

Unofficial translation

Translator's clarifying additions in [hard brackets].

The symbol § denotes "section".

Rules of Procedure of the Grand Committee

The Grand Committee has adopted, on 4 July 2014, in accordance with section 7 paragraph 3 of the Rules of Procedure of the Eduskunta, the following Rules of Procedure:

CHAPTER 1 General Provisions

1 §

Scope

The provisions of these Rules of Procedure shall apply to the business of the Grand Committee, unless there are countervailing provisions in the Constitution or the Rules of Procedure of the Eduskunta. Derogations can be made from these Rules of Procedure if the Committee unanimously so decides.

2 §

Constitution of the Committee and elections

The Committee constitutes itself at its first meeting of every electoral period in accordance with the procedure in 17 § of the Eduskunta's Rules of Procedure. However, the Committee elects two vice chairpersons, designated first and second chairpersons. The Committee decides its seating order at one of the following meetings. The clerks and assistant clerks of the Committee are appointed in accordance with 73 § of the Eduskunta's Rules of Procedure. In addition, the clerk or assistant clerk of the sector committee whose business is before the Committee may act as an assistant clerk of the Committee.

Elections are by ballot, applying the relevant regulations of the Eduskunta's Election Rules. When electing multi-member organs, the Election Rules' provisions on proportional voting and returns shall apply. Other voting is regulated by these Rules of Procedure.

3 §

Right of attendance and speech

Substitute members of the Committee and the Member of the Eduskunta for the Åland Islands have the right to take part in debates on European Union matters.

The right of Members of the Eduskunta to attend meetings of the Grand Committee is regulated in 36 § of the Eduskunta's Rules of Procedure.

4 §

Substitute members' order of precedence

A substitute member wishing to submit a motion or to vote in place of an absent titular member shall take the seat of the absent member. An absent member is replaced by a substitute member representing the same party group or, if no such person is present, primarily by a substitute member representing the same coalition, government or opposition. If there are several substitute members present from the same party group or coalition, precedence is given to the substitute member whose name comes first in the Eduskunta's decision to appoint the committee. Substitute members elected to replace a substitute member excused from duty on the committee have the precedence of the substitute member that they replaced.

5 §

Sub-committees

The Committee appoints among its members a working sub-committee. The working subcommittee makes proposals for the general organisation of the work of the Committee and prepares any other business assigned to it by the Committee. The working sub-committee consists of the Committee's chairperson and vice chairpersons and further members chosen so as to represent each parliamentary group within the Committee. The working sub-committee appoints the Committee's representatives on foreign travel and at international meetings and conferences, unless otherwise provided in 6 § 11 paragraph or 10 § of the Eduskunta's Rules of Procedure or unless the Committee decides otherwise.

The Committee may establish other permanent or ad hoc sub-committees. Sub-committees prepare business assigned by the Committee and draft reports or opinions for approval by the Committee. The Committee determines the number of members of sub-committees and appoints their chairpersons and members. Members of the Eduskunta who are not members of the committee may be appointed to sub-committees as supernumerary members; they can participate in the meetings and deliberations of the sub-committee.

6 §

Publicity of Committee documents (1.3.2024)

The publicity of Committee preparatory documents is regulated in section 43 a of the Parliament's Rules of Procedure, unless subsections 2–4 prescribe otherwise.

The preparatory documents of European Union business shall be made public when the Committee has decided on Parliament's opinion or decided not to take any further action in the matter. The preparatory documents also become public immediately after their arrival is recorded by the Committee's secretariat. However, preparatory documents concerning subsidiarity matters are made public when the Committee has decided that it will not deliberate on the matter or it has approved a report on the matter and, nevertheless at the latest, when the period to submit a reasoned opinion stating why the draft in question does not comply with the principle of subsidiarity to Presidents of the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission decreed for national parliaments in Article 6 of the protocol on the application of the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality (No 2) in the Treaty on European Union has elapsed.

If the Committee decides, in accordance with section 50, subsection 3 of the Constitution and on the grounds provided in section 43, subsection 2 of the Parliament's Rules of Procedure, that its members shall apply confidentiality to a European Union issue, the corresponding preparatory documents shall be secret. Preparatory documents are also kept secret if the Government has requested confidentiality, until the Committee has taken a decision on the request.

The Committee's decision on confidentiality shall be repealed immediately when the grounds for their approval no longer are valid. A Committee decision on confidentiality based on a request by the Government is deemed to have expired if the Government withdraws its request.

