



VERKHOVNA RADA OF UKRAINE

# UKRAINE WEEK IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT



European Parliament

## High-level discussion 1 "Relations between the legislative and the executive"

Tuesday 1 March, 09.00 – 11.00  
Venue: ASP 5G3

### Context of the discussion

Democracies are characterised by shared and distinct decision-making between the legislative and executive branches. Constructive and efficient relations between these two branches are thus a prerequisite for the smooth running of the legislative process, including for effective parliamentary oversight activities - a central characteristic of any modern democracy. The legislative process in Ukraine has its own specificities: it is central to the Verkhovna Rada as an institution (to a greater extent than in many other parliaments in the world, both in technical and political terms) and it is a highly politicised process, with a number of shortcomings. As a consequence, an unprecedented high level of drafts laws do not turn into legislation and the output is often of unequal quality. In this context, the concept for an "end-to-end" legislative process - based on greatly enhanced coordination between the Cabinet of Ministers, the Presidential Administration, and the Verkhovna Rada - should be considered.

### Objective of the discussion

The discussion would cover best practices on an "end-to-end" legislative process, including relations between the legislative and the executive ahead of a legislative proposal (consultations, green/white papers, agenda planning, exchange of information, etc.), interactions between parliamentary committees and ministries, monitoring and follow-up of implementation of adopted legislation, etc.

### 09.00 – 10.00 **Opening Presentations**

#### Co-Chairs:

**Jerzy Buzek**, former President of the European Parliament and former Prime Minister of Poland

**Sean Barrett**, Ceann Comhairle (Speaker), Dáil Éireann, Ireland

#### **Best practices in parliamentary oversight and in inter-institutional cooperation, including through parliamentary committees**

**Olemic Thommessen**, President of the Parliament of Norway

#### **Improving the relation from a legislative perspective**

**Oksana Syroid**, Deputy Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine

#### **Improving the relation from an executive perspective**

**Peter Wagner**, Head of the European Commission Support Group for Ukraine

### 10.00 – 11.00 **Q&A Session**



VERKHOVNA RADA OF UKRAINE

# UKRAINE WEEK IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT



## High-level discussion 2 "Role of a Parliament in the budget cycle"

Tuesday 1 March 9.00 – 11.00

Venue: ASP 5G2

### Context of the discussion

The national budget is a key policy statement made by the Executive in the course of a year. It reflects the fundamental values underlying national policy, outlines the government's views of the socio-economic state of the nation and provides a valuable measure of the government's future intentions and past performance. The budget is thus a critically important piece of legislation in insuring transparency, accountability, comprehensiveness and good governance. The budget in itself and the procedure relating to its adoption and execution underscore a fundamental constitutional relationship between the Executive and the Legislative. Both partners should therefore "play by the rules" to ensure transparency and accountability of the national budget process. The legal framework for the debate in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on the budget corresponds to European standards, but the practice does not meet the minimum criteria. Furthermore, the adoption of the annual budget by the Verkhovna Rada remains disconnected from the evaluation and control of its implementation, which narrows accordingly its ability to oversee the Executive.

### Objective of the discussion

Speakers will share their experience and exchange best practices on the role of a parliament in the budget cycle, in relation to the Executive and other institutional bodies. The discussion will cover the budget procedure in its entirety - from drawing of estimates on revenues and expenditure, to financial programming, budget procedure, follow up of implementation and budget control, including in relation with civil society and relevant bodies such as a court of auditors.

### 09.00 – 10.00 **Opening Presentations**

#### Co-Chairs:

**Jean Arthuis**, Chairman of the Committee on Budgets of the European Parliament

**Ivan Krulko**, Head of the Sub-Committee on State Financial Control and Accounting Chamber, Committee on Budget of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine

#### **The budget process in the Verkhovna Rada: challenges and possible way ahead**

**Gerd Ehlers**, Senior consultant, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)

#### **The interaction between a budget committee and other standing committees in a parliament throughout the budget cycle: lessons learnt and best practices**

