



DIÁRIO

da Assembleia da República

15th LEGISLATURE

1st LEGISLATIVE SESSION (2022-2023)

SUMMARY

**Conference of Parliamentary Committee
Chairpersons:**

Amendment to the competences of standing parliamentary
committees – 15th Legislature.

CONFERENCE OF PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

AMENDMENT TO THE COMPETENCES OF STANDING PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES

– 15th LEGISLATURE

Document approved by the Conference of Parliamentary Committee Chairpersons at the meeting on 1 June 2022, as amended and approved at the meeting on 25 January 2023

Parliamentary committees are internal bodies of the Parliament with specialised competences that fall within the general competence of the parliamentary institution. They are directly governed by their internal regulations and by the Rules of Procedure of the *Assembleia da República* (the Rules of Procedure – RAR), and the general operating rules of the Plenary are adopted as subsidiary law.

Where an initiative is referred to more than one parliamentary committee due to its subject matter, the President of the *Assembleia da República* issues an order, in accordance with Article 129(2) of the RAR, indicating the committee responsible for drawing up and passing the opinion. If they so wish, the committees to which the initiative has also been distributed may send information to the above-mentioned committee about the legislative initiative as regards their area of competence. Committees that are not responsible for drawing up the opinion but to which the initiative is also sent may, if they so wish, appoint one or several of their members to take part in meetings, audiences or hearings of the competent committee that deal with the initiative in question.

In accordance with Article 177(3) of the Constitution of the Portuguese Republic (the Constitution), the members of the Government must appear before the committees when asked to do so. They must be heard at least four times in each legislative session, according to a schedule set in advance at a Conference of Leaders (Article 104(5) RAR). It should also be noted that, under Article 104(3) of the Rules of Procedure, parliamentary groups may potestatively request the presence of members of the Government.

Accordingly, the Conference of Parliamentary Committee Chairpersons examined the competences of each of the standing parliamentary committees, taking into account the need to avoid or resolve conflicts, whether positive or negative, and to better adjust their current composition to fit the needs in terms of monitoring and supervising government action by the *Assembleia da República*. It also took into account the composition of the 23rd Constitutional Government and the respective Organisation and Operation Scheme (approved by Decree-Law No 32/2022 of 9 May 2022).

I – General competences of standing parliamentary committees

According to the Rules of Procedure, in general, standing parliamentary committees have the following competences:

- (a) to consider bills, draft amendments, treaties and agreements submitted to the *Assembleia da República* and to produce the necessary opinions, pursuant to Article 137;
- (b) to consider submissions of legislative initiatives, in accordance with Article 132;
- (c) to vote on the details of texts passed on the general principles by the Plenary, in accordance with and within the limits laid down in Article 168 of the Constitution and the Rules of Procedure, and to consider and vote on any replacement texts;
- (d) to discuss draft resolutions pursuant to Article 128(2), if so indicated by the respective authors, and to debate them and vote on their details, pursuant to Article 128(4);
- (e) to discuss draft votes, submit alternative draft votes and vote on draft votes or recommend that they should be voted on in Plenary, as well as to table draft votes for discussion and voting in Plenary in accordance with paragraphs (7) to (9) of Article 75;
- (f) to monitor, assess and pronounce themselves, under the Constitution and the law, on Portugal's participation in the process of constructing the European Union and to draw up reports on the information referred to in Article 197(1)(i) of the Constitution, without prejudice to the competences of the Plenary;
- (g) to consider petitions addressed to the *Assembleia da República*;

(h) to get acquainted with political and administrative problems that fall within their areas of competence and, where deemed appropriate by the *Assembleia da República*, to provide it with the elements required to consider the acts of the Government and the Administration;

(i) to verify compliance by the Government and the Administration with the laws and resolutions of the *Assembleia da República*, in which respect they may suggest the measures deemed appropriate;

(j) to propose to the President of the *Assembleia da República* the holding in Plenary of debates on topics that fall within their areas of competence so that the Conference of Leaders can rule on their timeliness and interest;

(k) to draw up reports on matters that fall within their areas of competence;

(l) to draw up and pass their own regulations;

(m) to ask and allow any citizen to take part in their work, including staff and senior officials of the state's direct and indirect administration and the state-owned business sector;

(n) to conduct hearings of persons designated for appointment as the heads of independent regulatory authorities and holders of senior state offices, as well as of candidates for offices outside the *Assembleia da República* whose appointment falls within its areas of competence;

(o) to approve their draft activity plan and budget at the end of each legislative session for the following session;

(p) to draw up activity reports at the end of each legislative session.

