

Summaries of Speaker Presentations

for the workshop on "The Role of Parliaments in Regulatory Policy"

Elke Ballon, Head, Impact Assessment Unit, European Parliament

The mission of the European Parliament's IA Unit is to help develop and implement, in close cooperation with the Parliament's committees, a more uniform and integrated approach to the concepts impact assessment, with a view to enhancing the quality and coherence of policy formation and enable the Parliament to make the best possible case for its positions, both to other EU institutions and to the public at large, at the same time supporting the overall objective of Better Law-Making within the European Union. At the request of committees, it evaluates the quality and independence of the European Commission's impact assessments, provides complementary or alternative impact assessments to those of the Commission, and organises the provision of the Parliament's own impact assessments on substantive amendments (the latter always being provided by outside experts).

Andrea Wicklein MP, Member of the German Parliament, SPD, Spokesperson on the reduction of bureaucracy, Germany

The word "bureaucracy" has negative connotations. By definition, it means "rule by officialdom", and in practice people often find it to be an uncontrollable behemoth.

This makes it necessary for politics to point as well: laws, directives and regulations provide on the one hand legal and planning security and are thus an important competitive advantage for Germany. On the other hand is an excessive bureaucracy in a modern state superfluous. It burdens the public and businesses and interfere equal opportunities.

And so when we talk about reducing bureaucracy, we mean a co-working process of Parliament and Government to reduce UNNECESSARY bureaucracy. Our goal is a bureaucracy which is responsive to the public's needs, business-friendly, transparent and modern. Parliament's task must therefore be to make legislation better, simpler and cheaper to implement.

Christer Aström, Senior Evaluator, Parliamentary Evaluation and Research Unit, Swedish Riksdag, Sweden

The Parliaments are a crucial link in the democratic chain of governance. Since 2001, follow-up and evaluation of decisions taken by Parliament are one of the tasks of the parliamentary committees in Sweden. The idea is that the committee that has prepared a decision on a new law is responsible for evaluating whether the output and the outcome of the law are in line with the Parliament's intentions. The ex post-evaluations should have a forward-looking orientation and be used to provide a basis for solidly based positions in committee deliberations. Evaluation is a way of obtaining information about results and creating more robust links with the Parliament's legislative decisions. Among other things, it should be used as an instrument for assessing legislative adjustments that may be needed. In the Riksdag, evaluations are carried out by evaluation groups comprising Members of Parliament from the different parties. These groups are supported by technical staff.

Sebastián Soto, Head of the Legal and Legislative Division of the Ministry of the Presidency, Chile

Chile and Latin America have presidential regimes where Congress and the President, head of the executive power, share roles in the lawmaking process. For that reason, the analysis of Parliaments in the regulatory process must consider the permanent interaction between both Congress and Executive. From this perspective the speaker will focus in Chilean and other Latin American countries' strengths and weaknesses in the law making process, not only in Congress but in the pre legislative stage too. Special attention will be given to the role of some institutions like the Library of Congress, the Budget Office and the financial reports elaborated there, and the tradition of hearings in Congress, among others.