



MINUTES OF THE LXXII COSAC

WARSAW, POLAND, 8-10 JUNE 2025

Note: The text of keynote interventions which have been shared with the Presidency will be published on IPEX. A video recording of the full meeting is available via the webpage of the Parliamentary Dimension of the Polish Presidency.

OPENING SESSION

The Session was chaired by Ms Agnieszka POMASKA, Chair of the European Union Affairs Committee of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland and Mr Tomasz GRODZKI, Chair of the European Union Affairs Committee of the Senate of the Republic of Poland.

Ms POMASKA opened the conference by welcoming delegations to Warsaw. She extended a particular welcome to Ms Bernadette GEIEREGGER from the Austrian *Bundesrat*, to Mr Vincent BLONDEL from the Belgian *Senaat/Sénat*, and to Mr Jan SCHILLER from the Czech *Senát*, who attended COSAC for the first time as chairpersons of their committees. She informed delegations that full interpretation into all official languages was provided in accordance with the Rules of Procedure, with the exception of Portuguese as the Presidency had been formally informed the Portuguese delegation was unable to attend.

WELCOME ADDRESS

Ms POMASKA then gave the floor to Mr Szymon HOŁOWNIA, Marshal of the Polish Sejm, for a welcome address.

Mr HOŁOWNIA began by noting that this was a good moment to reflect on the achievements of the Polish Presidency. There have been substantial changes on the international arena during this period. He argued that now, when we have to discuss which direction the EU should take in a changing geopolitical landscape, it is important to go back to basics. The founding fathers of the EU had a simplicity of thought which was excellent, he said, in seeing the EU as a promise of security, liberty, and a good future. When it comes to security, he underlined that the EU needs to take greater responsibility and that security, the motto of the Polish presidency, permeates all policy areas. In this perspective he emphasised that the EU does not compete with NATO, but rather complements it as a project aimed at providing security for EU citizens. That is why it should be constantly underlined that defence spending should be treated as an investment, he argued. The EU is not just a free market, but also a community of values, and one of the basic values is to guarantee the safety of our families. This is also what EU citizens call for and expect from their leaders. Mr HOŁOWNIA also called for mechanisms whereby

Russia, as the only culprit and aggressor, should be made to pay for the destruction brought upon Ukraine. When it comes to liberty, he expressed the need for some self-criticism and noted that nowadays the EU is often associated with constraining principles and bureaucracy rather than freedom. He argued in favour of less regulation, and warned that if the EU would be seen as a paternalistic organisation, it would lose popular support. Europe should be associated with simplification, fulfilling dreams and a project that will lead to a greater future. Mentioning this last pillar, which was hope for the future, Mr HOŁOWNIA argued for a change of mindset, with a more offensive attitude paired with quicker decision-making, increased competitiveness and a more proactive union. He stressed that politicians are fighting for a better future for the next generations and their own children. In this view, it is our obligation to make sure that the desire to live in the EU will be replicated in future generations. In order to achieve this goal, he continued, the EU has to regain its glamour that used to lure the previous generations. Mr HOŁOWNIA underlined that if we manage to tackle these challenges, we will survive all obstacles that we are facing today. The European Union has to clearly define its values, so that people can entirely understand this project. In his concluding remarks, Mr HOŁOWNIA mentioned also that in the last 10 years Europe survived many difficulties and crises, and it is natural that the world is shaking. But it is our responsibility to bring it back on the right track.

Following the speech by Mr HOŁOWNIA, Ms POMASKA also addressed the conference, remarking that Europe knows the prize for the lack of cooperation and safety, and that the EU at heart is based on concerns for security and peace, not primarily economic cooperation. She recalled that the EU was created not only for economic reasons, but above all for the need for peace and security. She underlined that no one country could face challenges such as economic instability, migration, disinformation and cyberattacks, on its own. Ms POMASKA then briefly commented that the Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union was dedicated to challenges related to multidimensional security. The priorities of the Presidency were also reflected in the parliamentary dimension and its many interparliamentary events. She then underlined that the LXXIII COSAC was its crowning achievement. Ms POMASKA wished for this conference to be an opportunity for conversations that would bring Parliamentarians closer, as nowadays understanding and cooperation are needed more than ever.

Lastly, Mr GRODZKI also gave a brief introductory statement. He noted that the Polish Presidency had the honour of chairing the Council's work during demanding times, which brought Europe new challenges, but also new opportunities, and that Poland was proud to play a role in promoting unity, boosting competitiveness and security, and protecting our shared values. Mr GRODZKI mentioned that COSAC gave space to exchange experiences and assessments, but also broadly discuss the directions in which the EU is heading. After giving a short presentation of the programme of the conference, Mr GRODZKI concluded by saying that COSAC was a unique platform for cooperation between national parliaments and the EU institutions and that only together could we build a Europe that is resilient, fair and capable of action.

