

THE SENATE







G. Van der Wa.

Palazzo Madama

1. Palazzo Carpegna, 2. Cupola della Chiesa di S. Luca nel Collegio della Sapienza, 3. Palazzo Giustiniani, 4. Chiesa del SS. Salvatore.

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Parliament

The Italian Parliament consists of two Houses: the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate of the Republic. According to the principle of full bicameralism the two Houses perform identical functions.

Functions

The main function of the Parliament is to make the laws of the Country.

The election, inauguration and – as the case may be – impeachment of the President of the Republic, in addition to the election of a portion of the justices of the Constitutional Court and the Higher Judicial Council, is conducted by both Houses in joint sitting.

Election

Both Houses are elected every five years.

Senate: the 315 elected senators must be at least 40 years of age and their electors must be over 25

Chamber of Deputies: 630 deputies, who must be at least 25 years of age. They are elected by all Italian citizens over 18 years of age.

Life senators

In addition to elected members, the Senate also includes life senators and ex officio life senators.. Among the life senators appointed by the President of the Republic for outstanding merits in social, scientific, artistic and literary fields, we can recall such names as orchestra conductor Arturo Toscanini, poet Eugenio Montale and playwright Eduardo De Filippo. Former President of the Republic are ex officio life senators.

The President of the Senate

Within twenty days of the general election, the Senate must hold its first sitting, which is presided over by the eldest senator. In their first meeting, senators elect a new President of the Senate by secret ballot. The President represents the Senate; runs the activities of all Senate departments and ensures that regulations are observed; chairs and regulates debates; decides upon the admissibility of bills, motions and questions; gives the floor to members; puts motions and questions to the House; sets the voting schedule and announces the result of votes; acts as President of the Republic when the latter is unable to perform his or her functions.

Bills

In the Senate bills are designated disegno di legge, whereas in the Chamber of Deputies, a bill is designated as disegno di legge or proposta di legge, depending on whether it was introduced by the Government or by a Member of Parliament.

Sittings

The President announces the bills introduced in the Senate or referred to the committees. The rapporteur, a senator appointed by his or her committee to refer a bill back to the Senate, introduces the general debate by submitting a written or, in urgent cases, oral report. A general discussion takes place on the bill.

Under the Constitution, a bill may be introduced by an MP, the government, the people (in which case it must be signed by at least fifty thousands qualified voters), a Regional Council or, on specific issues, the National Economy and Labour Council (CANEL)