**José Manuel Fernandes**, Member of the European Parliament, EP rapporteur on 2016 Budget for the EU Commission

#### **The role of a Parliament in liaising with other institutional specialised bodies**

**Gérard Deprez**, Member of the European Parliament, EP rapporteur on 2016 Budget for other EU Institutions

### 10.00 – 11.00 **Q&A Session**



# UKRAINE WEEK IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT



## High-level discussion 3

### "Openness, transparency and accountability: the representation role of a Parliament"

Tuesday 1 March, 11.15 – 13.15

Venue: ASP 5G3

#### Context of the discussion

Besides the adoption of legislation and the budget, and the oversight of the Executive, representation of and accountability to the citizens is an essential role of a parliament. In order to carry out their representation responsibilities in a transparent and effective manner, parliamentarians have to interact on a continuous, open and appropriate basis with the citizens, the civil society. A two-way process must be set up in which the Verkhovna Rada (both the institution and the MPs) communicates its activities with citizens both directly and through the media, and in which citizens can communicate their concerns and opinions with parliamentarians (on legislation or any other matter relevant to the Verkhovna Rada), both directly and through civil society organizations, who then follow up and represent these views transparently in the parliament.

#### Objective of the discussion

The representative functions of parliamentarians will be discussed from different angles and on different levels. Best practices on innovative and new technologies will also be shared as a way to enhance the representation and communication roles of parliamentarians, enabling them to adopt a modern strategic approach to engaging with citizens.

#### 11.15 – 12.15 **Opening Presentations**

##### Co-Chairs:

**Mairead McGuinness**, Vice-President of the European Parliament in charge of Information Policy, Press and Citizens Relations

**Svitlana Zalishchuk**, Chairperson of the subcommittee on Euro-Atlantic cooperation and Euro-integration of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine

##### **Parliament's interaction with citizens, civil society, expert groups and lobbyists in the legislative process**

**Rebecca Harms**, Co-Chair of the Greens/ALE group in the European Parliament

##### **Open parliament, tools and techniques for facilitating citizen engagement and parliamentary accountability**

**Jonathan Murphy**, Senior consultant in parliamentary development, UN Development Programme (UNDP)

##### **Beyond the capital: representing the interests of the citizens in the regions**

**Markku Markkula**, President of the Committee of the Regions of the EU

#### 12.15 – 13.15 **Q&A Session**



# UKRAINE WEEK IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT



## High-level discussion 4 "Administrative reform of the Verkhovna Rada:

Tuesday 1 March, 11.30 – 13.15

Venue: ASP 5G2

### Context of the discussion

The Administration of a parliament plays a crucial role in ensuring that the institution fulfils its constitutional and legal roles. The task of a parliamentary administration bears a lot of similarities with the role of a state civil service, but with important differences and additional responsibilities given the nature of the parliamentary institution. In particular, the multi-party character of a parliament requires the administration to respect at the same time the leadership of the institution by the Speaker, and also to provide services and support to all the deputies and their political groupings equitably and with discretion. A successful modernisation of the Verkhovna Rada administration - including restructuring, clarifying the line of accountability and developing a comprehensive human resource development strategy - can enable the many capable and committed members of the parliamentary secretariat to use their skills to the fullest and enhance the overall functioning of the institution.

### Objective of the discussion

The discussion will focus on the importance of and best practices to establish a well-structured, well-trained, independent, and permanent secretariat for the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, and its positive impact on the quality of legislative drafting, on institutional memory, and on the improvement of the working environment.

### 11.30 – 12.15 **Opening Presentations**

#### Co-Chairs:

**Klaus Welle**, Secretary General of the European Parliament

**Volodymyr Slyshynskyi**, First Deputy Head of the Secretariat of the Verkhovna Rada

#### **Experts' views on the process of reforming the administration of the Verkhovna Rada**

**Ihor Koliushko**, Lead expert of the Group on Administrative Reform of the Reanimation Package of Reforms

#### **Best practices from the General Secretariat of the European Parliament**

Interventions by **EP Director-Generals** in areas of interest for the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine

### 12.15 – 13.15 **Q&A Session**



VERKHOVNA RADA OF UKRAINE

# UKRAINE WEEK IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT



European Parliament

## Debate on "Ethical Standards for Parliamentarians for greater public trust and accountability"

organised by Kaja Kallas (1st Vice-Chair of the EP delegation to the EU-Ukraine Parliamentary Association Committee), in cooperation with the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and