Section 43 c of the Parliament's Rules of Procedure lays down provisions on confidentiality and prohibition of use.

CHAPTER 2

Committee meetings and decision-making

7 §

Convocation of the committee

The chairperson convenes meetings of the committee. Convocations are issued at the previous committee meeting, on the Eduskunta's web site and notice boards. Meetings can also be convened by announcement in a plenary session of the Eduskunta or by other means decided by the committee.

8 §

Agenda

The agenda of a Committee meeting shall contain a list of the matters to be deliberated. The Chairperson decides what issues are included in the agenda and in what order.

The agenda shall be made public on the Eduskunta's web site.

The Chairperson has the right to derogate from the agenda's order of business, to order that an agenda item is not deliberated and to suspend the deliberation of an item.

The Committee may deliberate items relating to the European Union, even if they are not on the agenda if, on the grounds of information received at the meeting, there are particular grounds to do so.

9 § *Roll call* A roll call is

taken at the beginning of each meeting.

Members and substitute members arriving after the roll call will be recorded present from the moment they report to the clerk. Members or substitute members who absent themselves before the end of the meeting shall report to the clerk.

10 §

Deliberation of business

The committee deliberates each item of business in a single reading. The committee may, however, decide to defer the approval of a report or opinion to a separate, decisive reading in accordance with 39 § 2 paragraph of the Eduskunta's Rules of Procedure.

11 §

Adjournment

Items of business shall be adjourned to the next meeting once, if this is moved and seconded.

Further adjournments will be decided by the committee.

After an adjournment has been moved and seconded, the following discussion shall concern the adjournment motion until it has been decided.

12 §

Committee reports and opinions

Matters leading to a report or opinion shall be the subject of a general debate, during which members of the committee may express their views on the issue in its entirety.

After the general debate, the matter is subjected to detailed scrutiny, during which the Committee approves the contents of its proposal, any resolutions and the justifications of its report or opinion.

The content and revision of reports, opinions and members' dissenting opinions are regulated in 42 § of the Eduskunta's Rules of Procedure.

The procedure for reports on legislative bills is regulated in 19 §.

13 §

Voting procedure

Having declared the debate closed, the Chairperson shall sum up the proposals that have been made.

If the summing-up leads to objections, that are deemed to be justified, the summing-up shall be amended. If the Chairperson does not agree with the objections, the Committee shall decide.

After the summing-up, the Chairperson proposes the order in which the proposals shall be voted on.

If the proposed voting order leads to objections, and the Chairperson does not agree with the objections, the Committee shall decide the voting order.

When the voting order has been approved, the Chairperson proposes the voting procedure in accordance with the procedure of plenary sessions.

14 §

Voting

Voting is by raising hands or by roll-call. Members vote either "aye", "nay" or "abstain".

A vote by roll-call shall be taken, whether or not there has been a vote by raising hands, if the Chairperson deems fit or if any Committee member so requests.

After a vote, the Chairperson declares the result.

In a vote by roll-call, members may not vote after the following member has been called.

When there are as many "ayes" as "nays", the outcome shall be decided by lot.

CHAPTER 3 **European Union business**

15 §

U-matters

Proposals in accordance with 96 § of the Constitution (*U-matters*) are sent to the committee by the Speaker. Their arrival is announced at a committee meeting. The committee may decide [at any time] to send the matter for opinion, other action or for information to other¹ sector committees.

The deliberation of U-matters is based on the government's communication, the opinion(s) of the sector committee(s) and the reported position of the government. In cases of urgency, the Grand Committee may deliberate U-matters without awaiting the opinion of sector committees.

U-matters are debated. At the conclusion of the debate, the chairperson proposes a resolution containing the committee's statement, unless the committee decides to issue an opinion. The committee decides the wording of the statement.

The committee may adopt statements in the presence of members of the government or their representatives. Statements are communicated to the government.

U-matters are re-deliberated as needed until they have been finally disposed of by the European institutions, after which deliberations in the committee lapse.

16 §

E-matters and hearing of ministers

When government reports according to 97 § of the Constitution (*E-matters*) arrive, the committee usually sends them to the appropriate sector committee for possible action. The committee may also request an opinion of the sector committee.

The deliberation of E-matters is based on the government's report and the opinion(s) of the sector committee(s). In cases of urgency, the Grand Committee may deliberate U-matters without awaiting the opinion of sector committees.