PROCEDURAL ISSUES AND MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS

Following the introductions, Ms POMASKA went on to the procedural issues and miscellaneous matters. Firstly, the programme of the LXXIII COSAC was presented and approved. She then gave a short report on the discussions held during the meeting of the Presidential Troika the preceding day. The Troika had received a briefing on the 43rd Bi-annual Report of COSAC made by the Permanent Member of the COSAC Secretariat. The Troika had also been briefed by the Presidency on the co-funding of the COSAC Permanent Member. The Polish Presidency had invited Parliaments/Chambers to renew their commitment to the co-financing agreement for the period from 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2027. She announced that 39 out of the 39 National Parliaments/Chambers had signed and sent their letters of intent indicating that they are willing to participate in the co-financing for the above stated period, and therefore the co-financing of the Permanent Member and the office of the COSAC Secretariat would continue.

The Troika had also discussed and agreed to a new draft of the LXXIII COSAC Contribution. The document had been communicated to delegations after the meeting, and there was a possibility to submit new proposals for amendments until 12.00 the same day (9 June). She then went on to inform delegations about the letters received by the Presidency. These, which had been made available on IPEX, include requests to participate in the meeting from the *Andorran Consell General*, *Armenian Azgayin Zhoghov*, *Monégasque National Council*, *Icelandic Alþingi*, and the *United Kingdom House of Commons*. After consultation with the Troika, these had been replied to favourably. A letter had also been sent from the Chair of the European Affairs Committee of the Portuguese *Assembleia da República*, explaining the reasons the Portuguese committee wasn't able to participate. Similarly, there was a letter from the Chair of the Grand Committee of the Finnish *Eduskunta*, explaining that she was not able to attend. The Presidency had also received a letter from the Chair of the Bulgarian Committee on European Affairs and oversight of European Funds, concerning the application of EU membership of North Macedonia. Ms POMASKA informed that the letters had also been uploaded to IPEX.

This point was followed by a presentation of the 43rd Bi-annual Report of COSAC made by the Permanent Member of the COSAC Secretariat, Mr Jakob SJÖVALL. In his presentation, Mr SJÖVALL informed about some of the main findings in the report, recalling that the Report consisted of three chapters: 1. Agenda of the European Commission and the European Parliament in the new institutional cycle. EU strategic agenda, 2. Multiannual Financial Framework; and 3. Towards strengthening the EU's effort to improve cyber-resilience and tackle disinformation.

SESSION I - Implementation of the priorities of the Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union

The Session was chaired by Ms POMASKA and Mr GRODZKI.

In her introductory remarks to this session, Ms POMASKA highlighted that Poland assumed the Presidency of the Council of the European Union during a time of geopolitical uncertainty particularly due to Russia's aggression against Ukraine. The Polish Presidency emphasizes strengthening the EU's defence capabilities and addressing growing hybrid threats. A key focus was the unity of the EU and fostering cooperation with partners that share European values. The Polish Presidency supported initiatives that enhance European security in all dimensions - external, internal, economic, energy, food, and health. The Polish Sejm and the Senate played an active role in fostering dialogue among parliamentarians on those vital issues, and the Polish Presidency hoped that these efforts would strengthen the EU's security, unity, competitiveness, and societies.

The session began with a keynote speech by Mr Adam SZŁAPKA, Minister for European Union Affairs of Poland. Mr SZŁAPKA noted that the EU is facing completely new challenges. It has been more than three years since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine started, Europe is facing numerous hybrid attacks, increased migration on the Eastern border, the global competition is tougher than ever, and Europe is no longer a leader in the economic field. Poland has acted boldly throughout its Presidency to tackle these issues, and to mainstream security into the policy areas of the EU, also for the coming years. Mr SZŁAPKA mentioned that the Polish Presidency worked under the motto: Security, Europe!, and referred to the main achievements in this regard within seven areas: external security and defence; internal security; information security; cybersecurity; economic security; energy security; and health security. When it comes to external security and defence, Mr SZŁAPKA mentioned the introduction of the White Paper for European Defence Readiness 2030 and the ReArm Europe Plan with its SAFE instrument. He underlined that the Polish Presidency was proud to make the defence of the external border its priority. He also mentioned the adoption of two packages of sanctions on Russia, as well as the continued importance of the enlargement of the EU - a way to extend the safety and stability of Europe. On internal security, Mr SZŁAPKA underlined that the Polish Presidency worked to strengthen control over migration flows and initiated works on the decision on returns and the safe third country concept. Regarding information security, the Presidency focused on the democratic resilience and the fight against disinformation, and strengthened the level of cybersecurity in the EU. On economic security, Mr SZŁAPKA highlighted the strengthening of competitiveness. In this respect, he mentioned deregulation as the core for boosting competitiveness - the Polish Presidency made its priority to simplify bureaucracy. As an example, he mentioned the Stop-the-Clock Directive, which was adopted in less than two months, as well as the SAFE instrument, which was probably one of the fastest completed EU projects in history. In relation to energy security, Mr SZŁAPKA mentioned a necessity to completely withdraw from the dependence on the Russian source of energy, and the success of the incorporation of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia to the European energy system in February, which completely unplugged them from the Russian energy grid. When it comes to food security, the Polish Presidency focused on the future of common agricultural policy and its budget, as well as on the mechanisms that encourage farmers to protect the environment. On health security and access to medicines, Mr SZŁAPKA mentioned difficult negotiations on the pharmaceutical package and the success of the adoption of the compromise proposal by the Polish Presidency. In his concluding remarks, Mr SZŁAPKA underlined that the EU has