**Tuesday 1 March, 14.30 – 15.30**

**Venue: ASP 5G1**

### Context of the discussion

The regulation of standards of parliamentarians' behaviour and ethics is essential to the maintenance of public trust in the efficacy, transparency and equity of democratic systems, and for building up a culture of democratic public service that clearly favours the public interest over private gains. Indeed, recurrent scandals and controversies in parliamentary democracies suggest that ethics regulatory reforms - carried out in an inclusive, transparent, and consultative manner - can be an important ingredient in restoring trust in democratic systems of governance. Unethical behaviour, including perceived corruption and lack of accountability, undermine public confidence in parliaments. Public trust in Ukraine's Parliament (Verkhovna Rada) has been measured at the level of 27%, including only 1.7% people who fully trust this institution.

### Objective of the discussion

The debate seeks to raise awareness about ethical and professional standards for parliamentarians and highlight main concerns and possible obstacles the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine may face while reforming and designing parliamentary standards of conduct.

**14.30 – 15.00**

#### **Opening Speaker and Moderator:**

**Kaja Kallas**, 1st Vice-Chair of the European Parliament Delegation to the EU-Ukraine Parliamentary Association Committee

#### **Discussants:**

**Olemic Thommessen**, President of the Parliament of Norway  
**Oksana Syroid**, Deputy Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine  
**Ostap Semerak**, Chair of the Verkhovna Rada delegation to the EU-Ukraine Parliamentary Association Committee

**Kateryna Ryabiko**, Project Co-ordinator, OSCE/ODIHR

**Igor Kogut**, Chief of Party, USAID Rada Program

**15.00 – 15.30** **Q&A Session**

*Please note that the debate will take place in English only. No interpretation will be provided.*



# UKRAINE WEEK IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT



## High-level discussion 5

### "The role of Parliament and Political Parties: towards a culture of dialogue, compromise and consensus building"

Tuesday 1 March, 15.30 – 17.30

Venue: PHS 6B001

#### Context of the discussion

The current reforms in the Verkhovna Rada are taking place against a backdrop of 25 years of political transition from authoritarian rule, towards a system based on the rule of law and parliamentary democracy. More recently, the illegal annexation of Crimea and the ongoing conflict in the east make the process of reform in Ukraine and in the VRU even more challenging. In addition to these geopolitical and domestic challenges, weak party structures lack key capacities to overcome a climate of mistrust and to facilitate inter-party or intra-coalition dialogue and consensus building. In this context, it is essential to develop the capacities of a Parliament to foster inter-party (and coalition) dialogue as a means to build the necessary consensus behind the ambitious reform agenda and to build consensus on key areas of national importance.

#### Objective of the discussion

High-standing international political figures, EP and VRU political party leadership, representatives from National Parliaments of the EU Member States, Members of the European Parliament will draw upon their vast experience and best practices to discuss the role and responsibility of political parties in developing a culture of political dialogue, compromise and consensus building as a means to effectively deliver key promises to the electorate. As a long term process, participants will also reflect on ways to accompany the process of implementation of the reform agenda of the Verkhovna Rada.

#### 15.30 – 16.30 **Opening Presentations**

##### Co-Chairs:

**Pat Cox**, former President of the European Parliament and leader of the Needs Assessment Mission to the Verkhovna Rada

**Volodymyr Groysman**, Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine

##### **The role and responsibility of political parties in a developing a culture of dialogue, compromise and consensus-building**

**Kjell Magne Bondevik**, former Prime Minister of Norway, Founder and President of the Oslo Centre for Peace and Human Rights

##### **The role of Parliament in providing space for inter-party dialogue and consensus building**

**Peter Vanhoutte**, Executive Director of the Centre for Democratic and Participatory Governance

##### **Consensus-building in a multi-party environment: the perspective of a national Parliament**

**Lolita Ignatjeva**, Chairperson of the European Affairs Committee, Parliament of Latvia

#### 16.30 – 17.30 **Q&A Session**



# UKRAINE WEEK IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT



## High-level discussion 6

**"Best practices on harmonisation of national legislation with EU acquis"**  
(Thematic meeting of the Bureau of the EU-Ukraine Parliamentary Association Committee)