In the field of international and European relations, and without prejudice to the specific competences of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and Portuguese Communities and the European Affairs Committee, each committee may establish contacts with its counterparts for the exchange of information in the international or European sphere and propose to the President of the *Assembleia da República* that it should take part in initiatives organised by counterpart committees of other national parliaments, by the European Parliament or by other regional or international parliamentary organisations.

As regards Portugal's participation in the European Union, the various parliamentary committees, depending on the subject matter and in cooperation with the European Affairs Committee, may request the presence of members of the Government to consider the orders of business of the corresponding Councils of Ministers of the European Union, whenever they take place. Furthermore, depending on the subject matter, each parliamentary committee is responsible for issuing an opinion on the legislative and non-legislative initiatives listed on the work programme of the European Commission, transmitted through the proper channels (i.e. the European Affairs Committee) of the *Assembleia da República*, pursuant to Law No 43/2006 of 25 August 2006 in its current wording¹ – Law on the monitoring, assessment and pronouncement by the *Assembleia da República* within the scope of the process of constructing the European Union – and the protocols relating to the role of national parliaments in the European Union and the application of the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality annexed to the Treaty of Lisbon.

Committees may ask any citizen, member of the Government, senior official and staff of the state's direct administration, and senior official, staff and contracted personnel of the state's indirect administration and the state's business sector to take part in their work, and they may ask them for information or opinions.

For the proper exercise of their duties, committees may, in particular:

- propose the formation of subcommittees and set up working groups;
- conduct studies;
- request information or opinions;
- ask any citizen or entity to give evidence;
- requisition or retain experts to assist them in their work;
- undertake fact-finding or study missions;
- participate in the periodic meetings of the counterpart committees of the national parliaments of the European Union countries;
- hold parliamentary hearings.

¹ Amended by Law No 21/2012 of 17 May 2012, Law No 18/2018 of 2 May 2018, and Law No 64/2020 of 2 November 2020.

II – Areas of competence of standing parliamentary committees

Without prejudice to the desired cooperation and coordination between parliamentary committees on wide-reaching matters falling within the remit of different committees, their competences are indicated below.

1 – Committee on Constitutional Affairs, Rights, Freedoms and Guarantees

The Committee on Constitutional Affairs, Rights, Freedoms and Guarantees (CACDLG) is responsible for:

- addressing questions concerning the interpretation or application of constitutional precepts;
- handling all matters concerning the fundamental rights and obligations enshrined in the Constitution and the law, in all matters pertaining to the areas of competence of this Committee, as defined by the Conference of Parliamentary Committee Chairpersons, namely:
 - rights, freedoms and guarantees (all those listed under Title II of Part I of the Constitution, in particular, rights of personality, apart from those mentioned in Chapter III – Workers' rights, freedoms and guarantees – and those relating to the media);
 - justice, social reintegration and prison matters;
 - internal administration, including electoral matters, namely concerning the exercise of voting and referendum rights – without prejudice to cooperation with the competent committee in matters concerning the electoral system and the statute of local government officials – and civil protection matters, without prejudice to the competence of other committees with respect to forest fires;
 - legal regimes relating to immigration, asylum and refugees, migration, integration and intercultural dialogue;
 - European area of freedom, security and justice;
 - human rights;
 - citizenship, equality and non-discrimination, tackling violence against women and domestic violence and combating human trafficking;
 - protection of children and young people at risk and the elderly, without prejudice to the necessary cooperation with the Committee on Employment, Social Security and Inclusion, which also has functional competences in this area;
 - legal schemes governing citizens' right to petition and legislative initiative by citizens;
 - definition of sanction regimes in sectoral areas, without prejudice to the primary competence of the parliamentary committee that is competent for the matter in question in each case, namely in the field of road safety, through the processing of legislative initiatives revising or amending the Highway Code, without prejudice to the competence of the Committee on Economic Affairs, Public Works, Planning and Housing;
 - to monitor, supervise and pronounce itself on the action of the Government and the Administration in the areas under the political responsibility of the Minister of the Presidency, the Minister in the Cabinet of the Prime Minister and for Parliamentary Affairs, the Minister of Justice, and the Minister of Home Affairs.