brought unprecedented wealth and well-being to its citizens, but that this is not a given - future presidencies must continue the work to strengthen security and competitiveness.

During the following debate, 31 speakers took the floor.

Most interventions underlined the security challenges facing Europe, underlining the core principles that the Polish Presidency had chosen for its priorities. There was unanimous agreement that the geopolitical landscape has changed drastically over the last years, and repeated calls for unified and joint cooperation to keep Europe strong and safe. Several pointed to the threat of Russia and the importance of having a strong European response to the war against Ukraine, including through unwavering support to Ukraine, the adoption of sanctions against Russia, as well as the use of frozen Russian assets to defend and rebuild Ukraine. There were many interventions focusing on the importance of strengthened defence capabilities and defence industry, and financial investments in this sector. Others underlined that security should be understood in a broader sense and raised issues concerning hybrid threats, information security and resilient democracy. A large number of speakers also pointed out that security is not only about Russia and the eastern border, but also concerns the Mediterranean and all external borders of Europe. The need for a credible, holistic and efficient security policy in a broad sense was underlined. In connection with this, some also marked the importance of shared values and upholding the rule of law. Furthermore, many speakers spoke about the importance of increased competitiveness and independence from large corporate companies from third countries, recalling that economic and social security is as important as military security. Speakers also focused on the necessity of the continuation of the enlargement process, which is the key to guarantee safety in Europe, but also to prevent third countries from turning towards Russia. During the debate, some also pointed to the importance of a continued strong climate policy in order to tackle climate changes which cause natural disasters throughout Europe.

The following speakers took the floor during this debate:

Brigitte KLINTSKOV JERKEL (Danish *Folketing*), Zoltán TESSELY (Hungarian *Országgyűlés*), Sven SIMON (European Parliament), Vincent BLONDEL (Belgian *Senaat/Sénat*), Harris GEORGIADIS (Cyprus *Vouli ton Antiprosopon*), Rasa BUDBERGYTĖ (Lithuanian *Seimas*), Anton HOFREITER (German *Bundestag*), Giovanni SATTA (Italian *Senato della Repubblica*), Ján FERENČÁK (Slovak *Národná rada*), Jean-François RAPIN (French *Sénat*), Gusti GRAAS (Luxembourg *Chambre des Députés*), Francisco José CONDE LÓPEZ (Spanish *Congreso de los Diputados*), Bastiaan VAN APELDOORN (Dutch *Eerste Kamer*), Edward ZAMMIT LEWIS (Maltese *Kamra tad-Deputati*), Peeter TALI (Estonian *Riigikogu*), Erik OTTOSON (Swedish *Riksdag*), Pieyre-Alexandre ANGLADE (French *Assemblée nationale*), Daniel FREUND (European Parliament), Ivan GERCHEV (Bulgarian *Narodno sabranie*), Robert O DONOGHUE (Irish *Dáil Eireann*), Milagros MARCOS ORTEGA (Spanish *Congreso de los Diputados*), Sari TAUNUS (Finnish *Eduskunta*), Eirini DOUROU (Greek *Vouli ton Ellinon*), Matilda ERNKRANS (Swedish *Riksdag*), Ivanna KLYMPUSH-TSINTSADZE (Ukrainian *Verkhovna Rada*), Ina COȘERU (Moldovan

Parlamentul Republicii), Milan RADIN (Serbian *Narodna skupština*), Ismail Emrah KARAYEL (Turkish *Büyük Millet Meclisi*), Jovan SUBOTIĆ (Montenegrin *Skupština Crne Gore*), Selman Ozboyaci (Turkish *Büyük Millet Meclisi*), Pawel BARTOSZEK (Icelandic *Alþingi*).

SESSION II - The European Commission and the European Parliament work programmes in the new institutional cycle. Strategic Agenda of the European Union

The session was chaired by Mr GRODZKI.

A pre-recorded video message was delivered by Mr Maroš ŠEFČOVIČ, Commissioner for Trade and Economic Security and Interinstitutional Relations and Transparency. Following this, a keynote intervention was held by Mr Esteban GONZÁLEZ PONS, Vice-President of the European Parliament.

