

RELATIONS BETWEEN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND EU NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS

EN



ANNUAL REPORT 2023



European Parliament

PARLIAMENTS IN THE EUROPEAN UNION



The functioning of the European Union is founded on representative democracy.



705 seats*



Citizens are directly represented at Union level in the European Parliament.

Member States are represented in the European Council by their Heads of State or Government and in the Council by their governments, themselves democratically accountable either to their national Parliaments, or to their citizens.



Council of the European Union

National Parliaments contribute actively to the good functioning of the Union by...



... being informed by the EU institutions and having draft EU laws forwarded to them.



... ensuring that the principle of subsidiarity is respected.



... taking part in the evaluation mechanisms for the area of freedom, security and justice and being involved in the political monitoring of Europol and the evaluation of Eurojust.



... taking part in the revision procedures of the EU Treaties.



... being notified of applications for accession to the EU.



... taking part in interparliamentary cooperation between national Parliaments and with the European Parliament.



The European Parliament and national Parliaments shall together determine the organisation and promotion of effective and regular interparliamentary cooperation within the EU.



A conference of Parliamentary Committees for Union Affairs (COSAC) may submit any contribution it deems appropriate for the attention of the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission. That conference shall in addition promote the exchange of information and best practice between national Parliaments and the European Parliament.

* As from 1 February 2020, the European Parliament has 705 seats following the UK's withdrawal from the EU on 31 January 2020.

Sources: Article 12 of the Treaty on European Union and Articles 9 and 10 of the Protocol on the role of National Parliaments in the European Union (No 1) annexed to the Treaties.

**DIRECTORATE FOR RELATIONS
WITH NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS**

ANNUAL REPORT 2023
Relations between
the European Parliament
and the EU national Parliaments

The annual activity report of the Directorate for Relations with National Parliaments provides an overview of the activities and main political developments in interparliamentary cooperation with national Parliaments in 2023 in the area of institutional cooperation, legislative dialogue and joint parliamentary scrutiny. This cooperation involved 39 national Parliaments and Chambers across the 27 Member States and the European Parliament.

This is a publication of the European Parliament's Directorate for Relations with National Parliaments, which constitutes part of the European Parliament's Directorate-General for Parliamentary Democracy Partnerships.

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Foreword by the European Parliament's Vice-Presidents responsible for relations with EU national Parliaments



Othmar Karas, First Vice-President of the European Parliament, and Dita Charanzová, Vice-President of the European Parliament
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Cooperation between the European Parliament and EU national Parliaments in 2023 remained marked by Russia's illegal war of aggression against Ukraine, which is also an attack on international law and on European values. Parliamentarians expressed their unwavering support for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine and called for support for Ukraine to continue, both economically and militarily, for as long as it takes. There were also calls on the EU to open accession negotiations with Ukraine and to revive the EU enlargement process.

The consequences of the war in Ukraine for the EU's economy, notably inflation in the food and energy sectors, also featured in interparliamentary debates. Discussions on the EU's economic recovery against the background of the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine focused on reforming the EU's governance framework. Parliamentarians stressed that economic governance rules needed to take into account the social dimension of the recovery and also support a competitive economy that could facilitate the necessary green and digital transitions.

After three years of disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the full normalisation of in-person interparliamentary meetings in 2023 was a very welcome development. Bilateral personal contacts again became an essential part of interparliamentary meetings providing

Members of national Parliaments and the European Parliament with the opportunity to exchange views, ideas and best practices on cross-cutting issues of mutual interest.

The possibility of closer formal and informal interparliamentary exchanges throughout 2023 was particularly significant as it was the European Parliament's last full year of parliamentary activity before the June 2024 elections. In 2023 it was also possible to pilot new forms of interparliamentary cooperation, such as the 'Rapporteur's dialogue'.

Amid geopolitical tensions, polarisation and contested narratives, the European Parliament and national Parliaments also underlined the key role of parliaments as the heart of democracy as well as the importance of global cooperation between democracies. In 2023, interparliamentary debates began on defining the fundamental principles and key elements of modern parliamentarism inherent to a liberal democracy. These discussions also focused on how to strengthen parliamentarism in a functioning democracy to address common challenges faced by parliaments around the world, with the drafting of a 'Charter on the Role of Parliaments in a Functioning Liberal Democracy'.

Before the end of the European Parliament's legislature, as Vice-Presidents for relations with national Parliaments, we would like to reiterate our commitment to further advancing interparliamentary dialogue based on mutual trust and cooperation. It is essential to foster greater political coordination and consistency in interparliamentary relations to defend our common values, democracy, freedom and the rule of law as the foundations of peace and stability in Europe and beyond.



Othmar Karas
EP First Vice-President



Dita Charanzová
Vice-President

Key developments and main topics on the interparliamentary agenda in 2023

In 2023 the work of the Directorate for Relations with National Parliaments was conducted under the political leadership and guidance of Roberta Metsola, President of the European Parliament, Othmar Karas, First Vice-President, together with Vice-President Dita Charanzová, both responsible for Relations with National Parliaments, and Salvatore de Meo, Chair of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs (AFCO).

The major recurrent topics discussed at various interparliamentary meetings included: (1) the EU's response to Russia's illegal war of aggression against Ukraine; (2) the EU's economic recovery, the energy crisis and the green and digital transitions; and (3) the rule of law, democracy and fundamental rights – the role of parliaments in promoting democracy and the 2024 European Parliament elections.

As had been the case the previous year, a specific point on Ukraine was included on the agendas of the main interparliamentary meetings, such as the Conference of Speakers of EU Parliaments (EUSC), the Inter-Parliamentary Conference for the Common Foreign and Security Policy and Common Security and Defence Policy (IPC CFSP/CSDP) or the Conference of Parliamentary Committees for Union Affairs (COSAC). The year 2023 also saw the organisation of the Second Parliamentary Summit of the International Crimea Platform.

The economic consequences of the Russian aggression against Ukraine, notably inflation and higher energy prices, were the central topic of the February 2023 European Parliamentary Week (EPW), as it was closely related to broader discussions on the economic situation in the EU. The review of the EU economic governance framework, against the background of the challenges posed by inflation but also the transformations of the European economy towards a green and digital future, were an important part of the Inter-Parliamentary Conference on Stability, Economic Coordination and Governance in the EU (IPC SECG).

The state of the rule of law, democracy and fundamental rights in the EU and its Member States was an ongoing topic of discussion. In 2023, this was a subject of debate on interparliamentary meetings organised by the Swedish Presidency, and the focus also broadened to emphasise the role of parliaments in the promotion of democratic values. In April 2023, the EUSC held in Prague discussed the role of the EU in the global cooperation of democracies and the issue of EU Member States' dependence on totalitarian regimes. The Spanish Presidency organised a 'Global Conference to commemorate the International Day of Parliamentarism: Strengthening Parliaments to Enhance Democracy' in León, in which the initiative to draw up a 'Charter on the role of parliaments in a functioning liberal democracy' was highlighted and supported by the León Declaration on parliamentarism. Various aspects of the preparations for the June 2024 European Parliament elections were also the subject of interparliamentary committee meetings (ICMs) throughout the year.



Family photo of participants at the 12th European Parliamentary Week at the hemicycle of the European Parliament in February 2023.

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The year 2023 also saw the full return of in-person meetings – although remote participation and hybrid meetings remain a useful tool for interparliamentary cooperation. In-person meetings and bilateral visits also returned to normal, after three years of interruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Fifty visits from Members and staff of national Parliaments to Brussels took place - a number that is close to pre-pandemic levels.

This return to normality post-COVID-19 also coincided with the last full year of parliamentary and legislative activity at the European level before the European Parliament elections.

In 2023, a total of 425 submissions from EU national Parliaments were received by the European Parliament: 294 (70 %) were submitted within the framework of Protocol No 2 subsidiarity checks, and 131 (30 %) under the Informal Political Dialogue (Protocol No 1).

Legislative cooperation with EU national Parliaments under the Early Warning System (EWS) and Protocol No 2 to the Treaties remained an important tool in ensuring the application of the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality as defined in the Treaties. In 2023, the European Parliament formally received 294 submissions from national Parliaments under Protocol No 2 – an increase from the 250 received the previous year. Only 22 of these submissions were reasoned opinions raising the issue of non-compliance with the principle of subsidiarity. The large majority (272) were contributions expressing the views of EU national Parliaments on issues related to the substance of legislative proposals, other than the formal topic of the principle of subsidiarity. The use of Protocol No 2 by EU national Parliaments as a means to express their views on the substance of

proposals more often than on subsidiarity could reflect their desire to be more closely involved in the substance of the legislative process from an early stage.

The Informal Political Dialogue (IPD) and Protocol No 1 to the Treaties, allowing EU national Parliaments to comment on legislative files falling under the exclusive competence of the EU as well as on non-legislative documents, remained an important vehicle for legislative dialogue. The European Parliament received 131 contributions under the IPD, a slight decrease from the 144 received in 2022.

In response to these requests, in cooperation with the relevant European Parliament committees, in 2023 the Directorate organised the first so-called 'rapporteur's dialogue'. This new type of interparliamentary activity has enabled progress from occasional contacts towards a more structured dialogue between the European Parliament and national Parliaments' rapporteurs, on a voluntary basis and at an early stage of the legislative process. The inaugural rapporteur's dialogue was organised in August on the proposal on 'Prohibiting products made with forced labour on the Union market'.

The work of the various networks of interparliamentary cooperation also intensified in 2023, with a shift towards more in-person meetings. For IPEX, 2023 was a year of technical upgrades and fine-tuning of existing capabilities. The year also saw the return to regular face-to-face meetings of the IPEX board, national IPEX correspondents and IPEX users.

The European Centre for Parliamentary Research and Documentation (ECPRD) was particularly active. It saw an increase in the submission of comparative requests to the network in 2023: 388 comparative requests were submitted, generating 10 981 replies (in 2022 there had been 342 comparative requests and 9 154 replies). The first in-person ECPRD Executive Committee meeting since the COVID-19 outbreak took place in June 2023 in Finland. Nine seminars (three webinars and six in-person seminars) were also organised by the ECPRD network.

Interparliamentary cooperation in the EU, both at the political and administrative level, enjoyed a certain return to normal in 2023 and in the last full year of activity before the June 2024 European Parliament elections.

Some of the subjects raised in interparliamentary forums and bilateral discussions are outlined below.

The EU response to Russia's illegal war of aggression against Ukraine

During the second year of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, the topic remained high on the agenda of interparliamentary cooperation. The Conference of Speakers of EU Parliaments (EUSC), hosted by the Czech Chamber of Deputies and the Czech Senate, in Prague on 24 and 25 April 2023, included a session on the Russian aggression against Ukraine and the EU response in a broader political context. Following an address by the Chairman of the *Verkhovna Rada* of Ukraine, Mr Ruslan Stefanchuk, all participants, including Roberta Metsola, President of the European Parliament, expressed their support

for Ukraine and the Ukrainian people and discussed related aspects such as EU enlargement, energy security and post-war reconstruction.

The Czech Chamber of Deputies and the *Verkhovna Rada* also jointly organised the Second Parliamentary Summit of the International Crimea Platform, which took place in Prague on 24 October 2023. The Summit was an opportunity to underline the need to re-establish Ukraine's borders – as recognised in 1991 – as a prerequisite for any possible peace negotiations. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy – speaking remotely – called on the representatives of national Parliaments to remain unwavering in their support, especially as other international crises, such as the conflict in the Middle East, risk diverting attention from Ukraine.



Ms Roberta Metsola, President of the European Parliament, speaking during the Conference of Speakers of EU Parliaments in Prague.

