the Members, the proportional distribution of the parliamentary groups must be borne in mind, using the D'Hondt method. Members shall preferably be responsible for drawing up opinions on legislative initiatives from other parliamentary groups.

Article 17

Decisions

1 – Without prejudice to the provisions of Article 12(2), the Committee may only make decisions on subjects that are included on the order of business for the meeting in question.

2 – Except in relation to subjects for which the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly of the Republic require a qualified majority, decisions shall be made by simple majority, without counting abstentions.

3 – Without prejudice to the quorum for sitting and making decisions or to the rules applicable to Members' attendance at Committee meetings, in the case of votes that are decided by simple majority, each parliamentary group's votes shall correspond to its share of seats in the Assembly of the Republic.

Article 18

Voting

1 – Voting shall be by a show of hands, except for matters for which the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly of the Republic require a secret ballot for votes in the Plenary.

2 – Voting is compulsory, and reserving one's position for the Plenary of the Assembly shall signify abstention.

3 – If so proposed by the Chairperson or requested by any parliamentary group, voting on a given matter may be postponed to the next meeting once only.

Article 19

Appeals

Rulings made by the Bureau or decisions made by the Chairperson may be appealed to the Committee plenary.

Article 20

(Minutes)

1 – Minutes shall be kept of each meeting and must include a list of those present and those absent, a summary of the matters addressed, the positions of the Members and parliamentary groups, and the result of votes, with the respective individual and collective explanations of vote.

2 – The parliamentary Committee may decide to record all or part of its meetings.

3 – The minutes shall be drawn up by the advisors who assist the Committee and are approved at the next

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meeting after the one to which they refer.

Article 21

Public nature of Committee meetings

1 – The Committee's meetings are public.

2 – The Committee may exceptionally meet in camera when this is justified by the confidential nature of the matters to be addressed.

3 – All the documents under examination or already examined by the parliamentary Committee which do not contain restricted information must be posted on the Assembly's website.

Article 22

Parliamentary hearings

1 – The parliamentary hearings established in Articles 102, 104, 231 and 257 of the Rules of Procedure take place at plenary sittings of the Committee, unless unanimously decided otherwise by the Committee's full members.

2 – The Committee shall use the table of times in Annexe I for all hearings.

3 – The holding, nature and organisation of other parliamentary hearings shall be decided on a case-by-case basis by the Committee plenary.

Article 23

Audiences

1 – All the day-to-day business relating to audiences must be processed via the Bureau.

2 – Audiences may be entrusted to a Committee representation, which shall be made up of at least one Member from each parliamentary group.

3 – The views that are voiced during audiences are not binding on the Committee.

Article 24

Committee support services

1 – The Committee is provided with technical and administrative support for its work, pursuant to the law and the Rules of Procedure.

2 – The Committee support services are responsible for:

a) Checking the presence of full Members and providing a secretarial services for meetings;

b) Drawing up the minutes;

c) Handling the day-to-day business and all the administrative work;

d) Managing and updating the Committee's page on the Assembly of the Republic's website;

e) Providing specialised legal and technical advice in the Committee's areas of competence;

f) Providing documental support.

CHAPTER IV

Subcommittees and working groups

Article 25

Formation

1 – Subject to prior authorisation by the President of the Assembly of the Republic, who shall first consult the Conference of Parliamentary Committee Chairpersons, the Committee may propose the formation of such subcommittees as it deems necessary.

2 – The Committee may also form working groups as it deems appropriate.

Article 26

Competences

1 – The subcommittees and working groups have the competence to:

a) Draw up and propose opinions on the various documents that are given to them by the Committee;

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- b) Make proposals to the Committee within their specialist areas;
- c) Grant audiences, by delegation from the Committee or its Chairperson;
- d) Discharge the day-to-day business referred to them as delegated by the Chairperson of the Committee.

2 – The subcommittees and working groups do not have decision-making powers and their work must be submitted to the plenary of the Committee for a decision.

Article 27

Composition

- 1 – The composition of subcommittees and working groups is established at the time of their formation.
- 2 – Only Members who are full or alternate members of the Committee may be members of subcommittees.
- 3 – Any other Member of the Committee may attend the meetings of its subcommittees and take part in their work.
- 4 – Members of other committees may also attend meetings of the subcommittees and, subject to prior authorisation by the Committee, take part in their work.
- 5 – Each parliamentary group is assured that it may be represented by at least one Member on any subcommittee or working group.

Article 28

Chairpersons and coordinators

- 1 – Each subcommittee shall have a chairperson, who shall convene and chair its meetings and also act as rapporteur.
- 2 – Subcommittee chairpersons are appointed by the plenary of the Committee.
- 3 – Chairpersons shall be chosen in conformity with the provisions of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly of the Republic.
- 4 – The chairperson of a subcommittee may be assisted by one vice-chairperson, who may deputise in the event of the chairperson's absence.
- 5 – The vice-chairperson is appointed on the same basis as the chairperson, although he/she must be a Member of a parliamentary group different from that of the chairperson.
- 6 – Each working group shall have a coordinator, who shall convene and chair its meetings and also act as rapporteur.
- 7 – Working group coordinators shall be appointed by the plenary of the Committee.

Article 29

Budget

The subcommittees must submit their draft activity plan and corresponding draft budget for each legislative session no later than 15 days before the end of the previous legislative session.

Article 30

Time limits

The Committee plenary may set time limits for subcommittees to complete the tasks entrusted to them.

Article 31

Limitations on powers

- 1 – Subcommittees do not have decision-making powers except on procedural matters and subject to consensus.
- 2 – The conclusions of the work done by subcommittees shall be submitted to the Committee for consideration.

Article 32

Functioning

The precepts governing the Committee's operating procedures apply to subcommittees, *mutatis mutandis*, as do those relating to the responsibilities of the relevant chairpersons.

Article 33

Dissolution of working groups

Working groups are dissolved automatically once the purpose for which they were created has been achieved, or

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by resolution of the Committee when it is considered that the reason which justified their formation has ceased to exist.

CHAPTER V Final provisions

Article 34

Revision of these Regulations

These Regulations may be revised upon a proposal made by any Member. Such proposal must be included in the order of business in advance.

Article 35

Omissions

Any situation that cannot be regulated through the provisions of these Regulations shall be resolved by means of the precepts set out in the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly of the Republic.

São Bento Palace, 25 November 2015

The Chairman of the Committee

Hélder Amaral