In the performance of its duties, the Committee is responsible for:

- issuing opinions on questions of interpretation of the Constitution;
- issuing opinions on the constitutionality of bills and other parliamentary initiatives, when asked to do so by the President of the *Assembleia da República* or other standing parliamentary committees, and producing the corresponding opinions;
- issuing opinions on conflicts of competence between committees at the request of the President of the *Assembleia da República*;
- considering bills, draft resolutions and rules of procedure submitted to it by the President of the *Assembleia da República* and producing the corresponding opinions;

- considering questions of procedure and issuing opinions on the interpretation and implementation of rules and remediation of shortcomings in the Rules of Procedure when so requested by the President of the *Assembleia da República*, the Bureau or the Plenary;
- considering and voting on the details of texts that the Plenary has passed with respect to the general principles, as well as any draft amendments, as provided for in Article 168 of the Constitution and the Rules of Procedure;
- considering petitions addressed to the *Assembleia da República* falling within its competences and falling within the remit of the Committee;
- monitoring, considering and pronouncing itself on Portugal's participation in the process of constructing the European Union and on European initiatives falling within its areas of competence, as laid down in the Constitution and the law;
- proposing to the President of the *Assembleia da República* the holding in Plenary of debates on topics falling within its areas of competence so that the Conference of Leaders can rule on their timeliness and interest, and appointing a rapporteur if the proposal is approved;
- setting up the panel for the Human Rights Award of the *Assembleia da República* and considering applications submitted to it (pursuant to Resolution of the *Assembleia da República* No 69/98 of 10 December 1998, as amended by Resolution of the *Assembleia da República* No 48/2002 of 20 July 2002, and the Award Regulations);
- setting up, together with the Committee on Education and Science, the panel for the António Barbosa de Melo Prize for Parliamentary Studies and considering the applications submitted to it (pursuant to Order of the President of the *Assembleia da República* No 56/XIII of 15 September 2017);
- drawing up, by the end of each legislative session, its draft activity plan and the respective draft budget for the following legislative session, for submission to the President of the *Assembleia da República* for consideration;
- drawing up and passing its regulations.

The concurrent competence of other standing parliamentary committees for the matter in question limits this Committee's work to issues of constitutionality and protection of fundamental rights.

2 – Committee on Foreign Affairs and Portuguese Communities

In the performance of its duties, the Committee on Foreign Affairs and Portuguese Communities (CNEP) is specifically responsible for exercising its competences and political control in the following areas:

- monitoring the implementation of Portuguese foreign policy, its determinants and conditions;
- monitoring the Portuguese communities living abroad;
- monitoring cooperation for development policy;
- monitoring the international status of the Portuguese language and the promotion of the Portuguese language and culture abroad;
- pronouncing itself on issues relating to foreign policy matters;
- pronouncing itself, through opinions, on draft resolutions concerning international treaties and agreements submitted to the *Assembleia da República* for approval.

The Committee on Foreign Affairs and Portuguese Communities is also responsible for:

- issuing opinions on the requests of the President of the Republic to leave the country;
- monitoring Portuguese parliamentary representations in the various international organisations and conferences, cooperating in publicising and debating any recommendations approved, without prejudice to the competences of other bodies;
- developing and maintaining, through contact with counterpart international committees, the relations of the *Assembleia da República* with parliaments of other countries and international organisations, without prejudice to the competences of other bodies;

- issuing opinions on the proposals of the President of the *Assembleia da República* referred to in Article 45(1) and (2) of the Rules of Procedure.

3 – National Defence Committee

In the performance of its duties, the National Defence Committee (CDN) is specifically responsible for exercising its competences and political control in the areas of national defence, as well as in matters under the supervision or coordination of the Ministry of National Defence.

The National Defence Committee is specifically responsible for:

- considering, in conjunction with the competent parliamentary committee, the military implications of the treaties concerning national defence matters and, in the same terms, the treaties on matters falling under the authority of the Minister of Defence;
- monitoring the involvement of Portuguese military contingents abroad, namely those arising from the Portuguese state's international military commitments or the participation in humanitarian and peace-keeping missions undertaken by international organisations of which Portugal is a member;
- without prejudice to the competences of other parliamentary bodies, monitoring and assessing Portugal's participation in the process of constructing the European Union's common defence policy, in the Committee's areas of competence, in particular as regards the European Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Common Security and Defence Policy (CFSP/CSDP);
- monitoring the implementation of technical-military cooperation policy with Portuguese-speaking countries, without prejudice to the overall competence of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and Portuguese Communities as regards cooperation policy.