© Parliament of the Czech Republic

Both the Swedish and the Spanish Presidencies included debates on the situation in Ukraine on the agenda of the COSAC meetings, as well as on the contributions adopted following the LXIX and LXX COSAC plenaries, held in Stockholm in May and in Madrid in November, respectively. In these debates, Members underlined that the war is an attack on European values and the need for EU unity in responding to Russia's aggression. Speakers also called for economic and military support to be given to Ukraine for as long as necessary, including the need to mobilise funding for reconstruction, and warned against fatigue and demobilisation in the EU's support for Ukraine. Another angle to the COSAC discussions on Ukraine's relations with the EU was the call on the EU to open accession negotiations with Ukraine.

The subject of EU enlargement became a salient topic of interparliamentary cooperation in 2023, for example through the organisation of an ICM on 'Moving the EU enlargement forward – 20 years since the Thessaloniki Declaration' by the Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET) on 27 June 2023.

The Russian aggression against Ukraine and the global consequences were the subject of a debate at the 22nd and 23rd IPCs on CFSP/CSDP organised in Stockholm on 2 and 3 March 2023 and in Madrid on 1 and 2 October 2023. The discussions were part of a wider debate on the growing geopolitical competition and the need to reinforce the EU's security, for example when examining the topics of the EU's Strategic Compass for Security and Defence and of European defence and challenges for the CSDP. The close interlinkages between the EU's internal and external policies, whether related to the war in Ukraine or, more generally, to the EU's global role in a contested world appeared in different formats in interparliamentary discussions throughout 2023.

One example of this was the topic of open strategic autonomy, which the Spanish Presidency included on the agenda of the LXX COSAC plenary and the Interparliamentary Conference on Stability, Economic Coordination and Governance in the EU (IPC SECG).

Another example of a topic cutting across internal and external dimensions is the universality of human rights, which needs to be underlined amid contested narratives led by emerging global powers. This was one of the central messages of the 'High-Level Conference marking the 75th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights' organised as an ICM by the Subcommittee on Human Rights (DROI) on 29 November 2023.

The EU's economic recovery, the energy crisis and the green and digital transitions

The economic situation in the EU was an important subject of discussion in interparliamentary meetings in 2023. The economic prospects for the Union were also worsened by Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine and its impact on energy markets. This was a central subject for the 12th European Parliamentary Week co-organised by the European Parliament and the Swedish *Riksdag*, which was held on 27 and 28 February 2023 in Brussels. It was the first in-person meeting since the COVID-19 pandemic. Some of the topics discussed were support for Ukraine amid national and EU budgetary crises, high inflation and the right policy responses, the socio-economic consequences of high inflation and energy prices and remedies to address them.

The impact of the energy crises on vulnerable Europeans was also the subject of the ICM organised by the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM) and entitled 'Gender aspects of energy poverty', which was held on 1 March 2023.

Another important subject discussed during the EPW and the 20th session of the Inter-Parliamentary Conference on Stability, Economic Coordination and Governance (IPC SECG), held on 26 and 27 October 2023 in Madrid, was the reform of the EU's economic governance framework in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. Discussions on this topic brought a parliamentary perspective on the need for structural medium-term budgetary plans. Some of the elements highlighted included the need for debt sustainability and fiscal prudence, along with a balanced, credible and transparent framework that takes into account each country's specific circumstances. Integrating the social dimension in the

review of the EU's economic and fiscal framework was also stressed, as was the need for an economic and monetary union able to react to a volatile geopolitical global context.

A third angle to the discussions on economic recovery held in the various interparliamentary forums over the course of 2023 was the need for the EU to develop a competitive economy and a dynamic industrial base that can facilitate the necessary green and digital transformations. For example, this twin transition should be incorporated in the new economic governance framework. The Swedish Presidency – in line with its priorities – included a debate on the 30 years of the single market on the agenda of the LXIX COSAC plenary, highlighting the single market's importance amid growing geopolitical competition, as well as a debate on the green transition discussing the European Green Deal, its level of ambition, and the related issues of the energy transition, environmental protection and social justice.

The LXX COSAC plenary meeting organised by the Spanish Presidency also included a debate on the energy crisis and green transition. The European Parliament Committee on Transport and Tourism (TRAN) also organised an ICM entitled 'Reaching the transport objectives of Fit for 55 at national level – opportunities and challenges' on 25 May 2023.

The rule of law, democracy and fundamental rights, and the 2024 European Parliament elections

Respect for the rule of law, democracy and fundamental rights has become an important and cross-cutting priority in all EU policies, as reflected in various interparliamentary meetings. The European Parliament's Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) organised the fourth annual ICM on 'The situation of the Rule of Law in the EU' on 4 December 2023. This has now become an established feature of interparliamentary relations allowing an in-depth exchange of views on the state of the rule of law in the EU and on the role of national Parliaments in the context of EU efforts to protect and enforce Union values.



Mr Didier Reynders addressing participants via video link during the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs' fourth annual ICM on 'The situation of the Rule of Law in the EU'.

© European Parliament

The LIBE Committee is also active in the parliamentary scrutiny and oversight of European executive action and agencies in the field of justice and home affairs.

The 12th meeting of the Joint Parliamentary Scrutiny Group on Europol (JPSG) was co-chaired by the Swedish *Riksdag* and the European Parliament's LIBE Committee and took place on 26 and 27 March 2023 in the *Riksdag* in Stockholm. The meeting included discussion of efforts to combat organised crime and trafficking in human beings.

The 13th meeting of the JPSG was co-chaired by the European Parliament's LIBE Committee and the Spanish *Cortes Generales* and took place on 20 and 21 September 2023 at the European Parliament in Brussels. The meeting scrutinised the area of serious and organised crime and examined the financial and economic crime threat assessment, including a focus on corruption in the EU.

Another area of scrutiny in the field of justice and home affairs was addressed at the 4th Annual ICM on Eurojust's Activities which took place on 7 November 2023 at the European Parliament. The ICM discussed challenges for future cross-border judicial cooperation in criminal matters and Eurojust's activities in relation to Ukraine.

Beyond the regular interparliamentary cooperation around the rule of law, democracy, fundamental rights, 2023 also saw concrete discussions and initiatives highlighting the importance of parliaments for the promotion of democracy, as well as the initial preparations ahead of the 2024 European Parliament elections.

The 2023 Conference of Speakers of EU Parliaments (EUSC) reflected, in its debates and in the conclusions it adopted, the role of the EU in global cooperation of democracies and the issue of EU Member States' dependence on totalitarian regimes. The speakers noted that democratic standards and principles must be upheld in all EU Member States while recognising that a functioning democracy cannot be taken for granted and must be sustained, strengthened and promoted given the current challenges. They also emphasised the key role of parliaments as the heart of democracy in global cooperation between democracies, and welcomed the European Parliament initiative in COSAC to jointly advance on the role of parliaments in a functioning democracy and to reflect on possible ways to strengthen modern parliamentarism.

Many of these themes also featured in the 'Global Conference to commemorate the International Day of Parliamentarism: Strengthening Parliaments to Enhance Democracy' organised in León by the Spanish Presidency on 30 June 2023. Participants in the meeting underlined the common challenges faced by parliaments, such as citizens' disengagement, loss of trust in democratic institutions, polarisation, populism, disinformation and foreign interference. They also underlined the responsibility of elected representatives to lead by example. At the León conference, Mr Othmar Karas, First Vice-President of the European Parliament outlined the principles of the initiative to draft a 'Charter on the role of parliaments in a functioning liberal democracy', which was to be discussed at the 2024 EUSC.

In light of these challenges to parliaments and the democratic process, and also ahead of the European Parliament elections due to take place in June 2024, various European Parliament Committees dedicated their ICMs in 2023 to topics related to the electoral process.

The Committee on Constitutional Affairs (AFCO) organised two ICMs on this issue. The first, entitled 'Reform of the European Electoral System', took place on 26 April 2023 and provided an opportunity to discuss the proposal for a new European electoral law, including the creation of a pan-European electoral constituency. The debate gave an opportunity for Members of national Parliaments to express some concerns about the proposal, and also to discuss the importance of democratic legitimacy in the upcoming European elections and the need for effective communication between the European Parliament and society. The second AFCO ICM on 'Preparing the European elections 2024' took place on 25 October 2023 and sought to gather input for the European Parliament's key political messages to strengthen the European dimension of the organisation of the June 2024 elections and the election of the President of the Commission.

Other ICMs and activities related to the upcoming elections were: the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs (EMPL) ICM on the 'Participation of persons with disabilities in the electoral process' held on 4 December 2023, the ICM on 'European Citizenship Education' organised by the Committee on Culture and Education (CULT) on 27 and 28 November 2023, and the ICM on 'Legislative Resilience, electoral laws and information manipulation campaigns' held on 21 March 2023. The latter was organised by the European Parliament's Special Committee on Foreign Interference in all democratic

processes in the European Union, including disinformation, and the strengthening of integrity, transparency and accountability in the European Parliament (ING2) to debate and exchange best practices on how to build resilient democracies and respond to acts of foreign interference. Hybrid threats, and notably the integrity of electoral processes, the protection of sensitive information, and the fight against foreign interference were also the central topics for discussion at the 3rd Conference of the Security Departments of the Parliaments of the European Union held on 13 October 2023 at the European Parliament in Brussels. This was one of the various staff seminars in which the Directorate for Relations with National Parliaments was involved in 2023.

1. INSTITUTIONAL INTERPARLIAMENTARY BODIES

1.1 Conference of Parliamentary Committees for Union Affairs



[The Conference of Parliamentary Committees for Union Affairs \(COSAC\)](#), was established in November 1989 in Paris. It is unique in that it is the only interparliamentary forum enshrined in the Treaties (Protocol No 1 on the role of national Parliaments in the European Union). The national Parliament of the Member State holding the rotating Council Presidency plays a leading role in defining the direction and work of COSAC. A Presidential Troika, of which the European Parliament is a permanent member, supports it. The presidency relies on the organisational backing of a small secretariat, hosted by the European Parliament and led by an official seconded from a national Parliament (referred to as the ‘permanent member’).

As with many other interparliamentary activities, for COSAC 2023 represented a return to normality after the COVID-19 pandemic, with all meetings again held only in person. The topic of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine remained high on the agenda, with debates on Ukraine included in all COSAC meetings. Other important topics discussed were the green and energy transitions and fostering Europe’s economic competitiveness and resilience through the promotion of the single market and the EU’s open strategic autonomy.

The [COSAC Chairpersons’ meeting during the Swedish EU Council Presidency](#) took place on 29 and 30 January 2023 in Stockholm, hosted by the Swedish Parliament (*Riksdag*) at its premises. The welcome address by Dr Andreas Norlén, Speaker of the *Riksdag*, underlined that national Parliaments have an obligation to fight for the rule of law, fundamental rights and the proper functioning of the European Union, particularly at this time of uncertainty marked by the war in Ukraine. The first session of the meeting was devoted to the topic of what the EU can do in the area of organised crime and included an address by Ms Ylva Johansson, European Commissioner for Home Affairs among other guests. Speakers emphasised the need for international police cooperation, including in the digital field and in the fight against organised criminal networks. The second session dealt with the Swedish Presidency’s priorities. Mr Christian Danielsson, State Secretary to the

Minister for EU Affairs, called for Europe's unity in its support for Ukraine to be maintained and listed Sweden's four priorities: security, competitiveness, the green and digital transition and the defence of democratic values and the rule of law.

The [LXIX COSAC Plenary meeting](#) took place from 14 to 16 May 2023 in Stockholm, hosted by the Swedish *Riksdag*. Dr Andreas Norlén, Speaker of the *Riksdag* delivered a welcome address and Ms Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, delivered a keynote address via video link. The first session, on the Swedish Presidency of the Council of the EU, discussed the actions taken to promote European safety, the green transition and the rule of law. A second session was devoted to the 30 years of the single market, highlighting both its successes and the remaining challenges for its completion, as well as its importance amid growing geopolitical competition. The session included an interactive poll of Members, with different questions and a panel commented on the results. The second day began with a session dedicated to the green transition, which discussed the European Green Deal, its level of ambition, and the related questions of the energy transition, environmental issues and social justice. The fourth and final session was dedicated to Ukraine in which the need for unity in the response to the Russian aggression was underlined, as well as the need to mobilise funding for Ukraine's reconstruction. The COSAC Plenary also adopted the [Contribution and Conclusions of the LXIX COSAC](#).