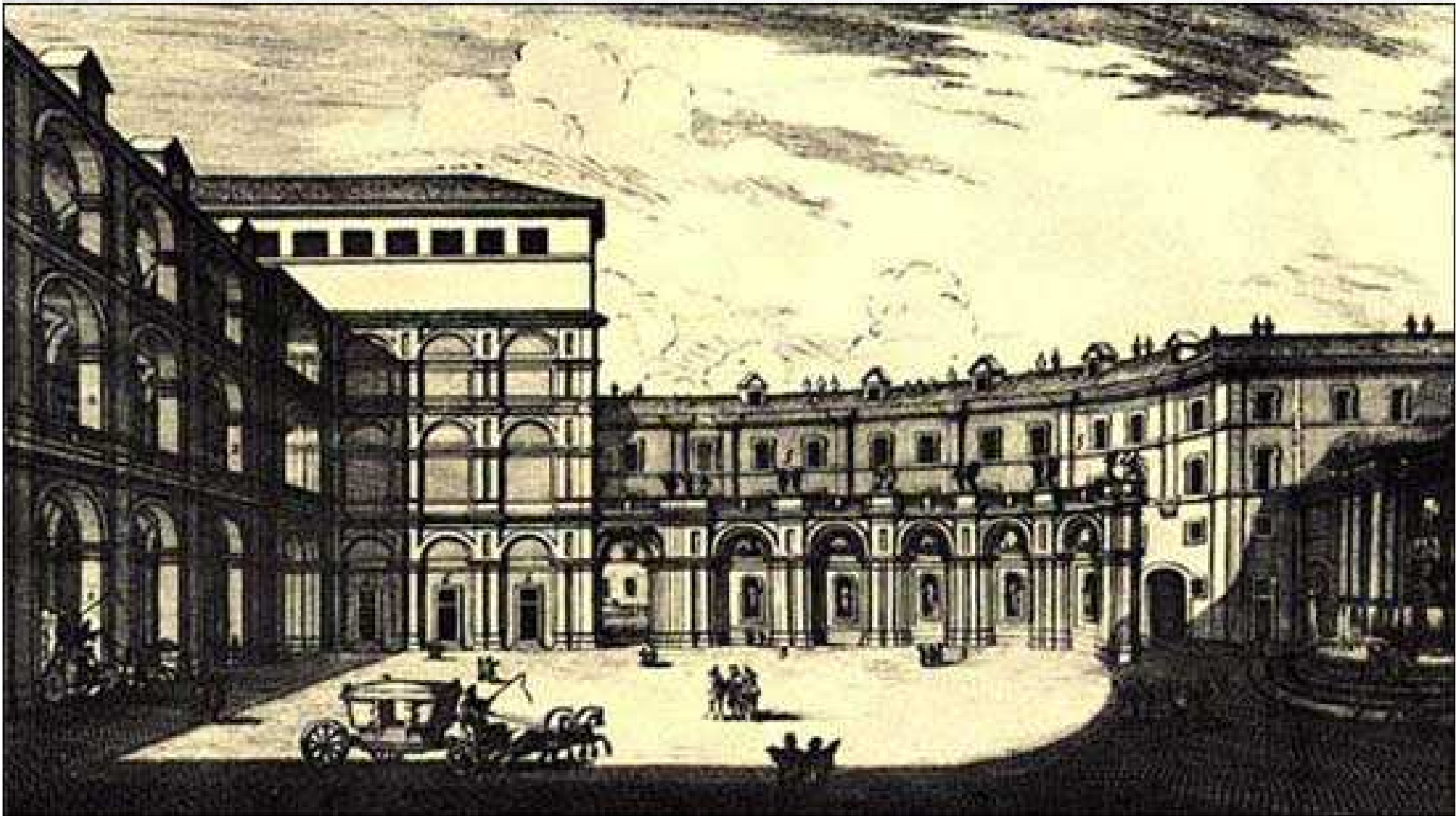
After this the bill is debated article by article, amendments are introduced and put to the vote and then the bill is ultimately adopted or rejected. After all individual articles have been examined, the bill is voted upon in its entirety. In case of approval, the bill is signed by the President of the Senate and sent to the Chamber of Deputies. If the bill has already been passed by the other House and the Senate has not amended it, it is signed by The President of the Senate and sent to the President of the Republic for promulgation, whereby the bill is enacted as law and published in the Official Gazette.

Therefore, in order to become a law of the Republic, a bill must be approved by both Houses of Parliament in the same wording. If one House amends a bill approved by the other, the bill must be sent back again to the house that scrutinised and approved it first.