4 – European Affairs Committee

Without prejudice to the competence of the Plenary and the remaining specialised committees, in the performance of its duties, the European Affairs Committee (CAE) is specifically responsible for:

- monitoring and considering, pursuant to the Constitution [in particular Article 161(n) and Article 163(f)] and Law No 43/2006 of 25 August 2006, in its current wording, all matters of interest to Portugal in the context of the construction of Europe, European institutions or cooperation between the Member States of the European Union, in particular, the action of the Government on such matters;
- encouraging greater involvement of the *Assembleia da República* in the work of the European institutions, namely by promoting meetings or hearings with the European Union's institutions, bodies and agencies on matters that are relevant to Portugal's participation in the construction of the European Union;
- intensifying, in particular, exchanges between the *Assembleia da República* and the European Parliament by proposing appropriate reciprocal facilities and regular meetings (in person or via videoconference) with interested Members, particularly those elected in Portugal;
- promoting interparliamentary cooperation within the European Union, namely – and without prejudice to the competences of other bodies – by establishing and maintaining contact with counterpart committees and relations between the *Assembleia da República* and national parliaments of the Member States of the European Union within the scope of implementing the Protocol on the role of national parliaments in the European Union and the Protocol on the application of the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality attached to the treaties governing the European Union;
- requesting from the Government the information needed for the *Assembleia da República* to monitor and assess Portugal's participation in the process of constructing the European Union;
- promoting hearings with the Government before and after European Council meetings;

- preparing and approving opinions on documents that the Government submits to the *Assembleia da República* concerning the European Union or that it is required to submit to European Union institutions;
- promoting the implementation of formal mechanisms for the *Assembleia da República* to effectively monitor, assess and pronounce itself, namely by preparing an opinion, when matters within the sphere of the exclusive legislative competence of the *Assembleia da República* are pending decision in bodies of the European Union;
- collaborating with the other committees with responsibility for the matter in question in the monitoring and follow-up of dossiers in the context of the process of constructing the European Union;
- liaising with the specialised committees with responsibility for the matter in question on the exchange of information and appropriate forms of collaboration to achieve efficient intervention by the *Assembleia da República* in matters concerning the construction of the European Union, with particular reference to the drafting of the opinion of the *Assembleia da República* on whether or not a draft normative act that is pending at the European institutions complies with the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality;
- applying the methodology defining the process for drawing up reports and opinions on compliance with the principle of subsidiarity by draft legislative acts of the European Union, taking into account the time limits and procedures stemming from the Protocol on the role of national parliaments in the European Union and the Protocol on the application of the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality attached to the treaties governing the European Union;
- presenting draft resolutions on draft European acts of a normative nature to be submitted to the Plenary for consideration and decision;
- holding an annual meeting with the members of the Legislative Assemblies of the Autonomous Regions, maintaining the necessary dialogue with the respective counterpart bodies for the practical application of the principle of subsidiarity, also asking them for an opinion where regional legislative competences are concerned in the consideration of initiatives;
- proposing the appointment of the Portuguese representatives in the Conference of Parliamentary Committees for Union Affairs of Parliaments of the European Union (COSAC) and considering their work and the results of the Conference;
- participating, in collaboration with the other parliamentary committees involved, in the appointment of the delegation of the *Assembleia da República* to the Inter-parliamentary Conference for the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Common Security and Defence Policy (CFSP/CSDP) and to the Inter-parliamentary Conference on Economic and Financial Governance of the European Union (Conference under Article 13 TSCG);
- promoting the hearing and consideration of the curricula vitae of those selected to be appointed or nominated by the Government for offices of a non-judicial or judicial nature in the institutions, bodies or agencies of the European Union;
- promoting hearings and debates on European matters with civil society representatives, contributing to the creation of a European public space at the national level.

5 – Budget and Finance Committee

In the performance of its duties, the Budget and Finance Committee (COF) is particularly responsible for exercising its competences and political control in all the areas under the Ministry of Finance, namely as follows:

- Major Options of the Plan and National Reform Programme;
- State Budget and General State Accounts;
- budgetary and public finance policy;
- budgetary and financial relations with the European Union, in particular as regards participation in conferences on Stability, Economic Coordination and Governance in the European Union;
- the state's role as a shareholder;
- supervision and regulation of financial activities and institutions;

- consideration of Court of Auditors' reports;
- welfare and pension systems for the purposes of monitoring their financial impact;
- other institutions and matters under the Ministry of Finance.

The Budget and Finance Committee is also responsible for guiding the operation of the Technical Budget Support Unit.