Mr Othmar Karas, First Vice-President of the European Parliament, participating as first speaker during the COSAC Chairpersons' meeting in the Swedish Parliament.

© Melker Dahlstrand / The Swedish Parliament

The [meeting of COSAC Chairpersons during the Spanish Presidency](#) took place on 17 and 18 September 2023 in Madrid, hosted by the Spanish Senate and held in their premises. Mr Pedro Rollán Ojeda, Speaker of the Spanish Senate, and Ms Francina Armengol Socias, Speaker of the Spanish Congress of Deputies, opened the meeting. During the first session, on the priorities of the Spanish Presidency, the Spanish Minister for Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation, Mr José Manuel Albares Bueno outlined the

main priorities of the Spanish Presidency: promoting the reindustrialisation and open strategic autonomy of the Union, the green transition and environmental adaptation, greater social and economic justice and the strengthening of European unity and security. The second session, dedicated to the future of Ukraine in Europe, featured keynote speeches by Ms Ivanna Klympush-Tsintsadze, Chairperson of the Parliamentary Committee on Ukraine's Integration into the European Union of the Ukrainian Parliament, and Mr Hans Wallmark, Chairperson of the Committee on European Union Affairs of the Swedish *Riksdag*. Both speakers warned against fatigue and demobilisation in the EU's support for Ukraine, underlined that the war is an attack on European values and called for support for Ukraine economically and militarily for as long as it takes. The third session was devoted to current affairs in the European Union and aimed to provide an opportunity for a broad and timely debate on current affairs of special relevance to the European Union. Some of the topics discussed were the follow-up of the State of the Union speech, EU enlargement, recent natural disasters, migration and the 2024 European Parliament elections.



Ms Ivanna Klympush-Tsintsadze, Chairperson of the Parliamentary Committee on Ukraine's Integration into the European Union of the Ukrainian Parliament delivering her speech during the COSAC Chairpersons' meeting in the Spanish Senate.

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The [LXX COSAC plenary meeting](#), organised by the Spanish Congress of Deputies, took place from 26 to 28 November 2023 in Madrid. The first session was devoted to the Spanish Presidency of the Council of the EU, but its scope was widened to include a debate on the crisis in the Middle East. The second session was dedicated to the EU's Pact on Migration and Asylum and included keynote speeches by the Spanish Minister for Home Affairs, Mr Fernando Grande-Marlaska Gómez, and a remote address by Ms Ylva

Johansson, European Commissioner for Home Affairs. Both speakers, and many of the Members who took part in the debate, underlined the importance of concluding the negotiations on the Pact by the end of 2023. The third session, on the energy crisis and green transition, included keynote addresses by Mr Nicolás González Casares, MEP, and Mr Gunther Krichbaum, Member of the German *Bundestag*. The fourth session was devoted to the situation in Ukraine and relations with the European Union. The keynote speakers and subsequent discussions advocated for maintaining assistance, including military aid, to Ukraine, and endorsed Ukraine's integration with the EU. The final session dealt with open strategic autonomy and relations with Latin America in which the keynote speakers called for stronger political cooperation and trade relations between Europe and Latin America. The Plenary adopted the [Contribution and Conclusions of the LXX COSAC](#).

Main developments in 2023:

- First full year of normal meetings after the COVID-19 pandemic, with all in-person meetings and the adoption of contributions and conclusions for the LXIX and LXX COSAC Plenaries under the Swedish and Spanish Presidencies.

1.2 Conference of Speakers of EU Parliaments (EUSC)



The Stockholm Guidelines for the [Conference of Speakers of EU Parliaments](#) were adopted in 2010. They provide for one annual meeting of the Speakers, organised by the Member State holding the second semester Presidency in a given year, to take place during the spring Presidency of the following year. This Conference adopts non-binding Presidency conclusions. It also has the task of overseeing the coordination of interparliamentary EU activities.

The EUSC agenda is prepared by the Meeting of the Secretaries-General of the EU Parliaments.



Family photo during the Conference of Speakers of EU Parliaments hosted by the Czech Chamber of Deputies and the Czech Senate in Prague on 24 and 25 April 2023

© Parliament of the Czech Republic

The [Conference of Speakers of EU Parliaments](#) hosted by the Czech Chamber of Deputies and the Czech Senate, took place in Prague on 24 and 25 April 2023. The event concluded the parliamentary dimension of the Czech Presidency of the Council of the EU. The European Parliament was represented by President Roberta Metsola, who gave a keynote speech during the second session of the event.

The meeting was preceded by a dinner for female presidents and speakers, hosted by Ms Markéta Pekarová Adamová, Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies, in the evening of 23 April 2023, which focused on the role of women in foreign policy. Keynote speeches were given by Ms Eliźbieta Witek, President of the Polish *Sejm*, and Ms Bärbel Bas, President of the German *Bundestag*. In the morning of 24 April 2023, there was a working breakfast for candidate countries hosted by Ms Markéta Pekarová Adamová, Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies, and Mr Miloř Vystrčil, Speaker of the Czech Senate, at which speakers from candidate countries discussed their progress towards accession.

Later on 24 April 2023, after the Troika meeting, the Speakers' Conference was officially opened by Ms Markéta Pekarová Adamová and Mr Miloř Vystrčil who delivered their welcome addresses.

The first session of the Conference dealt with the Russian aggression against Ukraine and the EU response in a broader political context, covering such aspects as EU enlargement, energy security and post-war reconstruction. The scene was set by a poignant speech given by the Chairman of the *Verkhova Rada* of Ukraine, Mr Ruslan Stefanchuk. All participants, including the President of the European Parliament, expressed their support for Ukraine and the Ukrainian people.

The second session of the Conference, on 25 April 2023, covered the topic of the role of the EU in global cooperation between democracies and the issue of EU Member States' dependence on totalitarian regimes. It featured a keynote speech by the President of the European Parliament, Ms Roberta Metsola, who strongly stressed the importance of Europe in confronting the challenges facing democracy. Arguing that all Europe's energy, strength and resources must be dedicated to ensuring that democracy prevails, she said: 'There is a line in the sand that is forever Europe. We cannot allow it to be erased. Our values and democracy must be protected and nurtured'.

Lastly, there was a consensus among the Speakers of the EU Parliaments on the [conclusions](#), which included strong support for Ukraine as well as backing for the continuation of economic sanctions on Russia, a call for a tribunal to prosecute crimes of Russian aggression, the further enlargement of NATO and the strengthening of cooperation between NATO and the EU. The conclusions also welcomed the initiative from the European Parliament in COSAC to jointly advance on the role of Parliaments in a functioning democracy and to reflect on possible ways to strengthen modern parliamentarism. The process, initiated by First Vice-President Othmar Karas, was to be discussed at the Speakers' Conference in April 2024 in Mallorca.

Main developments in 2023:

- Successful EUSC meeting and adoption of the Conclusions addressing Russian aggression against Ukraine and the EU response in a broader geopolitical context, and the role of the EU in global cooperation between democracies and the issue of EU Member States' dependence on totalitarian regimes.

- The Conclusions also welcomed an initiative on the role of parliaments in a functioning democracy and to reflect on possible ways to strengthen modern parliamentarism.

2. INTERPARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCES (IPCs)

2.1 European Parliamentary Week, the Interparliamentary Conference on Stability, Economic Coordination and Governance in the EU and the European Semester Conference

The [Interparliamentary Conference on Stability, Economic Coordination and Governance in the EU](#) (IPC SECG), established in accordance with Article 13 of the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union [Fiscal Compact], provides a framework for debate and exchange of information and of best practices in implementing the relevant provisions and for cooperation between EU national Parliaments and the European Parliament.

The European Semester Conference offers an opportunity to exchange information on best practices in implementing the European Semester cycles and to strengthen cooperation on scrutiny of the actions of executives at national and European levels.

Together they make up European Parliamentary Week, bringing together parliamentarians from all over the EU to discuss economic, budgetary and social matters. The two conferences have earned a regular place in the calendar of interparliamentary activities and are consolidated forums for interparliamentary debate in these important policy areas.



The European Parliament, together with the Swedish *Riksdag*, organised the [2023 European Parliamentary Week \(EPW\)](#) at the European Parliament's premises in Brussels on 27 and 28 February 2023. This was the first in-person meeting after the COVID-19 pandemic.

It was the 12th occasion on which the EPW had been organised and it was attended by more than 100 parliamentarians from 23 EU Member States, eight parliamentarians from five candidate countries, and one observer country. More than 40 Members represented the European Parliament. The large number of participants is testament to the relevance and need for parliamentary exchange on the proposed relevant topics.

The opening session of the EPW was co-chaired by Ms Roberta Metsola, President of the European Parliament, and Dr Andreas Norlén, Speaker of the Swedish *Riksdag*. In their speeches, both underlined the variety of difficulties that Europe is facing, such as inflation and rising energy prices, as a consequence of the Russian aggression against Ukraine. The following key remarks were delivered by Mr Valdis Dombrovskis, Executive Vice-President of the European Commission and Mr Mathias Cormann, Secretary-General of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).



Ms Roberta Metsola, President of the European Parliament, delivering her opening speech at the 2023 European Parliamentary Week in Brussels.

© European Parliament

Commissioner Valdis Dombrovskis began his speech by saying that ‘the EU is determined to support Ukraine winning this war, rebuilding itself and pursuing a European future’. The EU was committed to achieving this by supporting Ukraine politically and economically and by granting the country EU candidate country status. Mr Dombrovskis mentioned other measures taken by the EU to support Ukraine as well as EU citizens affected by the consequences of the war. He stressed that the EU had managed to avoid recession and that inflation was starting to cool off. The green and digital transitions, strengthening the EU’s economic and social resilience, and ensuring energy security were some of the other challenges which the EU was facing that Mr Dombrovskis mentioned.

Mathias Cormann began his speech by noting the good expectations for the EU's economic growth in 2023. He underlined the importance of EU countries' acting decisively to diversify energy supplies and praised the effort made by businesses and households to reduce energy consumption. According to Mr Cormann, some of the structural elements that would boost the EU's resilience to future external shocks and help to get growth back on track were also boosting productivity by supporting investment, research, innovation, skills development, or by promoting competition.

Three parallel interparliamentary committee meetings (ICMs) took place after the opening plenary session:

- an ICM organised by the Committee on Budgets (BUDG): Session I: Climate change, energy, inflation: what role for the multiannual financial framework and own resources, and how to best create synergies with national measures? and Session II: Support for Ukraine - national and EU budgetary crisis responses and the role of parliaments;
- an ICM organised by the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs (ECON): Session I: High Inflation: the Conundrum of the right policy responses and Session II: The impact of the decreasing use of cash - the case of digital currencies;
- an ICM organised by the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs (EMPL): Session I: Socio-economic consequences of high inflation and energy prices and remedies to address them with focus on vulnerable households and Session II: Further integrating the social dimension in the review of the EU's economic and fiscal framework.