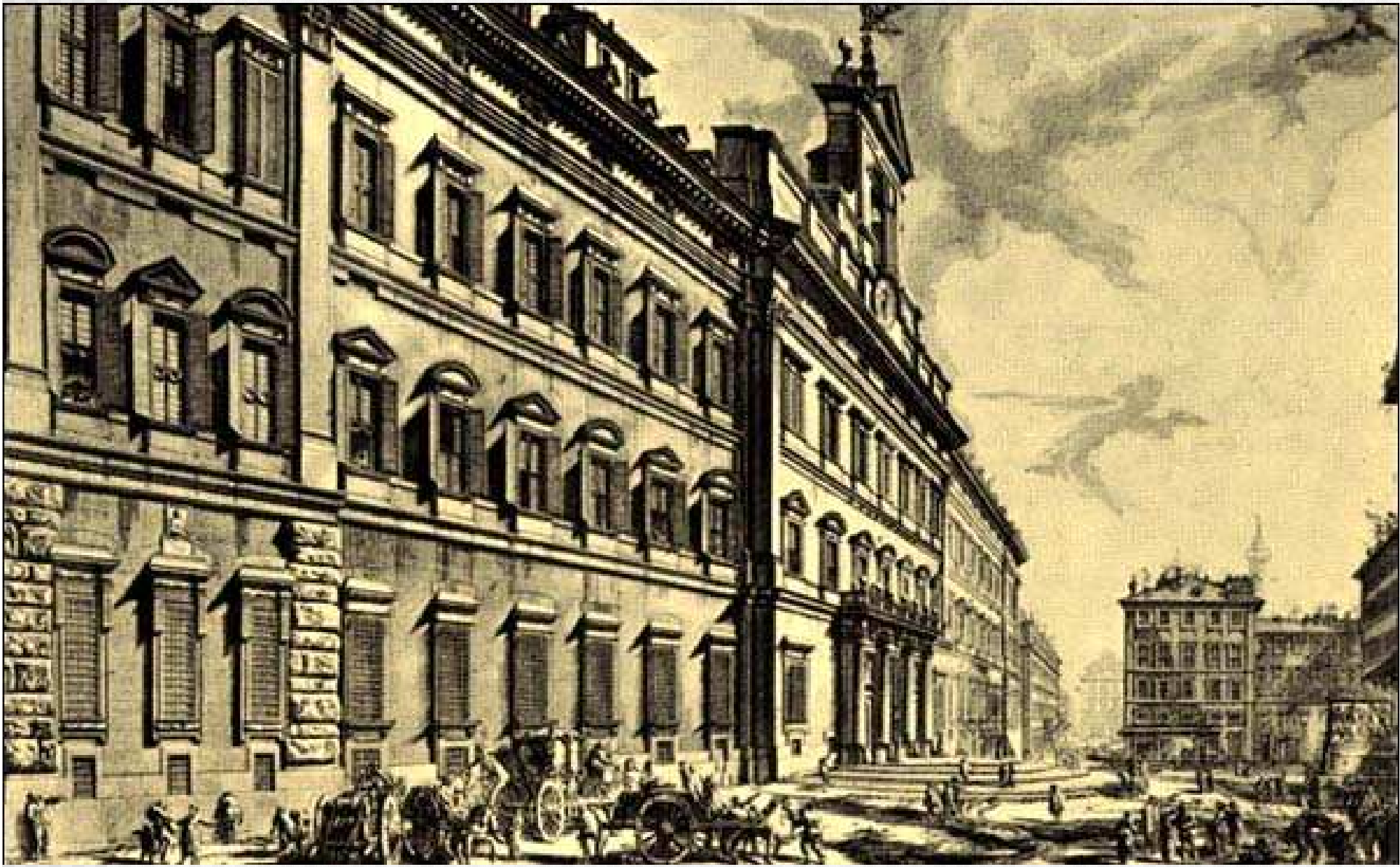
THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES





