



Press Office of the Constitutional Court

Press release of 11 January 2020

THE COURT OPENS TO HEARING THE VOICE OF CIVIL SOCIETY

From now on, civil society too will be able to make its voice heard on issues discussed before the Constitutional Court.

This was decided by the Constitutional Court by means of a deliberation, dated 8 January 2020, which amended the regulations governing the conduct of proceedings before the Court. The amendments will enter into force when published on the Official Gazette of the Italian Republic.

In particular, the new Article 4-*ter* of the Supplementary Rules on Proceedings before the Constitutional Court states that all non-profit social groups and all institutional bodies representing collective or diffuse interests relevant to the questions discussed will be able to present brief written opinions, to provide the Court with information that may be useful in understanding and evaluating the case before it.

In line with the practice followed by the supreme and constitutional courts of many other countries, the Italian Constitutional Court thus opens to the voice of *amici curiae*: institutional bodies, professional associations and non-governmental organisations.

Another important amendment approved by the Court, Article 14-*bis* of the Supplementary Rules, introduces the possibility of calling renowned experts to the Court, when it deems it necessary to acquire information on specific areas of knowledge. The experts will be heard in chambers, in the presence of the parties to the case.

In addition, with regard to incidental proceedings initiated by a court during civil, criminal or administrative cases, the range of potential intervenors will now extend to other parties – in addition to the parties to the case and the President of the

Council of Ministers (and the President of the relevant Regional Council, if a regional law is concerned) – provided that they have a valid and directly and immediately relevant interest in the decision. Prospective interveners may, when appropriate, be also authorised to access the case files of the constitutional proceedings prior to the hearing before the Court.

The new Article 4-*bis* contains the provisions regulating third-party interveners' access to case files.

Rome, 11 January 2020