The first plenary session of the EPW was dedicated to the EU's economic governance from a parliamentary perspective. The introductory remarks were delivered by Mr Othmar Karas, First Vice-President of the European Parliament. He stressed the need to reform the EU economic governance framework, which had to be adapted to a new geopolitical situation, war in Ukraine, the energy crisis and inflation. Mr Edward Riedl, Chair of the Committee on Finance of the Swedish *Riksdag* noted that today's economic growth is the basis for tomorrow's prosperity. At the same time, he highlighted that a competitive economy and a dynamic industrial base also had to support the green and digital transformations. Mr Paolo Gentiloni, Commissioner for Economy, explained that the goal of the European Commission's reform proposal was to achieve a more balanced, credible and transparent framework which would take into account each EU country's specific circumstances. Mr Lars Heikensten, Chair of the Swedish Fiscal Policy Council, welcomed this proposal as a step forward and suggested defining more concretely how the medium-term fiscal and structural plans were to be set up, as well as the principles for evaluating structural policies. Ms Philippa Sigl-Glockner, Director of *Dezernat Zukunft*, addressed the key elements and limitations of the proposed reform of the EU economic governance framework. During the subsequent debate MEPs and national parliamentarians emphasised the role of national Parliaments in the process of reforming and restructuring the Stability and Growth Pact. Russia's war of aggression made supporting Ukraine a priority, but they also raised questions concerning defence expenditure.

The second plenary session was dedicated to remote working within the EU and the related fiscal challenges. The plenary session was co-chaired by Ms Dita Charanzová, Vice-President of the European Parliament and Mr Niklas Karlsson, Chair of the Committee on Taxation of the Swedish *Riksdag*. European Parliament Vice-President Ms Charanzová emphasised that the COVID-19 pandemic had been a catalyst for a revolution in work culture and life generally. Within the EU this meant that more people have their residence in one country while working in another, which shifts taxation rights to the countries of residence. Mr Karlsson stressed that the increasing digitalisation of work following the pandemic had led to an increase in cross-border remote working, which in turn poses challenges for tax systems.

Mr David Bradbury, Deputy Director of the Centre for Tax Policy and Administration of the OECD, gave a presentation focused on global trends in digitalisation, cross-border teleworking practices and new types of platforms and jobs. Mr Stefan Olsson, Deputy Director-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion of the European Commission, pointed out that Article 48 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) was the legal basis for the social security issues in the EU and that taxation issues are the legal competence of each Member State. In addition, he noted that social partners had initiated negotiations about remote workers' right to disconnect, which had the potential to evolve into a legal instrument later this year. He concluded that the existence of different legal frameworks could lead to multiple taxation. Finally Mr Reinhard Biebel, Head of the Direct Tax Policy and Cooperation Unit in DG TAXUD of the European Commission, highlighted that cross-border mobility and teleworking is embedded in a range of legal frameworks concerning taxation, labour rights and social security.

Following these speeches the floor was opened for debate. Members of the national Parliaments expressed their views from their different national perspectives. It was concluded that cross-border problems need cross-border solutions and more harmonisation at the EU level and across Member States in order to harmonise the key elements of cross-border teleworking, such as tax residency and the place of work.

As is customary, in the second half of the year, the [20th session of the Inter-Parliamentary Conference on Stability, Economic Coordination and Governance in the EU](#) was held on 26 and 27 October 2023 in Madrid. The Conference was well attended, with 110 Members of Parliament (MPs) from 24 EU countries, 11 Members of the European Parliament, eight MPs from three candidate countries and one MP from an observer country being present.



Family photo during the 20th session of the Inter-Parliamentary Conference on Stability, Economic Coordination and Governance in the EU held at the Spanish Senate in Madrid.

© Povedano

The first session of the meeting, chaired and moderated by Mr Celso Delgado Arce, Deputy of the Spanish *Cortes Generales*, focused on the challenges for the reform of the economic governance framework and for economic recovery in the EU. He stressed that these reforms are very challenging given the ongoing unprecedented transformations of the European economy towards a green and digital future, which need to be incorporated into the new economic governance framework. The second session was dedicated to the architecture of the new governance framework focusing on the structural medium-term budgetary plans and specific net expenditure pathways for each country, debt sustainability and fiscal prudence within the framework of economic and monetary union.

The second day opened with a third session chaired by Ms María Amparo Marco Gual, Senator of the Spanish *Cortes Generales*, and devoted to integrating the social pillar into the economic governance based on the proposals for reform of the EU's economic governance framework and considering the European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR). The fourth and final session was chaired and moderated by Mr Javier Alfonso Cendón, Deputy of the Spanish *Cortes Generales*, and dealt with the EU's open strategic autonomy, a subject considered key for the EU's independent action in areas such as defence, the economy and safeguarding democratic values.

All four plenary sessions were followed by debates with Members of the European Parliament and EU national Parliaments who shared their insights and best practices to move forward in this geopolitically agitated time. The involvement of national Parliaments

was highlighted as an important factor for reforms to succeed and to strengthen the EU's economy.

These discussions were to be continued at the next European Parliamentary Week scheduled to be held in Brussels on 12 and 13 February 2024 under the Belgian Presidency of the Council of the EU.

Main developments in 2023:

- The recurring subject was the need to reform the architecture of the EU's economic governance framework, focusing on medium-term structural plans and specific pathways for each country, and the need to adapt economic governance to a new geopolitical situation marked by important challenges.
- The chosen topics enabled high-level speakers and parliamentarians to debate the possible solutions to current internal and external challenges facing the EU and resulting from inflation, rising energy prices, the consequences of the Russian aggression against Ukraine and the need to promote the green and digital transitions.

2.2 Interparliamentary Conference for the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Common Security and Defence Policy

Established by a decision of the Conference of Speakers of EU Parliaments in 2012, the [Interparliamentary Conference for the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Common Security and Defence Policy](#) (CFSP/CSDP IPC) is the interparliamentary platform for debate on the EU's foreign, security and defence policy. Organised twice a year by the Parliament of the EU Member State holding the rotating Council Presidency, in close cooperation with the European Parliament, the conference is regularly attended by parliamentarians from across the EU. In addition, the European Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET) frequently invites national Parliaments to its meetings in Brussels, complementing interparliamentary dialogue in this vital policy area.

The [22nd session of the CFSP/CSDP IPC](#) took place in Stockholm on 2 and 3 March 2023 in the Chamber of the *Riksdag*. A total of 109 parliamentarians from EU national Parliaments attended the conference, together with a European Parliament delegation composed of 15 MEPs from the AFET Committee and its Subcommittee on Security and Defence (SEDE), and led by David McAllister, Chair of the AFET Committee.



Family photo during the 22nd Interparliamentary Conference for the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Common Security and Defence Policy at the plenary chamber of the Swedish Riksdag.

© Anders Löwdin/The Swedish Parliament

Although the format was slightly shorter than previous IPCs, it successfully included all of the relevant and topical issues with four sessions lasting 90 minutes each. The topics covered by these sessions were:

1. Russia's aggression against Ukraine;
2. the EU's Strategic Compass for Security and Defence – challenges and opportunities;
3. the Arctic;
4. the priorities of the CFSP/CSDP.

In Stockholm the IPC also adopted a [joint statement by the Co-Chairs](#) focusing on the topics discussed during the sessions and calling in particular for the balanced implementation of the Strategic Compass, according to the agreed timelines and commitments across its four key pillars (act, secure, invest and partner).

The [23rd session of the CFSP/CSDP IPC](#) took place in Madrid on 1 and 2 October 2023. A total of 134 parliamentarians from 25 EU national Parliaments attended together with a European Parliament delegation composed of 11 MEPs from the AFET Committee and SEDE Subcommittee, and led by Ms Željana Zovko, Vice-Chair of the AFET Committee.

The conference, of particular relevance in light of the European scene marked by the war in Ukraine and the global challenges faced by the European Union, followed a similar format to the one held in Stockholm with four 90-minute sessions. These dealt with the following issues:

1. the priorities of the CFSP/CSDP and current challenges, within the framework of the 30th anniversary of the CFSP/CSDP;
2. the threats posed by Russia – the invasion of Ukraine and global consequences;
3. European Defence and challenges to the CSDP;
4. the latest developments in the CFSP/CSDP sphere.



Ms Francina Armengol Socias, Speaker of the Spanish Congress of Deputies, addressing the participants of the 23rd CFSP/CSDP Interparliamentary Conference in Madrid.

© Povedano

During the debate, parliamentarians insisted on the need to do more to support Ukraine, to isolate Russia internationally and to address China’s threat towards Taiwan. They also warned about the humanitarian disaster in Nagorno-Karabakh resulting from Azerbaijan’s military offensive and stressed the urgency to implement the Strategic Compass. No joint statement by the Co-Chairs was adopted this time.

In the margins of the conference, the first in-person meeting of the informal CSDP Hub – involving parliamentary staff specialised in security and defence matters – was very well attended, with strong interest from the participants, mobilising representatives of 19 national delegations.

Main developments in 2023:

- Good attendance and lively debates showed a strong interest among parliamentarians in keeping the IPC as a crucial forum for debating and scrutinising European foreign and defence policies, but also in increasing the involvement of national Parliaments and of the European Parliament in order to make full and effective use of the EU’s hard and soft power in an increasingly contested world.
- In the margins of the session held in Madrid, the first in-person meeting of the informal CSDP Hub involving parliamentary staff specialised in security and defence matters proved to be a success.

3. INTERPARLIAMENTARY OVERSIGHT IN THE AREA OF FREEDOM, SECURITY AND JUSTICE

3.1 Joint Parliamentary Scrutiny Group on Europol



Article 88 TFEU now allows national Parliaments, jointly with the European Parliament, to scrutinise any EU agency operating in the area of freedom, security and justice. On the basis of the [Europol Regulation \(2016/794\)](#), the [Joint Parliamentary Scrutiny Group \(JPSG\) on Europol](#) was established in 2017 to ensure that Europol is fully accountable and transparent. The main responsibilities of the JPSG are outlined in Article 51 of the Europol Regulation, which defines its role in politically monitoring Europol activities with particular focus on the impact of those activities on the fundamental rights and freedoms of natural persons.

The Europol Regulation was subsequently amended, and Europol's revised mandate, which entered into force on 28 June 2022, provides Member States with the tools they need in the fight against terrorism and serious and organised crime. With this strengthened mandate came a need to strike the right balance in ensuring effective safeguards for fundamental rights, including data protection. A number of new governance provisions relate to the JPSG and will have an impact on its future work.

The JPSG is an innovative institutional set-up for parliamentary scrutiny and holds two meetings per year: in the first half of the year, at the Parliament of the country holding the rotating presidency of the Council of the EU, and in the second half of the year, at the European Parliament.

The [12th meeting of the JPSG on Europol](#) took place on 26 and 27 March 2023. It was co-chaired by the Swedish *Riksdag* and the European Parliament and hosted by the *Riksdag* in Stockholm.



Family photo during the 12th meeting of the Joint Parliamentary Scrutiny Group (JSPG) on Europol at the Swedish Riksdag.

© Melker Dahlstrand/The Swedish Parliament

The agenda included contributions by the Executive Director of Europol, Ms Catherine De Bolle, and a keynote speech by Ms Ylva Johansson, European Commissioner for Home Affairs, on the fight against organised crime. Mr Gunnar Strömmer, Minister for Justice, addressed delegates on the priorities of the Swedish Presidency in the area of internal security.

The JPSG also heard a presentation from the European Data Protection Supervisor, Mr Wojciech Wiewiórowski. Two thematic debates with EU and national level experts covered the topics of Europol's operational support to Member States – with a special focus on the concept of High Value Targets/Operational Task Force (HVT/OTF), and the fight against trafficking in human beings.

The [13th Meeting of the Joint Parliamentary Scrutiny Group on Europol](#) took place on 20 and 21 September 2023 at the European Parliament in Brussels. It was co-organised and co-chaired by the European Parliament and the Spanish *Cortes Generales*.

The meeting addressed a number of issues directly arising from the JPSG's prerogatives, including presentations by Ms Catherine De Bolle, Europol Executive Director, Mr Peter De Buysscher, the new Chair of the Europol Management Board, and Mr Wojciech Wiewiórowski, the European Data Protection Supervisor. During the meeting, there were also exchanges of views with Europol's Data Protection Officer and Fundamental Rights Officer.