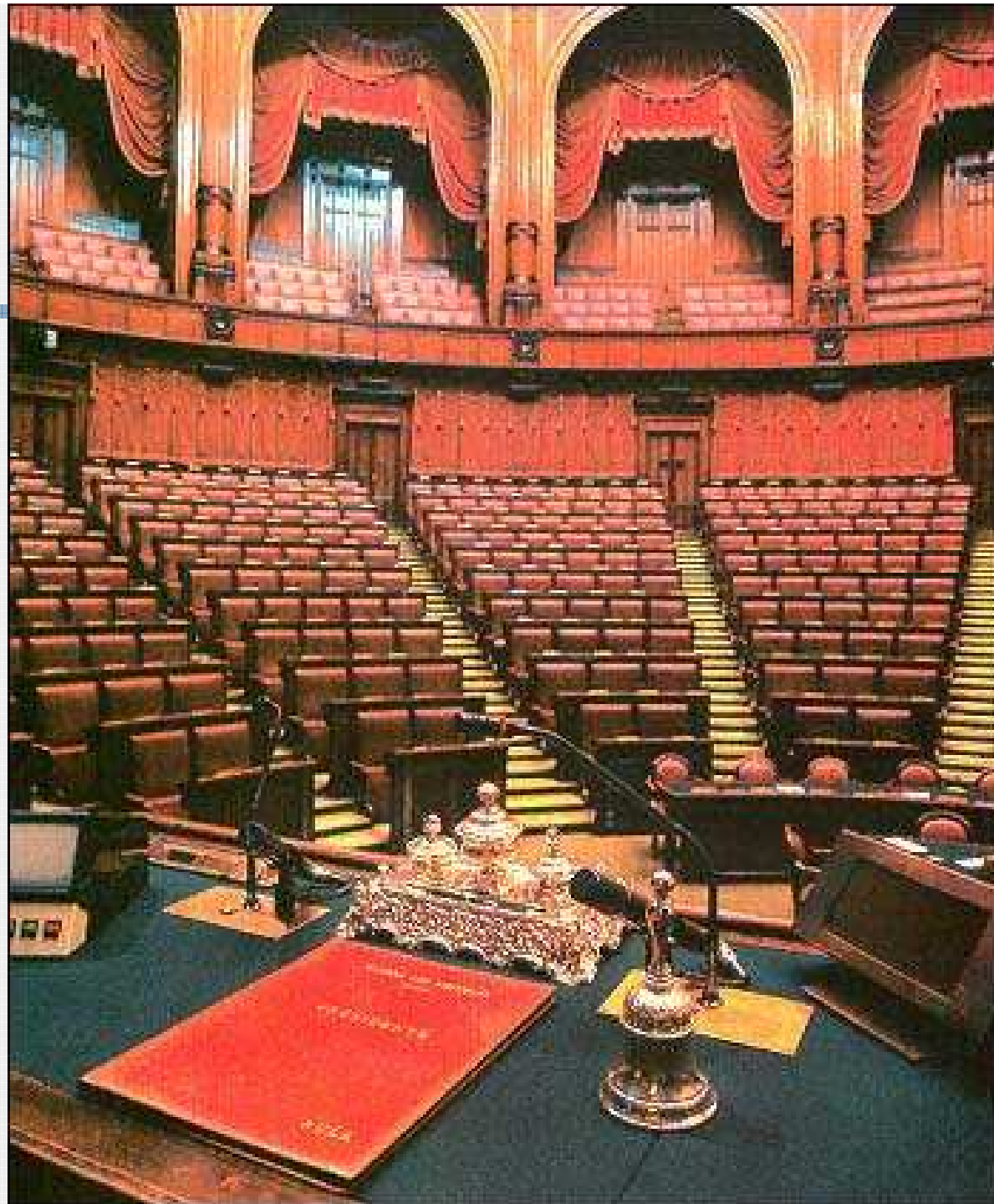








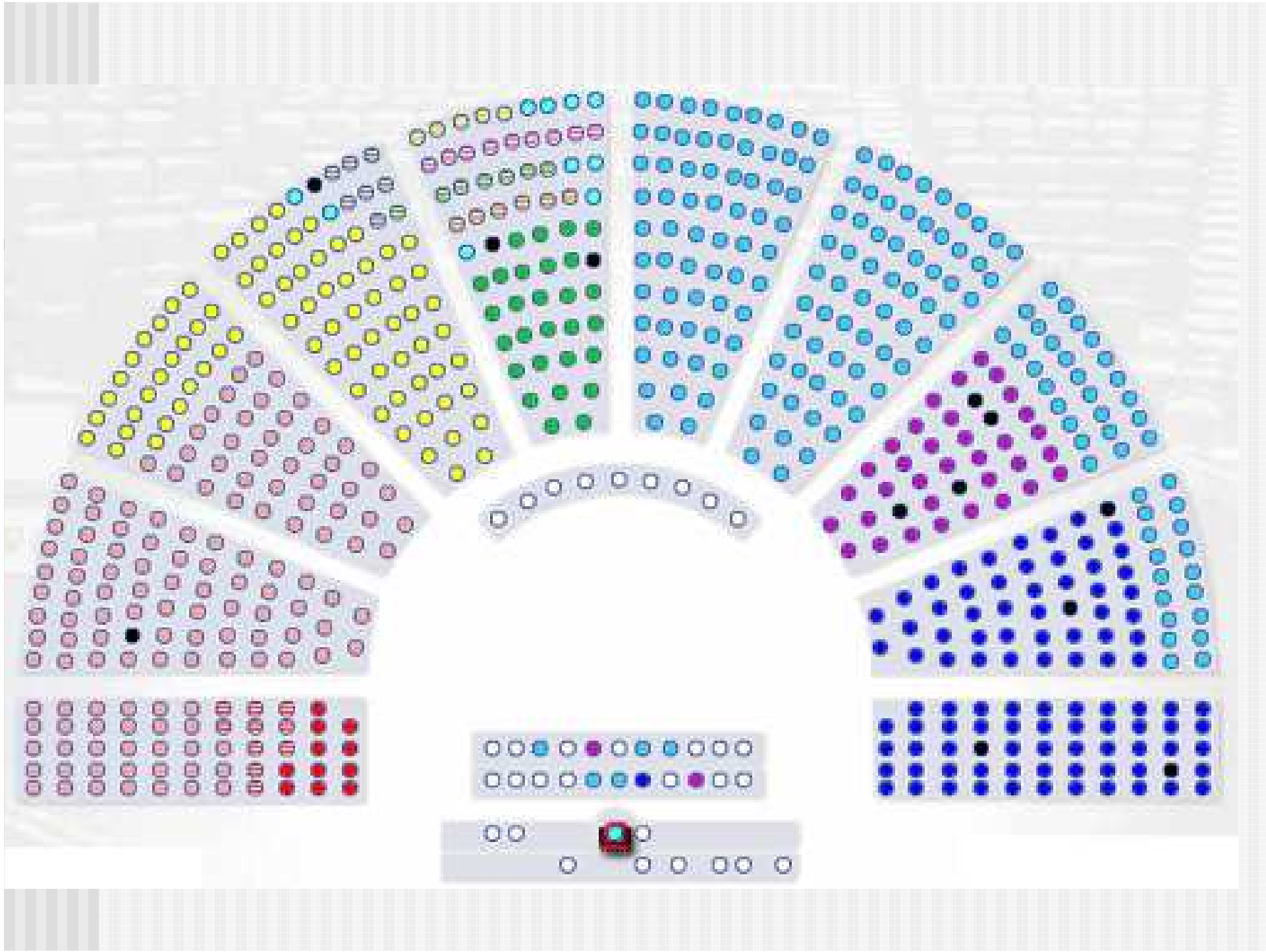












The Speaker of the Chamber

The speaker of the Chamber is elected by the House at the first setting of Parliament.

The speaker represents the Chamber and ensures its proper functioning

Parliamentary groups

All deputies must belong to a parliamentary group: within two days after the first sitting, they must therefore declare to which group they belong. To form a group minimum of 20 deputies is required. The groups – which normally represent the projection inside the Parliament of the parties and political movements – represent an essential factor in the functioning of the two Houses.

Each member of Parliament, in accordance with the Constitution, represent the Nation without any mandatory constraint. However, the most important decisions are agreed upon and adopted inside the parliamentary group to which each belongs and, in general, the group's position is expressed by its chairperson or by a representative who speaks on the floor of the House or in the Committee in the name of the group.

Standing committees

- constitutional affairs
- justice
- foreign affairs
- defence
- budget
- finance
- culture
- environment
- transport
- productive activities
- Labour
- Social affaires
- Agriculture
- European Union

Two Chambers and Inquiry Committees

- for regional matters
- Impeachment proceedings
- radio and TV services
- committee for security services
- childhood
- social security and welfare
- administrative reform
- Phenomenon of Mafia
- Waste disposal cycle