As provided by 97 § of the Constitution, the committee regularly hears members of the government before and after meetings of the EU Council. In accordance with 97 § 2 paragraph of the Constitution, the committee hears the Prime Minister on meetings of the European Council and on proposals to amend the EU's fundamental treaties.

The reports referred to in paragraphs 1 – 3 above are debated by the committee and then noted as received, unless the committee decides to issue a statement or opinion to the government.

17 §

¹ I.e. other than those decided by the Speaker. Translator's clarification.

Subsidiarity matters

Proposals for [European] legislation to be approved in accordance with the legislative procedure that have been forwarded by the Institutions of the European Union (*subsidiarity matter*) are recorded as received by the secretariat of the Grand Committee. The secretariat notifies the members of the Grand Committee and the affected sector committee when such proposals have arrived. The notification contains a link to the electronic database in which the documents are available. The secretariat also provides this information to the Åland Islands Legislature.

A member of the Grand Committee and a [sector] committee may propose that the Grand Committee examines, in the sense of the subsidiarity principle defined in Article 5 of the EU Treaty, an item referred to in paragraph 1. In addition, the Grand Committee shall examine this issue, if the Åland Islands Legislature so proposes.

A proposal to make a subsidiarity examination shall be made within six weeks of the arrival of the EU legislative proposal in Finnish and Swedish, unless the Grand Committee decides otherwise on exceptional grounds. The date of receipt of the proposal shall be registered in the database maintained by the secretariat.

If an examination is undertaken, the Grand Committee shall issue a report to the Eduskunta. In its report, the Grand Committee shall make a recommendation concerning the Eduskunta's opinion of whether the EU legislative proposal conforms to the subsidiarity principle. If the Grand Committee considers that the proposal is in conflict with the subsidiarity principle, the report shall contain a draft reasoned opinion of the Eduskunta to the EU Institutions. [If the Åland Islands Legislature proposed the examination,] the initiative of the Åland Islands Legislature shall be included in the report.

CHAPTER 4

Other parliamentary business

18 §

Legislative initiatives

The deliberation of legislative initiatives sent to the Grand Committee from the general debate of a first reading in the Eduskunta's plenary session according to 53 § 6 paragraph of the Eduskunta's Rules of Procedure is based on the report of the sector committee. The Grand Committee will not deliberate petitionary motions that the sector committee recommended to reject.

The deliberation of legislative initiatives sent to the Grand Committee after the detailed scrutiny section of a first reading in The Eduskunta's plenary session according to 53 § 3 paragraph of the Eduskunta's Rules of Procedure is based on the decision of the plenary.

If, however, a sub-committee of the Grand Committee has drafted a report, this shall be the basis of deliberations.

The deliberation of a legislative initiative begins with a general debate, during which members can express their opinion of the initiative in its entirety. Proposals to send the initiative to a sub-committee, to request the opinion of a sector committee or to hear experts shall be made during the general debate, unless the committee decides otherwise.

The general debate is followed by detailed scrutiny, during which the committee decides, first, the contents of its proposal, [and then] any proposed parliamentary resolutions and [finally] any justifications.

If there is a motion to reject the initiative, this shall be voted on after the contents of the committee's proposals, but before the justifications.

19 §

Reports on legislative initiatives

In its report on legislative initiatives sent to the Grand Committee from the general debate of a first reading in the Eduskunta's plenary session according to 53 § 6 paragraph of the Eduskunta's Rules of Procedure, the committee will make proposals, in the form of resolutions, concerning the contents of the draft law and possible parliamentary resolutions and it may propose that the justifications of the sector committee are amended.

In its report on legislative initiatives sent to the Grand Committee after the detailed scrutiny section of a first reading in the Eduskunta's plenary session according to 53 § 3 paragraph of the Eduskunta's Rules of Procedure, the committee, in the form of resolutions either signals that it agrees with the decision of the plenary or proposes amendments to or rejection of the draft law.

The committee may decide to include justifications in its report on a legislative initiative. If justifications are included, members who have supported different proposals than those adopted by the committee may add dissenting opinions to the report.

20 §

Other business

The deliberation of other business sent to the committee by the plenary session, such as government white papers, government reports and other matters not regulated in these Rules of Procedure shall be based on a proposal of the chairperson or a sub-committee. The committee's reports and opinions shall be subject to the provisions in 12 §.

These rules of procedure enter into force on 1 September 2014. They replace the rules of procedure adopted on 10 March 2000 with subsequent amendments.