Mr ŠEFČOVIČ stated that in the next five years the priorities of the European Commission would be to ensure that the EU delivers prosperity, boosts competitiveness, protects people and defends democracy. He noted that the Commission's work programme sets out the flagship initiatives for starting to deliver on this, with simplification and effectiveness. Further, Mr ŠEFČOVIČ mentioned that the Commission would soon adopt its proposal for the long-term EU budget which would need to be reformed to meet the needs of today. He also remarked that the EU should continue to play a strong role on the global stage – including supporting Ukraine for as long as it takes - despite the increasingly volatile geo-political environment. Mr ŠEFČOVIČ remarked that the EU should focus on agreeing on mutually meaningful and efficient trade deals tailored to each partnership. On the topic of the US, he described the tariffs on European goods as unjustified and underlined that the Commission is fully engaged in discussions and remarked that a negotiated solution remains the preferred outcome for the Commission. Moreover, Mr ŠEFČOVIČ also mentioned the importance of re-balancing EU-China relations.

Mr GONZÁLEZ PONS began by thanking the Commissioner for his address but remarked that he found it unacceptable that the Commission was not present at the COSAC Plenary. Mr GONZÁLEZ PONS noted that the national Parliaments met in a geopolitical context where European democratic values and systems were being challenged. He highlighted three main objectives of the European Union's Strategic Agenda 2024-2029. First and foremost, a free and democratic Europe, for which it was crucial to protect freedom, rule of law and fundamental values. The second objective was a secure and strong Europe, where Mr GONZÁLEZ PONS among others remarked that Europe should be responsible for its own security and would need to develop its own defence capabilities to complement NATO. The third objective was to provide a prosperous and competitive Europe: it should be a continent of growth, entrepreneurship and innovation going hand in hand with an acceleration of environmental and digital transformation.

Mr GONZÁLEZ PONS emphasised the European Parliament and national Parliaments' role in the monitoring and implementation of the EU Strategic Agenda. He listed several mechanisms

to discuss the state of play in implementing the Commission's Work Programme, such as structured dialogues with the different Commissioners, and also called for developing mechanisms such as the "green card".

During the following debate 30 speakers took the floor.

Speakers discussed several themes of the Strategic Agenda and in that regard put forward different arguments and perspectives, with three recurring themes: defence and support for Ukraine, climate and environment, as well as competitiveness and innovation.

On the topic of defence, most interventions expressed strong support for Ukraine, emphasizing the importance of solidarity, rule of law, and comprehensive security policies. The war in Ukraine was mentioned as being crucial for European defence and security, and there were also calls for swift implementation of sanctions against Russia and support for lasting peace in Ukraine. On the topic of defence there was also a focus on protecting democratic values.

On the topic of climate and environmental issues, links were made between natural disasters and the need to tackle the climate crisis. In that regard there were calls for further green solutions and enhancement of competitiveness without harming the planet and while respecting social balance. Moreover, there was a call for accountability for environmental damage Russia had caused during the war in Ukraine, and mentions of the needs of investments in climate resilience.

Competitiveness and innovation were also recurring themes, with an emphasis on industrial competitiveness, fostering innovation, and ownership of technology. Some speakers put forward concrete examples such as the need to take ownership in areas like AI and quantum computing. To increase industrial competitiveness there were calls for, among others, a strong internal market to support further job creations and qualified workers.

Moreover, EU enlargement was also mentioned as a tool to strengthen the EU's security as well as competitiveness.

The following speakers took the floor during this debate:

Eero HEINÄLUOMA (European Parliament), Anton HOFREITER (German *Bundestag*), Evangelos SYRIGOS (Greek *Vouli ton Ellinon*), Katrijn VAN RIET (Belgian *Kamer van volksvertegenwoordigers/Chambre des représentants*), Mika LINTILÄ (Finnish *Eduskunta*), Bastiaan VAN APELDOORN (Dutch *Eerste Kamer*), Ján FERENČÁK (Slovak *Národná rada*), Szymon SZYNKOWSKI VEL SEK (Polish *Sejm*), Róbert DUDÁS (Hungarian *Országgyűlés*), Daniel FREUND (European Parliament), Eirini DOUROU (Greek *Vouli ton Ellinon*), Milagros MARCOS ORTEGA (Spanish *Congreso de los Diputados*), Robert O DONOGHUE (Irish *Dáil Eireann*), José María SÁNCHEZ GARCÍA (Spanish *Congreso de los Diputados*), Ruslanas BARANOVAS (Lithuanian *Seimas*), Marco LOMBARDO (Italian *Senato della Repubblica*), Pieyre-Alexandre ANGLADE (French *Assemblée nationale*), Didier MARIE (French *Sénat*), Vicente MONTÁVEZ AGUILLAUME (Spanish *Cortes Generales*),

Beáta JURÍK (Slovak *Národná rada*), Rebecka LE MOINE (Swedish *Riksdag*), Kristo ENN VAGA (Estonian *Riigikogu*), Ivan RAČAN (Croatian *Hrvatski sabor*), Ina COȘERU (Moldovan *Parlamentul Republicii*), Mimoza MUSA (North Macedonian *Sobranie*), Ismail EMRAH KARAYEL (Turkish *Büyük Millet Meclisi*), Olena VINTONYAK (Ukrainian *Verkhovna Rada*), Alison SUTTIE (United Kingdom *House of Lords*), Arman YEGHOYAN (Armenian *Azgayin Zhoghov*) and Diljá MIST EINARSDÓTTIR (Icelandic *Alþingi*).