6 – Committee on Economic Affairs, Public Works, Planning and Housing

In the performance of its duties, the Committee on Economic Affairs, Public Works, Planning and Housing (CEOPPH) is specifically responsible for exercising its competences and political control, in particular in the following sectoral policies:

- industry;
- management of industrial property;
- trade and services;
- supervision and regulation of economic activities;
- investment and internationalisation of businesses, including economic diplomacy;
- models to attract foreign investment;
- territorial cohesion and competitiveness, in conjunction with the Committee on Public Administration, Spatial Planning and Local Government;
- entrepreneurship, competitiveness and innovation;
- tourism;
- competition;
- consumer protection, including the consideration of the legislative side of consumer rights and the oversight of economic activities (Portuguese Competition Authority [AdC] and Economic and Food Safety Authority [ASAE]);
- technology development and technology transfer;
- digital transition;
- Europe 2020 strategy and Europe 2030 strategy;
- national strategic reference framework and European Structural and Investment Funds;
- recovery and resilience plan;
- Banco Português de Fomento [national promotional bank], within the framework of financing and economic development policies;
- National Reform Programme;
- construction and public works;
- monitoring and promoting the quality of road infrastructure, as well as meeting mobility needs, in accordance with the duties of the Institute for Mobility and Transportation, without prejudice to the competence of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs, Rights, Freedoms and Guarantees in the field of road safety;
- land transport (road and rail);
- maritime and river transport and the port sector;
- air transport and airport sector;
- mobility;
- communications and postal services;
- policy on housing, leasing, and housing stock and urban management, conservation and regeneration;
- National Ocean Strategy 2021-2030, in liaison with the Committee on Agriculture and Fisheries and the Committee on the Environment and Energy, due to the matters concerned;
- Integrated Maritime Policy of the European Union, without prejudice to the competence of the National Defence Committee for maritime affairs under the Ministry of National Defence;
- monitoring of the process of extension of the Portuguese continental platform;
- national maritime spatial planning and management;

- national maritime and port plan;
- development of the blue economy, including emerging maritime industries, in liaison with the Committee on Agriculture and Fisheries and the Committee on the Environment and Energy;
- nautical tourism and recreational boating;
- science, innovation and technology within the scope of the blue economy, without prejudice to the competences of the Committee on Education and Science.

7 – Committee on Agriculture and Fisheries

In the performance of its duties, the Committee on Agriculture and Fisheries is responsible for exercising its competences in the areas indicated below:

A. Agriculture

- agriculture, from the point of view of the production of goods and services, from inputs to trade;
- livestock farming from the point of view of animal production, in particular, the feeding and welfare of production animals;
- forest and plant health;
- animal health;
- rural development (such as irrigation, agricultural insurance, production support infrastructure);
- land-ownership structure;
- national agricultural reserve;
- common land;
- beekeeping, hunting, and other activities carried out in a rural or forest environment, without prejudice to the competences specifically conferred on the Committee on the Environment and Energy and the Committee on Economic Affairs, Public Works, Planning and Housing;
- production and conservation forestry;
- management and spatial planning of forests and forest stands – Forest Reform, National Forest Strategy – without prejudice to the competences conferred on the Committee on the Environment and Energy;
- forest fires from the perspective of prevention and combat;
- agricultural implications of environmental policy and effects of climate change on agricultural and forestry production.

B. Fisheries and related maritime affairs

- fisheries, aquaculture and the chain of fish products;
- recreational fishing;
- fishing ports;
- conditions governing fishing activities, without prejudice to the competences of the Committee on Employment, Social Security and Inclusion;
- monitoring maritime affairs relating to fisheries and aquaculture, specifically allocated to the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, in particular as regards integrated maritime policy, maritime services, port protection works, maritime security and the coordination of national and European funds under the Mar2020 Operational Programme;
- National Ocean Strategy 2021-2030, as regards fisheries and aquaculture policies, in conjunction with the Committee on Economic Affairs, Public Works, Planning and Housing and the Committee on the Environment and Energy.

C. Food

- agro-industry and food systems;
- food, nutrition and gastronomy from the perspective of consumption, promotion and marketing, packaging and trading on national and international markets;
- food safety and sustainability;

- genetically modified organisms.

D. European policy, trade agreements, science and innovation

- European policies in the field of agriculture, fisheries and rural development, such as the common agricultural policy and the common fisheries policy, as well as national and EU financial instruments belonging to these common policies;
- trade agreements between the European Union/Portugal and other economic blocs concerning agro-forestry products;
- monitoring matters relating to agriculture, forestry, fisheries and food in international fora and organisations;
- science, innovation and technology in the fields of agriculture and forestry, without prejudice to the competences conferred in this respect on the Committee on Economic Affairs, Public Works, Planning and Housing, the Committee on the Environment and Energy and the Committee on Education and Science.