**Tuesday 1 March, 15.30 – 17.30**

**Venue: ASP 5G3**

### Context of the discussion

Following the ratification on 16 September 2014 of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement (AA), including Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area chapters, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine have been focussed on the implementation of the AA which includes ambitious reforms in key areas and the development of a system of institutions to underpin the process. Improving the legislative system on approximation of Ukrainian legislation to EU law and strengthening the capacities of the Verkhovna Rada both on political and administrative levels, will be essential for the implementation of the necessary reforms and for putting in place mechanisms to monitor and assess progress achieved.

### Objective of the discussion

Key EU interlocutors, including representatives from National Parliaments of EU Member States (in particular those who had undergone the harmonisation process recently), Members of the European Parliament, and European Commission officials will share best practices on practical and legislative tools/processes on harmonisation.

## 15.30 – 16.30 **Opening Presentations**

### Co-Chairs:

**Andrej Plenkovi** , Chair of the European Parliament Delegation to the EU-Ukraine PAC of the EU-Ukraine PAC

**Ostap Semerak**, 1st Deputy Head of the Committee of the Verkhovna Rada on European Integration, Chair of the Verkhovna Rada Delegation to the EU-Ukraine PAC

### **The EU acquis: importance of timely and efficient internal harmonisation**

**Jan Tombinski**, Head of the EU Delegation in Ukraine

### **The National Parliament as a key driver in the harmonisation process: building structures, expertise and developing long-lasting working methods with the Executive**

**Gordan Jandrokovi** , Chairman of the Committee on European Affairs of the Croatian Parliament

### **Relations between government, parliament and society in the harmonisation process: lessons learnt from the Polish experience**

**Jacek Saryusz-Wolski**, Member of the European Parliament, former secretary of the European Integration committee of the Polish Government

## 16.30 – 17.30 **Q&A Session**



# UKRAINE WEEK IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT



**Debate on "Verkhovna Rada and Civil Society:  
Collaboration for Reforms in 2016"**  
Organised by the EU-Ukraine Parliamentary Association Committee (PAC),

The Ukrainian Think Tanks Liaison Office in Brussels and the

**Tuesday 1 March, 17.30 – 19.00**

Venue: ASP 5G3

## Context of the discussion

The debate will examine the potential of greater cooperation between the Ukrainian civil society and the Verkhovna Rada on the challenges lying ahead for Ukraine in 2016. Where can Ukrainian civil society provide more input into the parliament's work and help speed up the reform process? What are the most useful channels of collaboration and how can these be translated into a more structured practice? What has worked in 2015 and how can this experience be applied in 2016?

## 17.30 – 18.00 **Welcome**

**Andrej Plenkovi**, Chair of the European Parliament Delegation to the EU-Ukraine PAC, European Parliament lead member on the parliamentary support and capacity-building programme for the Verkhovna Rada

**Jerzy Pomianowski**, Executive Director, European Endowment for Democracy  
**Olena Prystayko**, Executive Director, Ukrainian Think Tanks Liaison Office in Brussels

## Opening Presentations

**Ostap Semerak**, 1st Deputy Head of the Committee of the Verkhovna Rada on European Integration, Chair of the Verkhovna Rada Delegation to the EU-Ukraine PAC  
**Yevhen Bystrytsky**, Executive Director, International Renaissance Foundation

## 18.00 – 18.30 **Potential fields of collaboration between the Verkhovna Rada and Civil society in 2016**

### 1. Electoral Legislation

#### Discussants:

**Oleksandr Chernenko**, Member of the Committee on Legal Policy and Justice of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine

**Olha Aivazovska**, Head of the Board, all-Ukrainian Network OPORA

### 2. Ukraine's commitment from the Association Agreement with the EU, including implementation of the DCFTA

#### Discussants:

**Ivanna Klympush-Tsyntsadze**, First Deputy Head of Committee on Foreign Affairs of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine

**Ihor Burakovsky**, Head of the Board, Institute for Economic Research and Policy Consulting

## 18.30 – 19.00 **Q&A Session**