Mr Juan Fernando López Aguilar, Chair of the European Parliament's Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE), speaking during the 13th Meeting of the Joint Parliamentary Scrutiny Group on Europol.
© European Parliament

The draft agenda also included two scrutiny sessions: the first on the situation of organised crime in the EU and the activities of Europol's European Serious and Organised Crime Centre (ESOCC), and the second on the financial and economic crime threat assessment from Europol's European Financial and Economic Crime Centre (EFECC), including a focus on corruption in the EU.

Mr Fernando Grande-Marlaska Gómez, Minister of the Interior of Spain, and from Ms Ylva Johansson, European Commissioner for Home Affairs addressed the meeting via video link.

The JPSG was consulted on Europol's Multiannual Programming Document 2024-2026 and the Executive Director of Europol was asked to react to the written comments received during her talk.

Main developments in 2023:

- Decision to extend the duration of the mandate of the Working Group on the establishment of a Consultative Forum on Fundamental Rights until the 14th JPSG meeting under the Belgian Presidency in February 2024. The Working Group was set up at the 12th JPSG meeting, in order to comply with the provisions of the revised Europol Regulation and made progress throughout 2023 on drafting a proposal to be submitted to and adopted by the JPSG by consensus.
- Delegates welcomed the addition of scrutiny sessions to the agenda and of the 'question time' with the executive director, who replied individually to each question.

3.2 Interparliamentary Committee Meeting on the evaluation of Eurojust

Since its creation in 2002, Eurojust has become a central player in judicial cooperation on criminal matters.

In line with Article 85 TFEU, the EU regulations governing Eurojust also ‘determine arrangements for involving the European Parliament and national Parliaments in the evaluation of Eurojust’s activities’. In 2018, the European Parliament and the Council adopted a new Regulation on Eurojust (2018/1727) with a view to providing a single, renewed legal framework for a new fully fledged Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation (Eurojust).

In order to increase the transparency and democratic oversight of Eurojust, the regulation (point 62 of its preamble and Article 67) provides for a mechanism for the joint evaluation of Eurojust’s activities by the European Parliament and EU national Parliaments. The evaluation should take place within the framework of an Interparliamentary Committee Meeting (ICM) organised by the European Parliament at its premises in Brussels, with the participation of members of the competent committees of the European Parliament and of EU national Parliaments.

[The Fourth Annual ICM on Eurojust’s Activities](#) took place on 7 November 2023 at the European Parliament’s premises in Brussels.

As a consequence of the war in Ukraine, the Eurojust regulation has been amended with new provisions enabling it to store, analyse and share evidence on core international crimes. In other areas, Eurojust has reinforced its cooperation with other EU bodies and agencies and has concluded several new agreements to structure this cooperation more efficiently.



Against this background and in compliance with the relevant provisions of primary and secondary law, the topics addressed at the 4th Eurojust ICM included a discussion on Eurojust's annual report and an outlook of its activities and challenges for future cross-border judicial cooperation on criminal matters. The presentation by Mr Ladislav Hamran, President of Eurojust, was followed by an in-depth exchange of views with delegates. In addition, a number of Eurojust's activities with regard to Ukraine, including the assessment of its enhanced mandate, were discussed.

Given the need to regularly assess Eurojust's activities with regard to inter-agency cooperation, the fourth edition of the Eurojust ICM also focused on its cooperation with Europol, in particular with regard to organised crime, with the participation of distinguished experts from both agencies.

Main developments in 2023:

- Renewed commitment to pursue inter-agency cooperation and present the relevant outcome to parliamentarians in the framework of the Eurojust ICM.
- Strengthening of the interparliamentary network on Eurojust, as the 2023 edition was only the second event held in-person.

4. INTERPARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE MEETINGS AND OTHER INTERPARLIAMENTARY COOPERATION

4.1 Interparliamentary Committee Meetings

Interparliamentary Committee Meetings (ICMs) are the standard type of meeting organised by the European Parliament for focused exchanges between sectoral committees on key legislative and political issues under Articles 9 and 10 of Protocol No 1 to the Treaties. The calendar of ICMs is sent by the President of the European Parliament to the Speakers of all national Parliaments each semester.

The committees of the European Parliament organise up to 20 ICMs per year, inviting the corresponding committees of the EU national Parliaments to engage in focused debates. ICMs have proven to be a valuable way for Members of the European Parliament to share views with their national counterparts. ICMs are not only a forum for exchange on legislative issues, thereby contributing to better law making, but also a platform on which to discuss political issues of common interest and to meet with Commissioners and the High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. ICMs are co-organised on the initiative of one or more European Parliament committees with the support of the Directorate for Relations with National Parliaments.

In 2023, 17 ICMs were co-organised by 14 different European Parliament committees (13 standing committees and 1 special committee). A total of 613 Members of national Parliaments and 232 Members of the European Parliament participated in these debates. The number of ICMs in 2023 was the same as in 2022, but the number of European Parliament Committees involved increased. The great majority of ICMs in 2023 were held in person; however the hybrid format was also used. In the hybrid format, some of the MEPs and speakers joined from the European Parliament's premises in Brussels, while national Parliament Members and other guest speakers participated online.

Three ICMs were organised by the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs (**ECON**), the Committee on Budgets (**BUDG**) and the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs (**EMPL**) in the framework of the 2023 European Parliamentary Week (EPW). They together constitute the European Semester Conference and provided an opportunity to exchange information on best practices in implementing the European Semester cycles and to strengthen cooperation on the scrutiny of the actions of the national and European executives. More information about the EPW is available in Chapter 2.1.

The Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality (**FEMM**) organised an [ICM on 'Gender aspects of energy poverty'](#), held in person in the European Parliament in Brussels on 1 March 2023. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss gender inequality, especially concerning the issue of energy poverty, with a particular focus on how it is impacting single mothers and women who are living alone. Mr Robert Biedroń, Chair of the European Parliament's FEMM Committee, and Mr Dimítrios Papadimoulis, Vice-President of the

European Parliament, responsible for gender equality and diversity, opened the meeting. Experts and representatives from national Parliaments shared their views and ideas on how to address this issue, and the meeting explored ways in which gender equality can be integrated into policies and initiatives at the EU, national, and local levels to alleviate the energy poverty problem.



*Family photo of participants at the ICM on 'Gender aspects of energy poverty'.
© European Parliament*

In view of the numerous national and European elections, it is of strategic importance that European democracies cooperate and coordinate in the face of foreign interference campaigns. The European Parliament's Special Committee on Foreign Interference in all democratic processes in the European Union, including disinformation, and the strengthening of integrity, transparency and accountability in the European Parliament (**ING2**) invited Members of 11 selected national Parliaments of the EU Member States to an [ICM on 'Legislative Resilience, electoral laws and information manipulation campaigns'](#), held on 21 March 2023. The purpose of the meeting was to debate and exchange information and best practices on foreign interference related work done at EU, national and international level, and to develop further insights and expertise on how to address the challenges posed by these acts of interference. The meeting was also a forum for deepening the dialogue between the national Parliaments and the European Parliament, by facilitating the exchange of ideas on how to build resilient democracies and on possible responses to foreign interference, in particular in relation to electoral processes.

The Committee on Constitutional Affairs (**AFCO**) organised an [ICM on 'Reform of the European Electoral System'](#) on 26 April 2023 in the European Parliament with optional remote participation. Stressing the importance of cooperation between national Parliaments and the European Parliament, discussions covered the proposal for a new European electoral law, emphasising the addition of a pan-European electoral constituency with EU-wide lists of candidates. Two Members of national Parliaments, Mr Erik Ottoson, Vice-Chair

of the Committee on the Constitution of the Swedish *Riksdag*, and Mr Artemi Rallo Lombarte, Member of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs in the Spanish Senate, and professor of Constitutional Law presented perspectives on the importance of democratic legitimacy in upcoming European elections and the need for effective communication between the European Parliament and society. During the debate, featuring input from various Members of Parliament, issues like transnational lists, voting age, and concerns about the proposed reforms were addressed.



Mr Salvatore De Meo, Chair of the European Parliament's Committee on Constitutional Affairs (AFCO), during the ICM on 'Reform of the European Electoral System'.

© European Parliament

The European Parliament's Committee on Transport and Tourism (**TRAN**) organised an [ICM entitled 'Reaching the transport objectives of "Fit for 55" at national level – opportunities and challenges'](#), held on 25 May 2023. The purpose of the meeting was to exchange views with Members from national Parliaments on the realities and experiences of Member States in working towards achieving the transport objectives of the 'Fit for 55' package. The meeting focused on the decarbonisation of road transport and the roll-out of alternative fuel infrastructure as well as on the decarbonisation of the maritime and aviation sectors through the uptake of sustainable fuels. The meeting was well attended and sparked lively debates. All the guest speakers were parliamentarians from either EU national Parliaments or the European Parliament. The participants expressed their interest in holding exchanges of this kind more frequently.



Participants during the ICM on 'Reaching the transport objectives of "Fit for 55" at national level - opportunities and challenges'.

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The European Parliament's Committee on Budgetary Control (**CONT**) organised an [ICM on 'The role of national parliaments in overseeing the spending of EU funds and the Next Generation EU plan'](#) on 26 June 2023. Participants pointed out that exercising parliamentary budgetary oversight is of paramount importance in ensuring that public money is spent economically, efficiently and effectively and that potential misuse or fraud is either prevented or detected and prosecuted. They also noted that for the oversight of funds based on the multiannual financial framework, both national Parliaments and the European Parliament play a role. However, when it comes to NextGenerationEU funds, the role of national Parliaments is even more crucial. The Members of national Parliaments and the European Parliament exchanged their views and discussed common experiences, shared best practices to foster mutual learning, and raise awareness of the common challenges related to the oversight of EU spending, including funds allocated under the NextGenerationEU plan.

On 27 June 2023, the Committee on Foreign Affairs (**AFET**) organised on [ICM on 'Moving the EU enlargement forward – 20 years since the Thessaloniki Declaration'](#). The meeting was divided into two sessions and sought to discuss and exchange information on the highly topical issues of the cost of non-enlargement and strengthening security and democratic resilience through the enlargement process. Debating the perspective of national Parliaments on the future of the EU's enlargement policy was particularly relevant and timely as EU enlargement remains a geopolitical necessity, serving as a powerful tool to eliminate grey zones and promote democracy, security, and prosperity. Ms Michela

Matuella, acting Director in the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR) at the European Commission and Ms Aude Maio-Coliche, Director for Strategic Communication and Foresight at the European External Action Service (EEAS) participated in the two sessions dedicated to both issues. Members urged bold decisions and a joint commitment to advancing the enlargement process, particularly in response to the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine, which posed a threat to peace and the rules-based order. In addition, participants were invited to a special address by H.E. Ms Aïssata Tall Sall, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Senegal, followed by an exchange of views.



Ms Aïssata Tall Sall, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Senegal and Mr David McAllister, during the ICM on 'Moving the Enlargement Forward– 20 years since the Thessaloniki Declaration' organised by the Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET).

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The Committee on Employment and Social Affairs (**EMPL**) hosted an [ICM on the topic of 'Children at the heart of Europe: Two years of the European Child Guarantee'](#) on 28 June 2023 at the European Parliament. The event provided room for discussion and exchanges on ways to generate greater political support to policies for children, analysing the status quo of the adoption and implementation of the European Child Guarantee action plans, and exploring ways to promote more effective investments in the European Child Guarantee to ensure its sustainability. The debates explored the general state of play, good practice examples, and possible solutions to improve the implementation of the European Child Guarantee by fostering discussions with national Parliamentarians, Members of the European Parliament and national authorities responsible for delivering the Child Guarantee .