SESSION III - The new EU Multiannual Financial Framework – a perspective on the EU's challenges

The Session was chaired by Mr GRODZKI.

In his opening speech Mr SZŁAPKA, Minister for European Union Affairs, stressed that the new multiannual financial framework (MFF) post 2027, for which the draft proposal by the European Commission is set to be revealed mid-July 2025, should bring stability and safety for the Member States. He added that the Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union wished to start the debate on the next MFF already and had organised a series of events involving Member State governments and regional actors to this end. The Minister stressed that regions should be at the centre of cohesion policy in the future.

The line of keynote speakers continued with the Undersecretary of State in the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Poland, Mr Paweł KARBOWNIK's intervention. Mr KARBOWNIK underlined that the Union's budget in its present form is not fit for the future: the one percent of GNI is far from enough to tackle challenges the Union is facing. He advocated for the establishment of European public goods, like joint initiatives to strengthen defence as a possible example. The Undersecretary of state also urged the mobilisation of private funding to bridge the gap between investment needs and the current size of the EU budget. He concluded by saying that if Europe will not live up to the challenges it faces it will become a passive follower of global events.

The final keynote speech was given by Mr Sven SIMON, Chair of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs of the European Parliament. Mr SIMON stressed that the new MFF should be more ambitious, more simple and more transparent. He urged the introduction of new own resources to complement the EU budget, since he too considered the current size of the EU budget of one percent of GNI as insufficient. He deplored the European Commission for not being present at the LXXIII COSAC plenary meeting. Mr SIMON also expressed the Parliament's opposition to the possible introduction of individual national plans during the course of the next MFF, since it would hamper Parliament's legislative and discharge competences. Similarly, he also expressed criticism towards the European Commission for the recurring use of Art. 122 TEU as a legal basis for its legislative proposals. Mr SIMON finally stressed the fundamental role of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2020/2092 on a general regime of conditionality for the protection of the Union budget in the next MFF. He also proposed to establish a general mechanism on transparency on the basis of the recent report by the European Court of Auditors.

During the following debate 36 speakers took the floor.

A large number of speakers defended the traditional policies of the EU, namely the cohesion policy and the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), which they considered essential to preserve in the next MFF. Many speakers advocated adding new priorities to the budget, namely defence and the support for Ukraine. Many Parliaments/Chambers considered climate policy, climate related natural disasters, social cohesion, migration, the defence of the EU's external borders, and the support for farmers as cornerstones of the future MFF. Members of the European Parliament argued for an extended EU budget, which was met with opposition from some of the Parliaments/Chambers. A number of speakers stressed the need for further simplification, cutting red tape and budget flexibility.

The following speakers took the floor during this debate:

Vincent BLONDEL (Belgian *Senaat/Sénat*), Rasa BUDBERGYTĖ (Lithuanian *Seimas*), Mihai COTET (Romanian *Senat*), Edward ZAMMIT LEWIS (Maltese *Kamra tad-Deputati*), Jean-François RAPIN (French *Sénat*), (Belgian *Kamer van volksvertegenwoordigers/Chambre des représentants*), Ionel-Ovidiu BOGDAN (Romanian *Camera Deputaţilor*), Ján FERENČÁK (Slovak *Národná rada*), Anton HOFREITER (German *Bundestag*), Jelena MILOŠ (Croatian *Hrvatski Sabor*), Francisco José CONDE LÓPEZ (Spanish *Congreso de los Diputados*), Peeter TALI (Estonian *Riigikogu*), Szymon SZYNKOWSKI VEL SEK (Polish *Sejm*), Christian FRIIS BACH (Danish *Folketing*), Barbara HEGEDŰS (Hungarian *Országgyűlés*), Daniel FREUND (European Parliament), Mikko POLVINEN (Finnish *Eduskunta*), Eileen LYNCH (Irish *Seanad Éireann*), Martin KINNUNEN (Swedish *Riksdag*), Franz FAYOT (Luxembourgian *Chambre des Députés*), José María SÁNCHEZ GARCÍA (Spanish *Congreso de los Diputados*), Dimcho DIMCHEV (Bulgarian *Narodno sabranie*), Christiana EROTKRITOU (Cypriot *Vouli ton Antiprosopon*), Michael MURPHY (Irish *Dáil Éireann*), Elena MURELLI (Italian *Senato della Repubblica*), Zoi RAPTI (Greek *Vouli ton Ellinon*), Markus TÖNS (German *Bundestag*), Pia Maria WIENINGER (Austrian *Nationalrat*), Jan BERKI (Czech *Poslanecká sněmovna*), Laurent MAZAURY (French *Assemblée nationale*), Ivanna KLYMPUSH-TSINTSADZE (Ukrainian *Verkhovna Rada*), Ina COŞERU (Moldovan *Parlamentul Republicii*), Ismail Emrah KARAYEL (Turkish *Büyük Millet Meclisi*), Milan RADIN (Serbian *Narodna skupština*), Ozgur Erdem INCESU (Turkish *Büyük Millet Meclisi*), Andreas Arthur SPANRING (Austrian *Bundesrat*).