8 – Committee on Education and Science

The Committee is responsible for monitoring policies in the areas under the responsibility of the Minister of Education and the Minister of Science, Technology and Higher Education in the following areas:

- education, including all education systems and levels, without prejudice to coordination with the Committee on Culture, Communication, Youth and Sport with regard to school sport;
- science and technology, including, inter alia, subjects related to science and technology-based innovation, space, guidelines on digital skills, scientific computing, dissemination of scientific and technological culture and international scientific and technological cooperation, in particular with countries whose official language is Portuguese;
- information and knowledge society in Portugal, in matters whose coordination is the responsibility of the Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia [Foundation for Science and Technology], a public agency under the Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education;
- the treatment of matters concerning copyright and related rights by the Committee on Education and Science, as regards creators in the field of education and science, is to be performed without prejudice to the specific competence of the Committee on Culture, Communication, Youth and Sport regarding the media and culture.

The Committee is also responsible for coordinating the development of the ‘Young People’s Parliament’ Programme.

9 – Health Committee

In the performance of its duties, the Health Committee is responsible, in particular, for exercising its legislative and supervisory competences in the sectors covered by the Ministry of Health, monitoring the National Health System and health policy, specifically in the following areas:

- access to health;
- primary healthcare;
- long-term healthcare and palliative care;
- monitoring of the National Health Plan through indicators for cancer, mental health, HIV/AIDS, obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and the health of women and children;
- policy on medical products;
- hospitals and hospital management;
- healthcare quality;
- drug addiction: preventive action, deterrence, treatment, risk reduction and minimisation of harm, and psychosocial reintegration;

- public health – diseases of civilisation;
- relations between the National Health Service and the social and private health sector;
- science and research on health;
- funding and sustainability of the National Health Service;
- public-private partnerships in the health sector;
- monitoring the activities of international bodies in the health sector;
- legislative procedures concerning the Statutes of the Portuguese Medical Association, the Portuguese Pharmacists' Association, the Portuguese Dental Association and the Portuguese Nurses Association.

10 – Committee on Employment, Social Security and Inclusion

In the performance of its duties, the Committee on Employment, Social Security and Inclusion (CTSSI) is specifically responsible for exercising its competences and political control, in particular, in the following areas:

- labour, including labour relations and working conditions;
- solidarity and social security policies;
- employment and vocational training policies;
- schemes governing social protection and retirement from the civil service, without prejudice to the specific competences of the Committee on Public Administration, Spatial Planning and Local Government;
- occupational health and safety;
- social policies to support families, children, parenthood, the elderly and care for dependent people;
- policies to combat poverty and promote social inclusion;
- social economy, cooperative sector and volunteering;
- persons with disabilities and policies for their inclusion;
- protection of children and young people at risk in matters related to social security, without prejudice to the necessary coordination with the Committee on Constitutional Affairs, Rights, Freedoms and Guarantees, which is competent in this area.

Regarding public professional associations – professional chambers or associations – the Committee has specific responsibilities for matters relating to the creation, wind-up, merger and demerger of professional associations and all subsequent changes concerning engagement in the profession. Where doubts arise as to the nature of the proposed changes to public professional associations, and where the subject matter of the initiative is connected not only to the sphere of competence of the Committee on Employment, Social Security and Inclusion because it concerns the regulation of a professional association but also to the material framework of competences of another standing committee, it may also be referred to this Committee for the issuance of a general opinion. For historical and institutional reasons, the legislative procedures relating to the statutes of the Portuguese Bar Association, the Solicitadores and Enforcement Agents National Association and the Portuguese Chamber of Notaries, and the statutes of the Portuguese Medical Association, the Portuguese Pharmacists' Association, the Portuguese Dental Association and the Portuguese Nurses Association are exceptions to the above, as they must be monitored by the parliamentary committees with competence for the corresponding subjects, respectively, the Committee on Constitutional Affairs, Rights, Freedoms and Guarantees and the Health Committee.

11 – Committee on the Environment and Energy

In the performance of its duties, the Committee on the Environment and Energy (CAENE) is specifically responsible for exercising its competences and political control in the areas under the responsibility of the member of the Government responsible for the environment and climate action, in respect of the environment, energy, nature conservation and forests.