The Subcommittee on Human Rights (**DROI**) organised an [ICM on 'Coordination between EU delegations and EU Member States' embassies on human rights in third countries'](#), held in hybrid format on 19 July 2023. It discussed how best to ensure that EU delegations and EU Member States' embassies in third countries coordinate on human rights issues in order to protect and promote fundamental rights and freedoms as enshrined in international treaties in its relations with partner countries. Members of national Parliaments were invited to share proposals and recommendations to enhance the implementation of the EU action plan on Human Rights and Democracy 2020-2024, and to improve coordination between EU institutions and governments and Parliaments of EU Member States in order to promote and protect human rights and democracy outside the EU.

The European Parliament's Committee on Petitions (**PETI**) organised an [ICM on 'Cooperation with Petitions committees in national parliaments'](#) on 20 September 2023 to exchange best practices and reflect on new approaches. The event was divided into two sessions. A first panel discussed the rules, procedures and practices of the right to petition parliaments and was based on the [study on the topic commissioned by the PETI Committee](#). The second panel looked into national practices and new approaches to the right of petition. The debate made it possible to discuss common experiences, share best examples, foster mutual learning and awareness of the common challenges related to citizens' right to petition national Parliaments and the European Parliament.



Ms Dolors Montserrat, Chair of the Committee on Petitions during the ICM on 'Cooperation with Petitions committees in national Parliaments'.

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The **AFCO** Committee organised a second [ICM, dedicated to 'Preparing the European elections 2024'](#) on 25 October 2023 in hybrid format. The aim of the meeting was to provide

input for the [AFCO own initiative report on the European Elections 2024](#) (Rapporteurs: Mr Sven Simon and Mr Domènec Ruiz Devesa), so as to convey Parliament's key political messages to strengthen the European dimension of the organisation of the elections in June 2024 and the process leading up to the election of the President of the Commission. The ICM also offered an excellent opportunity for an in-depth exchange of views between AFCO Members and Members of national Parliaments on ways of strengthening European democracy at the next election to the European Parliament.

The Committee on Regional Development (**REGI**)'s [ICM entitled 'The Future of Cohesion Policy: Opportunities, Challenges and Next Steps'](#) was held at the European Parliament on 7 November 2023. The main purpose of the meeting was to provide a forum for exchange on achievements, challenges and the future of the EU's Cohesion Policy, with a view to improving its effectiveness. Chaired by the REGI Chair, Mr Younous Omarjee, the meeting emphasised the importance of cohesion policy in fostering cooperation and exchanging views between European and national Members of Parliament. Key speakers included Ms Elisa Ferreira, European Commissioner for Cohesion and Reforms, and Ms Mercedes Caballero Fernández, Spanish Secretary-General for European Funds. During the open debates, concerns over disparities, bureaucracy reduction, and transparency were raised while stressing the importance of advocating for a shift in the narrative to increasingly highlight the positive impacts of cohesion policy. The meeting concluded with a collective call for greater cohesion around European values and more funding for cohesion policy.



Ms Elisa Ferreira, European Commissioner for Cohesion and Reforms and Mr Younous Omarjee, Chair of the Committee on Regional Development during the ICM on 'The Future of Cohesion Policy: Opportunities, Challenges and Next Steps'.

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An [ICM on 'European Citizenship Education'](#) was organised by the Committee on Culture and Education (**CULT**) on 27 and 28 November 2023 in the European Parliament. The ICM provided a valuable platform for a thorough discussion of the state of play of citizenship education in Europe, particularly in view of the 2024 European Parliament elections and the role of the European Parliament in implementing actions. The ICM enabled debate with MEPs, Members of national Parliaments and invited guests, including representatives of the European Commission, UNESCO and the Council of Europe. The discussion focused on best practices in the national and European context of European Citizenship Education and its importance for young people. Systematic approaches and collaborative efforts were emphasised, stressing the need for resources for teachers, demographic diversity, cultural identity, and the objective of strengthening European values.

A second **DROI** ICM was held on 29 November 2023 as part of the [High-Level Conference marking the 75th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#). The meeting, opened by Roberta Metsola, President of the European Parliament, was a unique opportunity for members of national Parliaments, MEPs and representatives from other EU institutions, as well as international and regional human rights organisations and mechanisms to bridge divides and stand up for human rights at the time when emerging contested narratives led by global powers are prospering. Thanks to a vivid and candid exchange of views, the Conference contributed to fostering dialogue and cooperation to ensure that the universality of human rights is respected and implemented globally.



Ms Roberta Metsola, President of the European Parliament, at the opening of the High-Level Conference marking the 75th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

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The European Parliament's **EMPL** Committee organised a second [ICM on the 'Participation of persons with disabilities in the electoral process'](#) on 4 December 2023. The event was divided into two sessions. The first panel discussed the 'Participation of persons with disabilities in the electoral process - State of play and remaining obstacles' while a second panel looked into 'Preparing for the European elections 2024 - How can improvements still be achieved?' The debate allowed for discussions on common experiences, to share best practices, foster mutual learning, raise awareness of the common challenges related to this right and discuss how improvements could still be made before the 2024 European elections. This event brought together MEPs and Members of national Parliaments, Council and Commission representatives, as well as NGOs. In view of the upcoming 2024 European elections, the first aim was to identify the state of play regarding persons' with disabilities participation in electoral processes, progress made and remaining legal or accessibility barriers.



A moment during the ICM on the 'Participation of persons with disabilities in the electoral process'.
© European Parliament

On 4 December 2023, the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (**LIBE**) held its [annual ICM on 'The situation of the Rule of Law in the EU'](#), which has now become an established feature of interparliamentary relations. The ICM was dedicated to an assessment of the fourth Commission's rule of law report with a specific emphasis on combating corruption. The meeting served as a follow-up to previous ICMs, including the previous one on this matter which took place in December 2022, as well as to the [European Parliament's resolution of 30 March 2023 on the Commission's 2022 Rule of Law Report](#). Its objective was also to provide input for a LIBE own-initiative report on the Commission's 2023 Rule of Law Report (rapporteur Ms Sophie in 't Veld). The meeting provided the

occasion for an in-depth exchange of views on the rule of law situation in the EU and on the role of National Parliaments in the context of the EU's efforts to protect and enforce the Union's values. The agenda featured the participation of experts from the European Commission, the Council of Europe, NGOs, academia and also MEPs and Members of various national Parliaments.

While the number of ICMs in 2023 was comparable to that in 2022, there was a significant decrease in the participation from Members of the European Parliament – from 463 in 2022 to 232 in 2023. The participation from Members of national Parliaments in the ICMs also decreased but to a lesser extent: from 720 parliamentarians in 2022 to 613 in 2023.

The years of the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the use of digital tools; however, returning to in-person meetings meant that participants could benefit from the added value of personal contacts and conversations. While remote meetings facilitate participation in ICMs without having to travel, the in-person format provides considerably more interaction between Members. Debates and exchanges are livelier and there are more informal discussions, bilateral meetings and networking opportunities on the sidelines of the formal meeting.

A list of the ICMs organised by European Parliament committees in 2023 and more detailed statistics can be found in Annex II.

Main developments in 2023:

- The return to in-person ICMs meant livelier debates and more informal exchanges between parliamentarians.
- There was, however, a decrease in participation in 2023, compared to the previous year, both from Members of the European Parliament and Members of EU national Parliaments.

4.2 Global Conference to commemorate the International Day of Parliamentarism: Strengthening Parliaments to Enhance Democracy

On 30 June 2023, the first event of the Parliamentary dimension of the Spanish Presidency of the Council of the EU was organised. The '[Global Conference to commemorate the International Day of Parliamentarism: Strengthening Parliaments to Enhance Democracy](#)' was organised in León, in the Royal Collegiate of St Isidoro, the same venue in which the Cortes de León took place in 1188, in what UNESCO recognised as the first documented example of parliamentarism in history.

His Majesty King Felipe VI addressed the participants during the inaugural session of the Conference, which was attended by 20 Parliaments - 11 of them at the level of Speaker - from EU Member States, the European Parliament - represented by First Vice-President Othmar Karas, EU candidate countries and selected non-EU countries.



*His Majesty King Felipe VI of Spain addressing the participants at the 'Global Conference to commemorate the International Day of Parliamentarism: Strengthening Parliaments to Enhance Democracy' held in León (Spain).
© Povedano*

As well as marking the historical trajectory of parliamentarism – notably through a keynote address by Professor John Keane – the conference provided a forum to debate current challenges faced by parliaments and how elected representatives can contribute to strengthening parliaments and democratic systems.

Some of the themes and messages underlined by the participants included the recognition of parliaments as central institutions for democracy and acknowledging the common

challenges faced by parliaments, such as citizens' disengagement and loss of trust in democratic institutions, polarisation, populism, disinformation and foreign interference.

To counter these trends participants called for more democracy and underlined the responsibility of elected representatives to lead by example. They also noted the importance of interparliamentary cooperation and of support programmes and capacity building. Additionally, they called for the promotion of gender equality, enhanced communication (without simplifying debates) and initiatives to engage younger citizens.

Speakers stressed the need for parliaments to be responsive and future-oriented and to make better use of new technologies; they also noted the potential of new mechanisms for engagement (such as 'citizen assemblies') while respecting the specific and essential role of political parties and elected representatives.



From left to right: Ms Marketa Pekarova Adamova, Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies of Czechia, Ms Bärbel Bas, Speaker of the German Bundestag, Mr Kevin Casas Zamora, Secretary-General of the IDEA Foundation, Mr Othmar Karas, First Vice-President of the European Parliament and Ms Catherine Gotani Hara, Speaker of the Parliament of Malawi during the Global Conference on Parliamentarism.

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The Conference closed with the adoption of the '[Declaration of León on parliamentarism](#)'. This included a pledge to continue working on the European Parliament initiative for a 'Charter on the role of parliaments in a functioning liberal democracy', the principles of which were outlined by First Vice-President Karas in his speech in León. A further discussion of this Charter was expected to take place in April 2024 at the Conference of Speakers of Parliaments of the European Union.

4.3 Second Parliamentary Summit of the International Crimea Platform

On 24 October 2023, Czechia hosted the [Second Parliamentary Summit of the International Crimea Platform](#), which took place as Russia's invasion of Ukraine passed the 600 day mark and against the background of Hamas' attack on Israel, the response by Israel and an escalating humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip. The summit was organised jointly by the Czech Chamber of Deputies with the *Verkhovna Rada* of Ukraine with participation of 40 delegations.

Vice-President Roberts Zile represented the European Parliament on behalf of President Metsola at this Second Summit. The first one took place on 25 October 2022 in Zagreb, with the European Parliament represented by First Vice-President Othmar Karas.

The International Crimea Platform was established in the summer of 2021 on the initiative of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and aims to bring together and coordinate all existing national and international efforts to de-occupy the Crimean Peninsula. The objective of the parliamentary dimension is to raise awareness among world leaders and the general public about the illegitimate Russian occupation of Crimea and its negative impact on the human rights of the local population, on security in the Black Sea region, on global food security and on the rules-based world order.



Mr Volodymyr Zelenskyy, President of Ukraine, addressing the participants at the Second Parliamentary Summit of the International Crimea Platform held in Prague, via videoconference.

© Parliament of Czechia

The summit was an opportunity to show unity in condemning Russia's aggression against Ukraine and to underline the need to re-establish Ukraine's borders as recognised in 1991 as a prerequisite to any possible peace negotiations. Mr Ruslan Stefanchuk, the Speaker of the *Verkhovna Rada* and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy called for representatives of national Parliaments to remain unwavering in their efforts and especially in view of the worsening situation in the Middle East. Many speakers underlined that the war against Ukraine had started with the illegal annexation of Crimea back in February 2014 and not in February 2022.