MEETING OF THE CHAIRPERSONS OF COSAC

The session was chaired by Ms POMASKA. During the meeting, the draft Troika proposal for the Contribution of LXXIII COSAC was discussed. Following several votes on proposed amendments, an amended draft Contribution was adopted. The adopted text was put forward for approval by LXXIII COSAC at the closing session (see below).

SESSION IV - Enlargement policy of the European Union

The Session was chaired by Ms POMASKA.

The session began with a keynote speech by Mr Marek PRAWDA, Undersecretary of state in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland. Mr PRAWDA began by underlining that Poland was an example of the success and potential of the enlargement process. This made the country a strong advocate of enlargement for those countries meeting the Copenhagen criteria. In the aftermath of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, EU enlargement is more than ever a geopolitical imperative for the peace, stability and prosperity of the region. Mr PRAWDA noted that this had also reshaped the EU's views on enlargement moving from a community of rules to a community of fate and increasing the importance of the perspective of Eastern Member States in the EU. He also detailed the state of play in enlargement negotiations with the different candidate countries and regretted that the Polish Presidency's objective of opening the first chapter in negotiations with Ukraine and Moldova was not met due to the objections of Hungary.

This was followed by a keynote speech by Mr Jan TRUSZCZYŃSKI, former Ambassador of the Republic of Poland to the European Union and former Chief Negotiator for Poland's accession to the EU. Mr TRUSZCZYŃSKI noted that his speech was based on his personal experience, and his concern of how to make the EU enlargement process more efficient and effective. He outlined five important topics to ensure progress. First, enlargement always had to be on top of the EU's political agenda. Second, there had to be a realistic programme for legislative changes by candidate countries, and an outreach to the broader society. Third, it was imperative to overcome bilateral disputes that risked blocking the progress of EU enlargement. Fourth, he advocated for the potential of gradual or staged integration, including giving candidate countries an observer status in the Council for areas in which accession chapters had been closed. Fifth, he called on Member States to make more frequent use of underutilised capacity building tools, such as technical assistance and twinning programmes.

During the following debate, 37 speakers took the floor.

Most speakers underlined that, in the current international situation, the EU enlargement represented a geopolitical imperative and an investment in peace and stability. It was necessary to extend EU membership to prevent negative interferences and instability in Eastern Europe and the Western Balkans. At the same time, numerous interventions noted that the strategic urgency generated by Russia's invasion of Ukraine should not undermine the merit-based process. EU enlargement had to be based on strict compliance with the Copenhagen criteria, and there could be no fast-track enlargement. Speakers also underlined the need for the EU to accompany the reforms in candidate countries with adequate funding. Other interventions noted also that monitoring respect for the rule of law should continue after EU accession to prevent backsliding from Member States.

Various interventions stressed the need for the EU to carry out important reforms to deepen the Union by promoting a more effective functioning of its institutions, as it enlarges in size by welcoming more Member States. These reforms were noted as particularly important in terms of the future EU budget and decision-making, with a number of calls to move away from decision-making based on unanimity, as this could paralyse the EU. A minority of interventions

rejected further EU enlargement and instead advocated for strengthening the EU within its current shape. Representatives of parliaments from candidate countries who took the floor all welcomed the new momentum in the EU enlargement process, and noted the importance which European aspirations had for their countries. Some speakers underlined the urgency generated by the new geopolitical situation and security challenges, while others stressed the importance of individual assessment of each country's progress in meeting enlargement criteria.