In particular, the Committee is responsible for monitoring matters related to:

- sustainable development;

- climate crisis, including climate change mitigation and adaptation measures, the national strategy for controlling greenhouse gases and management of extreme events in climate change scenarios;
- nature conservation, biodiversity, national ecological reserve (REN), network of protected areas and national agricultural reserve (RAN), as part of spatial planning;
- water resources and waterways policy and management, including matters relating to the right of access to potable water, the quality of water intended for human consumption, water resource management and services, and other matters falling within the scope of the Water Framework Directive;
- waste policy and waste management and treatment;
- circular economy and resource efficiency;
- recovery and reclamation of contaminated land and other sites;
- prevention, control and reduction of all forms of pollution and environmental degradation, including the marine environment, as well as the assessment of environmental impacts and remediation of damage to the environment;
- international and regional measures and agreements aimed at protecting the environment;
- environmental implications of agricultural policy;
- forests, in terms of conservation, environmental protection, sustainable development and social and territorial cohesion;
- geological resources and energy, in cooperation with the Committee on Economic Affairs, Public Works, Planning and Housing, with regard to existing resources on the soil and subsoil of the national maritime space;
- energy policy, in particular as regards its integration with environmental and energy planning measures, including the monitoring of the National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP) and the link between renewable energy sources and the National Climate Change Plan (NCCP), as well as the monitoring of energy transition projects in Portugal, photovoltaic, aeolian, onshore and offshore, and renewable gas projects in Portugal;
- strategy and implementation of PO SEUR – Operational Programme for Sustainability and Efficient Use of Resources and other funds from the areas within the remit of the member of the Government responsible for the environment and climate action;
- animal protection and welfare, with the exception of livestock and matters concerning production;
- sustainable urban mobility, in terms of the environmental management of cities and means of organising social life;
- territorial management instruments, in terms of nature and biodiversity protection;
- coastline;
- strategy and implementation of national and EU funds under the responsibility of the member of the Government responsible for the environment and energy, in particular the Environmental Fund, and Strategic Goals 2 – a greener Portugal and 3 – a more connected Portugal under the Partnership Agreement Portugal 2030.

12 – Committee on Culture, Communication, Youth and Sport

1. In the performance of its duties, the Committee on Culture, Communication, Youth and Sport is responsible for exercising its competences of monitoring and political supervision in the areas of culture, media, youth and sport.

2. Therefore, the Committee is responsible for:

- in the field of **culture**, dealing, in particular, with matters concerning language, heritage, arts, creative and cultural industries, and also copyright and related rights (as regards cultural creators, artists and performers and the creative and cultural industries);
- in the field of **communication**, dealing with policies concerning the media, including, inter alia, matters related to their public and private bodies, public radio and television services, digital terrestrial television and new generations of broadband; dealing with policies on communication and new communication channels, such as social media and blogs; dealing with matters linked to copyright in connection with the media, without prejudice to the need for coordination with the Committee on

Education and Science with regard to scientific creation.

- in the field of **youth**, dealing with matters concerning youth, namely as regards volunteering, health and sexuality, leisure activities, education, employment and entrepreneurship, and housing, without prejudice to the specific competences of the other parliamentary committees, in particular the Committee on Education and Science as regards education, the Health Committee as regards health and sexuality, the Committee on Employment, Social Security and Inclusion as regards employment, and the Committee on Economic Affairs, Public Works, Planning and Housing as regards housing;
- in the field of **sport**, particularly with regard to programmes to encourage the practice of sport, to ethics and violence, to federated sport, including the Olympic and Paralympic cycles, high-performance sport and the monitoring of the situation in the national sport movement, and to school sport, without prejudice to coordination with the Committee on Education and Science.

13 – Committee on Public Administration, Spatial Planning and Local Government

In the performance of its duties, the Committee on Public Administration, Spatial Planning and Local Government (CAPOTPL) is specifically responsible for exercising its competences and political control, in particular, in the following areas:

- public administration in cooperation with the parliamentary committees with responsibility for the matter in question;
- legal scheme governing public employment;
- schemes governing social protection and retirement from the civil service, without prejudice to the specific competences of the Committee on Employment, Social Security and Inclusion;
- administrative digitalisation, innovation and modernisation of the state and the public administration;
- measures and programmes concerning local Government;
- administrative decentralisation, through the transfer, by legislative means, of competences from state bodies to bodies of local authorities and inter-municipal entities;
- territorial cohesion, in connection with the [Committee on Economic Affairs, Public Works, Planning and Housing](#);
- promoting, within the scope of the legislative procedure, the consultation of the National Association of Portuguese Municipalities (ANMP) and the National Association of Parishes (ANAFRE), in the case of bills on local authorities involving, in particular, the following matters:
 - (a) the statute of local authorities, including the rules governing local finances;
 - (b) the scheme governing municipal police forces and their form of establishment;
 - (c) promotion of hearings with the respective local authority bodies upon the creation, wind-up or change of local authorities and their respective scheme, without prejudice to the powers of the autonomous regions.
- spatial planning model and management (within the remit of the Ministry of Territorial Cohesion);
- national geographic information policy.