Vice-President Roberts Zīle urged EU Member States to make a historic decision in the following weeks about starting accession negotiations with Ukraine. In addition, he called on the European Council to find a swift and reassuring solution for reviewing the EU's financial framework and adopting the Ukraine Facility. He also stressed that there is no credible alternative to Ukrainian victory, a Ukrainian Crimea and President Zelenskyy's peace plan. The summit ended with the adoption of a [joint declaration of the Participants of the Second Parliamentary Summit of the International Crimea Platform](#).

Main developments in 2023:

- The Second Parliamentary Summit of the International Crimea Platform condemned Russia's aggression against Ukraine and underlined international support for Ukraine and the re-establishment of the 1991 borders.

4.4 Bilateral visits and other bilateral exchanges

Bilateral visits from EU national Parliaments to the European Parliament are a constantly evolving tool and format for interparliamentary dialogue. This format is highly focused, tailor-made, flexible and cost- and time-efficient. It allows for discussions on issues of concern to individual national Parliaments.

In addition, other bilateral exchanges of views can be a useful form of small-scale interparliamentary cooperation when parliamentarians need to initiate collaboration, concentrate on specific topics or deepen collaboration in specific areas of mutual interest.

Bilateral visits are traditionally an important form of interparliamentary cooperation. Meetings take place at various levels and in various formats, from the highest-level political discussions to technical staff-level study visits.

In 2023, in-person bilateral visits and exchanges returned to normal, after three years of almost complete interruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Fifty visits from national Parliaments took place – a number similar to the pre-pandemic level.

The visits were both political – including high-level visits (Parliament Speakers), and visits by Members of Parliament – and administrative in nature. National parliamentarians exchanged views with their counterparts from the corresponding European Parliament committees, particularly in the field of internal policies. Staff visits brought together officials from various services, including but not limited to, committee secretariats or research services, or the activities linked to the preparation of the Presidency (see Section 6.3 for details).

A comprehensive list of the bilateral visits and exchanges can be found in Annex III.

Main developments in 2023:

- There was a return to normal after the COVID-19 pandemic, with 50 bilateral visits from EU national Parliaments to the European Parliament's premises, a number similar to that in pre-pandemic years.

5. LEGISLATIVE COOPERATION WITH EU NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS

In 2023, a total of 425 submissions from EU national Parliaments were received by the European Parliament: 294 (70 %) were submitted within the framework of the Protocol No 2 subsidiarity checks (Section 5.1), and 131 (30 %) under the Informal Political Dialogue (Protocol No 1) (Section 5.2).

5.1 Early Warning System and Protocol No 2 to the Treaties

Under the principle of subsidiarity (enshrined in Article 5 of the Treaty on European Union), in areas which do not fall within its exclusive competence the Union must act only if and in so far as the objectives of the proposed action cannot be sufficiently achieved by the Member States, but can be better achieved at Union level. Under the principle of proportionality, the content and form of Union action must not exceed what is necessary to achieve the objectives of the Treaties.

National Parliaments ensure compliance with the principle of subsidiarity in accordance with the procedure set out in Protocol No 2 to the Treaty on European Union and to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union on the application of the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality. This protocol sets out a review mechanism, the Early Warning System (EWS). Under this mechanism national Parliaments may, within eight weeks from the date of transmission of a draft legislative act, send a reasoned opinion to the Presidents of the institutions stating why they consider that the draft in question does not comply with the principle of subsidiarity.

5.1.1 Early Warning System

With regard to the EWS, submissions from EU national Parliaments are considered under the following categories:

1. Reasoned opinion: if submitted under that heading, raising the issue of non-compliance with the principle of subsidiarity, and received within the eight-week deadline referred to in Article 6 of Protocol No 2 to the Treaties.
2. Contribution: where the submission does not fulfil the above criteria.

When reasoned opinions represent at least one third of the votes allocated to the national Parliaments, the draft legislative act must be reviewed (yellow card procedure). The institution that produced the draft act may decide to maintain, amend or withdraw it, giving reasons for that decision. For draft acts relating to police cooperation or judicial cooperation in criminal matters, the threshold is lower (one quarter of the votes).

If, in the context of the ordinary legislative procedure, national Parliaments with at least a simple majority of the votes challenge the compliance of a legislative proposal with the principle of subsidiarity, the Commission must review its proposal and decide whether to maintain, change or withdraw it (orange card procedure). If it decides to maintain its proposal, the matter is referred to the legislator (the European Parliament and the Council)

and the Commission must justify its decision. If the legislator considers that the legislative proposal is not compatible with the principle of subsidiarity, it may reject it subject to a majority of 55 % of the Members of the Council or a simple majority of the votes cast in the European Parliament.

To date, the yellow card procedure has been triggered three times, while the orange card procedure has never been triggered.

Within the European Parliament, the Committee on Legal Affairs (JURI) is the committee responsible for monitoring compliance with the principle of subsidiarity of reasoned opinions. Every six months a member of the committee is appointed as standing rapporteur for subsidiarity on the basis of rotation among the political groups.

Gilles Lebreton (ID) and Karen Melchior (Renew) were the standing rapporteurs for subsidiarity for the year 2023. Also in 2023, the JURI Committee drew up a report entitled [‘Report on European Union regulatory fitness and subsidiarity and proportionality – report on Better Law-Making covering 2020, 2021 and 2022’](#) (Rapporteur Catharina Rinzema (Renew)), adopted as a European Parliament [resolution on 23 November 2023](#).

5.1.2 EU national Parliaments’ submissions under Protocol No 2

In 2023, the European Parliament formally received 294 submissions from national Parliaments under Protocol No 2 on the application of the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality. Of these 294 submissions, 22 (7.5 %) were reasoned opinions and 272 (92.5 %) contributions (i.e. submissions not raising concerns about subsidiarity).

By comparison, in 2022 there had been 250 submissions, of which 34 (13 %) were reasoned opinions and 216 contributions.

In 2023, 11 Chambers, out of 39, submitted reasoned opinions and 21 submitted contributions. See detailed statistics for 2023 in Annex IV.

Number of reasoned opinions received from EU national Parliaments under Protocol No 2 in 2023 – by Parliament/Chamber

Member State	Parliament/Chamber	Number of reasoned opinions
Italy	Camera dei Deputati	6
Sweden	Riksdag	4
Italy	Senato della Repubblica	3
France	Sénat	2
Cyprus	Vouli ton antiprosopon	1
Hungary	Országgyűlés	1
France	Assemblée nationale	1
The Netherlands	Tweede Kamer	1
The Netherlands	Eerste Kamer	1
Romania	Camera deputatilor	1
Czechia	Poslanecká sněmovna	1

The most active Parliament/Chamber in sending reasoned opinions was the Italian Chamber of Deputies (6), followed by the Swedish Parliament (4), the Italian Senate (3) and the French Senate (2). All the other Parliaments/Chambers in the table submitted one reasoned opinion each.

Number of contributions received from EU national Parliaments under Protocol No 2 in 2023 – by Chamber

Member State	Parliament/Chamber	Number of contributions	
Czechia	Senát	38	
Portugal	Assembleia da República	36	
Czechia	Poslanecká sněmovna	32	
Germany	Bundesrat (German Federal Council)	30	
Spain	Congreso de los Diputados / Senado (Cortes)	27	
Italy	Camera dei Deputati	23	
Italy	Senato della Repubblica	23	
Romania	Senat	22	
Ireland	Houses of the Oireachtas	8	
The Netherlands	Eerste Kamer (Senate)	8	
France	Sénat	7	
Austria	Bundesrat (Austrian Federal Council)	5	
France	Assemblée nationale	3	
Romania	Camera deputatilor	2	
Denmark	Folketinget	2	
Austria	Nationalrat (Austrian National Council)	1	
Cyprus	Vouli ton antiprosopon	1	
Finland	Eduskunta	1	
Croatia	Hrvatski sabor	1	
Luxembourg	Chambres des Députés	1	
Poland	Senat	1	

As for contributions, the three most active Parliaments/Chambers were the Czech Senate (38), the Portuguese Assembly (36) and the Czech Chamber (32).

Number of reasoned opinions from EU national Parliaments under Protocol 2 in 2023 – by Committee

Committee	Reasoned opinions
ENVI	10
LIBE	3
ECON2	2
IMCO	2
JURI	2
ITRE	2
TRAN	1

The committee that received the most reasoned opinions in 2023 was the Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI) with 10 reasoned opinions - more than three times more than the number submitted by the next committee.

Number of contributions from EU national Parliaments under Protocol No 2 in 2023 – by Committee

Committee	Contributions
ENVI	69
ECON	35
LIBE	34
JURI	33
ITRE	25
TRAN	21
IMCO	17
EMPL	10
AGRI	7
FEMM	7
CULT	5
BUDG	4
INTA	3
AFET DROI/SEDE	2

The largest number of contributions was received by the ENVI Committee (69), which received approximately twice the number sent to each of the three following committees in

the ranking: the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs (ECON) (35), the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) (34), and the Committee on Legal Affairs (JURI) (33).

Since the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon in 2009, 1 296 draft legislative acts have been transmitted to national Parliaments for examination under the terms of Protocol No 2 to the Treaty of Lisbon.

In response, the European Parliament has received 4 208 submissions from national Parliaments. Of these, 565 (13.4 %) were reasoned opinions while the remaining 3 643 (86.6 %) were contributions.

These statistics confirm that EU national Parliaments use Protocol No 2 as a means to express their views on the substance of proposals more often than on subsidiarity. This could reflect their wish to be involved more closely in the substantive legislative process.

The Directorate for Relations with National Parliaments ensures that all submissions transmitted by national Parliaments are available to Members, political bodies and European Parliament services. The Directorate provides them, in particular rapporteurs, with specific expertise and briefings on EU national Parliaments' submissions throughout the legislative cycle, which have been used as input for drafting committee reports and for trilogue negotiations with the Council.

The Directorate provides facts, figures and statistics on the number and nature of these documents and manages the [CONNECT database](#), which contains all the reasoned opinions and contributions received from national Parliaments.

Main developments in 2023:

- The number of submissions from national Parliaments increased by 17.6 %, from 250 in 2022 to 294 in 2023.
- The overwhelming majority of these submissions (94 %) were contributions that did not raise concerns about subsidiarity. This large number – representing an increase on the preceding year – demonstrates the willingness of the national Parliaments to express their concerns and opinions on the substance of proposals, rather than to raise the issue of non-compliance with the subsidiarity principle. This early warning mechanism is used primarily as a tool for legislative dialogue with the EU co-legislators.

5.1.3 Monthly State of Play Note

The Directorate for Relations with National Parliaments produces a monthly [State of Play Note](#) on reasoned opinions and contributions submitted within the scope of Protocol No 2. This note, transmitted to Members, the relevant services of the European Parliament, EU institutions and national Parliaments, gives an overview of all submissions received since the previous note and refers to all legislative files which are on the agenda of the upcoming European Parliament plenary session.

The note is also included in the meeting file for the European Parliament's Conference of Committee Chairs. The State of Play Note is also published on the Directorate's website ahead of each European Parliament plenary session.

5.2 Informal Political Dialogue and Protocol No 1 to the Treaties

Protocol No 1 to the Treaty on European Union and to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union provides that EU national Parliaments may comment on legislative files falling under the exclusive competence of the EU as well as on non-legislative documents, for example relating to ongoing debates at European level, Commission Green/White Papers or communications from the Commission. These contributions are handled under the Informal Political Dialogue (IPD).

In 2023, EU national Parliaments continued to make active use of this tool, sending in 131 contributions under the IPD, compared to 144 in 2022. Detailed statistics on the contributions received under the IPD in 2023 are available in Annex V.