The following speakers took the floor during this debate:

Dimitar GARDEV (Bulgarian *Narodno sabranie*), Barry WARD (Irish *Dáil Eireann*), Erik OTTOSON (Swedish *Riksdag*), Mihai COTET (Romanian *Senat*), Edward ZAMMIT LEWIS (Maltese *Kamra tad-Deputati*), Evangelos SYRIGOS (Greek *Vouli ton Ellinon*), Bastiaan VAN APELDOORN (Dutch *Eerste Kamer*), Katrijn VAN RIET (Belgian *Kamer van volksvertegenwoordigers/Chambre des représentants*), Anton HOFREITER (German *Bundestag*), David KLOBASA (Slovenian *Državni svet*), Laurent MAZAURY (French *Assemblée nationale*), Ionel-Ovidiu BOGDAN (Romanian *Camera Deputaţilor*), Gabriela MORAWSKA-STANECKA (Polish *Senat*), Geadis GEADI (European Parliament), Jasna VOJNIĆ (Croatian *Hrvatski Sabor*), Johan DECKMYN (Belgian *Senaat/Sénat*), Dan HARDY (Luxembourgish *Chambre des Députés*), Jani KOKKO (Finnish *Eduskunta*), Radvilė MORKŪNAITĖ-MIKULĖNIENĖ (Lithuanian *Seimas*), Andreja RAJBENŠU (Slovenian *Državni zbor*), Fiona O'LOUGHLIN (Irish *Seanad Éireann*), Aikaterini SPYRIDAKI (Greek *Vouli ton Ellinon*), Kristo ENN VAGA (Estonian *Riigikogu*), Ivan RAČAN (Croatian *Hrvatski Sabor*), Didier MARIE (French *Sénat*), Christiana EROKORITOU (Cyprus *Vouli ton Antiprosopon*), Milagros MARCOS ORTEGA (Spanish *Congreso de los Diputados*), Robert O DONOGHUE (Irish *Dáil Eireann*), Szymon SZYNKOWSKI VEL SEK (Polish *Sejm*), Ivanna KLYMPUSH-TSINTSADZE (Ukrainian *Verkhovna Rada*), Ivan VUKOVIĆ (Montenegrin *Skupština Crne Gore*), Ina COŞERU (Moldovan *Parlamentul Republicii*), Milan RADIN (Serbian *Narodna skupština*), Ismail Emrah KARAYEL (Turkish *Büyük Millet Meclisi*), Pawel BARTOSZEK (Icelandic *Alþingi*), Alison SUTTIE (United Kingdom *House of Lords*), Hans-Peter PORTMANN (Swiss *Assemblée fédérale*)

SESSION V - TOWARDS STRENGTHENING THE EU'S COLLECTIVE EFFORT TO IMPROVE CYBER-RESILIENCE AND TACKLE DISINFORMATION

The Session was chaired by Mr GRODZKI.

Mr Rafał ROSIŃSKI, Undersecretary of State in the Ministry of Digital Affairs of the Republic of Poland, emphasized that cybersecurity and cyber resilience are key priorities for the European Union, especially in light of rising geopolitical tensions, technological change, and the growing threat landscape. He underlined that Poland, during its Presidency of the Council of the EU, placed strong focus on this area. Among the presidency's achievements, he highlighted the adoption of the EU Cybersecurity Blueprint for coordinated crisis response, conclusions on resilient connectivity, and the Warsaw Appeal – a joint informal declaration on cybersecurity cooperation. Mr ROSIŃSKI stressed the need for deeper collaboration among EU Member States, including better information sharing, joint threat responses, and stronger

links between civilian and military cybersecurity actors. He called for improving risk assessments, advancing cyber diplomacy, and implementing the NIS 2 Directive effectively and uniformly. He also urged support for innovation-friendly regulation, increased investment in cyber technologies such as post-quantum cryptography, and the development of a skilled cybersecurity workforce. Protecting undersea cables and other critical infrastructure was identified as another key priority. In addressing disinformation, Mr ROSIŃSKI underlined the importance of protecting freedom of expression and ensuring access to reliable information. He pointed to the role of the Digital Services Act in holding platforms accountable while safeguarding democratic values. He concluded that a secure and resilient digital environment, built on respect for human rights and the rule of law, is essential for Europe's democratic and economic future.

Ms Martyna BILDZIUKIEWICZ, Deputy Head of Division, Strategic Communication Regional Teams and Coordination of Task Forces in the European External Action Service, delivered a speech outlining the growing threat posed by foreign information manipulation and interference (FIMI). She described how recent events such as a large-scale blackout in Spain and Portugal were rapidly exploited by Russian-linked networks to spread disinformation. Ms BILDZIUKIEWICZ emphasized that FIMI is not just about competing narratives, but a systemic and strategic effort to corrode democratic foundations like trust, shared facts, and civic participation by paralyzing rather than persuading. It involves an ecosystem of state media, proxy platforms, fake experts, bots, and amplified content across multiple languages and platforms. Over 1,000 disinformation cases and more than 300 manipulation techniques have been documented by EU efforts. She outlined the EU's four-pillar response to FIMI: (1) situational awareness - real-time monitoring and analysis of information environments through partnerships and systems like the Rapid Alert System; (2) resilience building - investing in fact-checkers, journalists, and strategic communicators, and promoting effective, credible messaging; (3) disruption - using tools such as the Digital Services Act and sanctions to raise the cost of manipulation; and (4) external cooperation with NATO, G7, Ukraine, and others to coordinate responses and strengthen partner resilience. Concluding, Ms BILDZIUKIEWICZ called on lawmakers to prioritize FIMI across all policy domains, ensure institutional preparedness, support independent media and media literacy, and promote responsible public discourse. She stressed that while the tools and frameworks exist, political leadership and coordination are now critical.