14 – Committee on Transparency and the Statute of Members

The Committee is responsible, in particular, for examining matters relating to the fundamental rights and duties enshrined in the Constitution and the law, in all matters falling within the competences of the Committee; pronouncing itself on all matters concerning instances of incompatibility, inability, disqualification, waiver of immunities, conflicts of interest, suspension and loss of the mandate as Member; pronouncing itself on any issues that may in any way affect the mandate as Member and the conditions governing its exercise; and dealing with other matters attributed to it by law or by the Rules of Procedure.

1 – In the performance of its duties, the Committee is fully responsible for:

- (a) examining cases of incompatibility, inability and disqualification of Members of the *Assembleia da República* and, in cases of breaches of the law or the Rules of Procedure, conducting the corresponding proceedings and issuing the respective opinion;
- (b) receiving and registering declarations that raise possible conflicts of interest;
- (c) considering, upon a request by the declarants or the President of the *Assembleia da República*, any conflicts of interest raised, and issuing an opinion thereon;
- (d) considering the possible existence of conflicts of interest that have not been the object of a declaration, also issuing the respective opinion thereon;
- (e) considering whether declarations are correct, either on an *ex officio* basis or upon a duly substantiated request by any citizen exercising their political rights;
- (f) issuing an opinion on the verification of the credentials of Members of the *Assembleia da República*;
- (g) pronouncing itself on the waiving of immunity pursuant to the Statute of Members;
- (h) issuing opinions on a Member's suspension and loss of mandate;
- (i) conducting proceedings in challenges against eligibility and loss of mandate;
- (j) conducting inquiries with regard to facts that have occurred within the scope of the *Assembleia da República* and compromise the honour or dignity of any Member, as well as any serious irregularities committed in breach of the duties of Members of the *Assembleia da República*, on its own initiative, at the request of the Member or upon a decision of the President of the *Assembleia da República*;
- (k) issuing general statements and recommendations promoting good parliamentary practice;
- (l) considering any other issues concerning the mandate of Members of the *Assembleia da República*.

2 – The assessment of any facts or proceedings concerning Members of the *Assembleia da República* must always safeguard the political freedom to exercise the mandate, and the implementation of any of the envisaged measures must be subject to a prior hearing with the Members concerned.

3 – In the context of cooperation with judicial authorities, in the situations provided for in Article 11(8) of the Statute of Members, the decision to refer non-publicly accessible matters concerning Members of the *Assembleia da República* to the above authorities is the responsibility of the Committee, after examining the request, with due regard to judicial secrecy, where appropriate.

4 – The provisions of the preceding paragraph apply *mutatis mutandis* to requests submitted by entities outside the *Assembleia da República*.

5 – In accordance with paragraph 1(l), the Committee is responsible for considering all matters relating to the nature and scope of the mandate of Members as referred to in Article 1 of the Statute of Members, including, where relevant, legislative and regulatory matters.

6 – The Committee is also responsible for ensuring the implementation of the Code of Conduct for the Members of the *Assembleia da República* and exercising the competences provided for therein, in particular:

- (a) developing supplementary rules for the implementation of the legal rules on offers and hospitality;
- (b) drawing up an annual report on the implementation of the Code and the Committee's activity in that scope.

7 – Without prejudice to Article 35 of the Rules of Procedure of the *Assembleia da República*, the Committee is also responsible for considering and pronouncing itself on:

- (a) matters concerning the regime governing the exercise of functions by political officeholders and senior public officeholders, their reporting obligations and sanctioning regime;
- (b) issues raised with regard to the regime of the activity and the prevention of conflicts of interest of private organisations wishing to participate, in accordance with the law, in the definition and implementation of public policies and legislation, an activity commonly referred to as lobbying;

(c) issues concerning transparency measures applicable to political officeholders and senior public officeholders.

8 – It is the Committee's primary or related responsibility, as appropriate, to consider legislative initiatives, draft resolutions or decisions concerning the matters referred to in the preceding paragraphs.

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