During the following debate, 25 speakers took the floor.

The debate focused on rising cyber threats, disinformation, and digital technology misuse, especially in the context of hybrid warfare and foreign influence - mainly from Russia and China. These state actors use cyberattacks, social media manipulation, and distorted narratives to destabilise democracies, particularly targeting both Member States and countries like Ukraine. Participants called for stronger EU-wide cybersecurity cooperation, including the implementation of NIS2, the Digital Services Act, and investment in cyber resilience, AI regulation, and digital literacy. AI was seen as both a tool for progress and a risk for spreading deepfakes and manipulating public opinion. Maintaining democratic values while combating

disinformation was emphasized with warnings against overreach that could harm free speech. Judicial oversight, transparency, and support for journalists were seen as essential. A strategic push for EU digital sovereignty, innovation in emerging tech, and reduced reliance on foreign providers was urged. Combating disinformation was framed as defending democracy itself, requiring a coordinated, multi-layered approach grounded in resilience, oversight, and social cohesion.

The following speakers took the floor during this debate:

Peeter TALI (Estonian *Riigikogu*), Bernadette GEIEREGGER (Austrian *Bundesrat*), David KLOBASA (Slovenian *Državni svet*), Helena LANGŠÁDLOVÁ (Czech *Poslanecká sněmovna*), Christofer RANZMAIER (Austrian *Nationalrat*), Anton HOFREITER (German *Bundestag*), Ionel-Ovidiu BOGDAN (Romanian *Camera Deputaţilor*), Gabriela MORAWSKA-STANECKA (Polish *Senat*), Geadis GEADI (European Parliament), Vicente MONTÁVEZ AGUILLAUME (Spanish *Congreso de los Diputados*), Anna VIKSTRÖM (Swedish *Riksdag*), Elhadj Moussa DIALLO (Belgian *Senaat/Sénat*), Arminas LYDEKA (Lithuanian *Seimas*), Catherine MORIN-DESAILLY (French *Sénat*), Cees VAN DE SANDEN (Dutch *Eerste Kamer*), Fiona O'LOUGHLIN (Irish *Seanad Éireann*), Leonid YURKOVSKIY (Swedish *Riksdag*), Milagros MARCOS ORTEGA (Spanish *Congreso de los Diputados*), Franz FAYOT (Luxembourgian *Chambre des Députés*), José María SÁNCHEZ GARCÍA (Spanish *Congreso de los Diputados*), Pavel STANĚK (Czech *Poslanecká sněmovna*), Ismail Emrah KARAYEL (Turkish *Büyük Millet Meclisi*), Dmytro LIUBOTA (Ukrainian *Verkhovna Rada*), Jovan SUBOTIĆ (Montenegrin *Skupština Crne Gore*), Víðir REYNISSON (Icelandic *Alþingi*).

CLOSING SESSION OF THE PLENARY MEETING OF THE LXXII COSAC

The session was chaired by Ms POMASKA.

She informed delegations that the draft Conclusions of LXXIII COSAC had been sent out ahead of the meeting and that no proposed amendments had been received. The updated draft Contribution of the LXXIII COSAC, following the meeting of the chairpersons of COSAC, had been circulated to delegations. A physical copy containing a clarification from the Belgian delegation in the form of a footnote had been handed out to delegations. The clarification concerned paragraph 15 of the Contribution. In the view of the Belgian delegation, the wording of this paragraph should instead be in line with the Contribution of the LXXII COSAC, as adopted in Budapest in October 2024.

Two speakers took the floor. Ms Katrijn VAN RIET (Belgian *Kamer van volksvertegenwoordigers/Chambre des représentants*) underlined that the inclusion of the aforementioned footnote was of importance to the Belgian delegation. Mr Szymon SZYNKOWSKI VEL SEK (Polish *Sejm*) also took the floor and expressed his view on the wording of paragraph 6 of the draft Contribution.

Following these remarks, the Conclusions and Contribution were adopted.

Mr GRODZKI then took the floor to thank delegations for their attendance. He extended a special thanks to Mr GONZÁLEZ PONS, Vice-President of the European Parliament, for having taken an active part in the debate, and expressed his regret that, in contrast, no representative of the European Commission had attended the conference.

Lastly, Mr GRODZKI gave the floor to Ms Brigitte KLINTSKOV JERKEL of the Danish *Folketing*, who informed delegations about the incoming Danish Presidency and welcomed delegations to the next meeting of the chairpersons of COSAC on 3-4 July 2025 in Copenhagen, as well as to the LXXIV COSAC on 30 November - 2 December 2025 in Copenhagen.