Contributions under the Informal Political Dialogue in 2023 – by Parliament/Chamber

Member state	Parliament/Chamber	Number of contributions
Romania	Camera deputatilor	33
Czechia	Poslanecká sněmovna	22
Czechia	Senát	19
Italy	Camera dei Deputati	13
France	Assemblée nationale	9
Germany	Bundesrat	7
Ireland	House-of-Oireachtas	5
Romania	Senat	5
France	Sénat	3
Belgium	Sénat/Senaat	3
Italy	Senato della Repubblica	3
Netherlands	Eerste Kamer	3
Croatia	Hrvatski sabor	2
Sweden	Riksdag	2
Spain	Congreso de los Diputados / Senado (Cortes)	1

In this context, 15 Chambers from 11 EU Member States sent contributions in 2023; the three most active Chambers were the Romanian Chamber of Deputies (33), the Czech Chamber of Deputies (22) and the Czech Senate (19).

Contributions under the Informal Political Dialogue in 2023 – by Committee

Committee	Contributions
BUDG	20
ITRE	17
ENVI	16
ECON	11
LIBE	8
PECH	7
CULT	6
JURI	5
IMCO	4
AFCO	3
EMPL	3
IMCO/TRAN	3
AFET	2
AGRI	2
REGI	2
TRAN	2
OWN	20

The three committees that received the most IPD contributions were the Committee on Budgets (BUDG) with 20, the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE) with 17 and the Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI) with 16. 'OWN' means that this type of submission sent by a national Parliament was not addressed to any specific Parliament committee.

Since 2009, the European Parliament has received around 2 941 contributions from EU national Parliaments under Protocol No 1. These contributions have also been published in the CONNECT database.

Main developments in 2023:

- The number of contributions submitted under the Informal Political Dialogue decreased by 10 %, from 144 in 2022 to 131 in 2023. The most likely reason for this is that in 2023 there were fewer proposals for new legislation from the European Commission.
- National Parliaments provided more summaries in English with their submissions under both Protocol No 2 and Protocol No 1, facilitating the work of the legislators.

5.3 Rapporteurs' dialogue

In recent years EU national Parliaments have expressed their interest in engaging in the EU legislative process from an early stage, and notably to intensify contacts with European Parliament rapporteurs.

The response to these requests was the organisation by the Directorate for Relations with National Parliaments of the 'rapporteur's dialogue'. This new type of interparliamentary activity enables a shift from occasional contacts towards a more structured dialogue on a voluntary basis among European Parliament and national Parliaments' rapporteurs at an early stage of the legislative process. It serves as a two-way information channel, to receive the opinions and views of the national rapporteurs and to inform national Parliaments about the position of the European Parliament's rapporteur. This seeks to enable the integration of national Parliaments' positions, if taken on board by the European Parliament rapporteur, in a more timely and frequent manner.

On 29 August 2023, a first rapporteurs' dialogue on the proposal on 'Prohibiting products made with forced labour on the Union market' took place. It was organised in close cooperation between the Legislative Dialogue Unit and the Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO) and International Trade (INTA) Committees' Secretariats. Thirteen Members participated in the meeting from five EU national Parliaments, Norway, and the European Parliament.

The European Parliament co-rapporteurs, Ms Maria Manuel Leitão Marques (IMCO) and Ms Samira Rafaela (INTA), stressed the importance of this proposal for a legislative instrument to ban products made using forced labour and outlined the European Parliament's position. Through this legislation, they noted, the European Union has a unique opportunity to act to eradicate forced labour, both inside and outside the EU.

In the subsequent exchange, Members of national Parliaments welcomed the opportunity for discussions with the co-rapporteurs and supported the co-rapporteurs' approach to strengthening the Commission proposal further. Some of the topics raised were the need for a common framework for implementation of the Regulation and the inclusion of certain ancillary services such as transportation, packaging and distribution within the scope of the Regulation. On the other hand, concerns were also expressed over the reversal of the burden of proof proposed by the co-rapporteurs for certain high-risk products and areas.

Main developments in 2023

- The inaugural rapporteur's dialogue took place with the participation of 11 Members from six Parliaments, in addition to the European Parliament's co-rapporteurs. The feedback received from European and national Members of Parliament was very positive. It encouraged and endorsed future encounters on a number of legislative files.

6. NETWORKS AND EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION

6.1 Interparliamentary EU Information Exchange (IPEX)



The [InterParliamentary EU information eXchange \(IPEX\)](#) supports interparliamentary cooperation by providing a platform and a network for the electronic exchange of EU-related information between Parliaments in the EU. IPEX was launched as an initiative of EU national Parliaments and was developed with the technical assistance of the European Parliament. Today, 39 Chambers of 27 national Parliaments and the European Parliament are using IPEX in their daily activities. IPEX is subject to continual improvement to meet the changing needs of its users. It is developing into an effective platform for information exchange and evolving into a unique 'one stop shop' for information on European Union interparliamentary cooperation.

IPEX has been characterised variously as a 'tool', a 'platform' and a 'network'. These three definitions show that the instrument has evolved. Its development from a tool to a network has been slow but is now achieving its aim.

For IPEX, 2023 was a year packed with further technical upgrades and fine-tuning of existing capabilities, including an updated search functionality and social media sharing integration. The year also saw the return to regular face-to-face meetings.

The IPEX Board met under the Slovenian Chairmanship on 20 January 2023 (remote) and under the Czech Chairmanship on 2 June 2023 (remote) and 13 October 2023 in Brussels.

The Annual IPEX Correspondents' meeting took place on 2 and 3 November 2023 in Prague.

The IPEX Users' Conference was organised on 20 March 2023 in Lisbon.

The use of IPEX and its tools by national Parliaments also recorded an uptick, hinting toward a return to pre-pandemic levels. However, further fine-tuning of IPEX version 3 is an ongoing process and should therefore be a key priority of the IPEX Board in the coming years.

Apart from addressing the technical aspects of the platform, 2023 also saw the amending of the IPEX Guidelines under Slovenian Chairmanship, which synchronised the technical developments in version 3 with the reality of the activities performed by the national Correspondents and the IPEX Board, prepared IPEX for the next wave of enlargement and clarified certain aspects of governance.

The revised IPEX Guidelines were approved at the meeting of the Secretaries-General of the EU National Parliaments and the European Parliament organised by the Czech Presidency on 6 February 2023 via videoconference, together with the 2022 IPEX Annual Report and Conclusions (all prepared by the Slovenian Chairmanship). A section on IPEX was, as is usual practice, included in the Conclusions of the Conference of Speakers of EU Parliaments that took place in Prague in April 2023 (see Section 1.2 for details).

With the completion of the three-year cycle of the current IPEX Rolling Work Programme, the Czech Presidency focused on finalising the implementation of the Rolling Work Programme 2021-2023, its evaluation and the preparation of the new cycle for the years 2024-2026. The IPEX Network, comprising its correspondents, the Working Groups and the Board, dedicated their energies to the implementation of the tasks set out in the IPEX Rolling Work Programme 2021-2023.

As a result of these efforts, the Working Group on Content prepared a follow-up to the first baseline study on how parliaments use IPEX, which was presented in 2020. The Working Group created a completely new questionnaire and a general survey for all IPEX users was launched at the Users Conference in Lisbon on 20 March 2023. The follow-up study, called 'IPEX through the eyes of its users: Take Two (2023 users survey)' was presented at the Board meeting in October 2023. Over time, IPEX became a real one-stop shop for interparliamentary cooperation in the EU, as evidenced also by the overwhelming majority of 83 % of respondents to the questionnaire. However, IPEX still has untapped potential that could be further enhanced, for example by involving new groups of users or additional networking activities. Further improvement is still possible in terms of sharing and uploading information, especially for the sections on news, research and information, and the Democracy Support Network.

The Working Group on Promotion and Social Media continued working on the visibility of IPEX in various ways: social media posts on Twitter/X and distribution of leaflets during the EU interparliamentary conferences. The Working Group also contributed with questions on the Baseline Study and the 39th bi-annual COSAC report, with the aim of identifying promotional activities based on users' needs. During the Swedish Presidency, videos about the conferences organised by the Presidency were posted on the initial IPEX website in order to support the visibility of IPEX and draw more attention to it. Preparatory work was also carried out for a survey to be published on the IPEX website on further exploring the needs of the IPEX target user base.

The Working Group on Training produced written training materials mainly focusing on the basic operations, and regularly updated existing materials in order for them to reflect the technical reality of IPEX version 3. The Working Group also assessed ways to make the materials more visible and easily accessible to the IPEX correspondents. In addition, the Working Group convened online training sessions in smaller groups, provided training upon request to individual Parliaments and organised training sessions during the IPEX Users' Conference (March 2023) and the IPEX Correspondents' meeting (November 2023).

Main developments in 2023:

- The new IPEX Guidelines were adopted by the Secretaries-General in February 2023.
- Implementation and evaluation of the Rolling Work Programme 2021-2023 and preparing the New Rolling Work Programme 2024-2026 by the Czech Chairmanship were completed.
- A follow-up study was prepared based on the results of the questionnaire of the General Survey launched at the Users' Conference in Lisbon on 20 March 2023.

6.2 European Centre for Parliamentary Research and Documentation (ECPRD)



Managed jointly by the European Parliament and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the [European Centre for Parliamentary Research and Documentation \(ECPRD\)](#) includes 64 parliamentary Chambers (including 39 in the European Union) from 53 countries and EU institutions among its members.

The Council of Europe's decision to exclude the Russian Federation on 16 March 2022 meant that the Duma and Council of the Russian Federation are no longer part of the ECPRD and cannot participate in its activities. Almost 119 correspondents and deputy correspondents represent their respective Parliaments in the network and contribute to the main objectives of the ECPRD, which are to promote the exchange of information and good practice on subjects of common interest. The ECPRD promotes the above cooperation between member Chambers through the launch of ECPRD comparative requests and the organisation of seminars.

In times when the need to exchange, cooperate and learn from each other is growing, the ECPRD has proved to be a success story that owes much to the dedication and professionalism of the correspondents in each national Parliament.

The two pillars of ECPRD's activities remain comparative requests on the one hand, and seminars on the other.

The activities of the ECPRD network in 2023 returned to normality, notably with in-person seminars resuming after the COVID-19 pandemic years. However, this period has led to a transformation in our network's operations, with several meetings still being held virtually so more colleagues from national Parliaments can take part. However, the majority of meetings were held face-to-face, restarting essential human connections among participants, as a hallmark of the ECPRD network with a view to promoting the exchange of information and good practice.

6.2.1. Comparative requests

In 2023, ECPRD member Parliaments submitted 388 comparative requests to the network, generating 10 981 replies. This marks a substantial increase since 2022, when there were 342 comparative requests and 9 154 replies. This increase in requests is placing growing pressure on ECPRD correspondents to respond to them.

388 ECPRD comparative requests launched in 2023

Committee	Comparative requests
January	30
February	30
March	51
April	35
May	35
June	33
July	27
August	23
September	29
October	32
November	36
December	37

10 981 ECPRD replies sent in 2023

Committee	Replies
January	1 094
February	811
March	1 227
April	1 037
May	1 179
June	832
July	741
August	631
September	939
October	1 095
November	752
December	643

The requests for information covered many sectors, with particular focus on topics ranging from social, health and migration issues to the organisation of work in parliamentary administrations. A substantial number of requests concerned legal, financial and general parliamentary issues.

The Directorate for Relations with National Parliaments further aided European Parliament services by facilitating and transmitting their requests to the ECPRD network. In total, the European Parliament submitted 7 requests to the ECPRD network in 2023, a decrease from 16 requests in 2022 and 14 in 2021.

In 2023, the European Parliament delivered 112 responses to requests from other ECPRD Parliaments, an increase on the 90 replies provided in 2022, 84 replies in 2021, 79 replies in 2020 and 27 replies in 2019. However, the response rate dropped from 97.8 % in 2022 to 94.64 % in 2023.

6.2.2. Final Summaries

In 2023, a total of 134 Final Summaries had been uploaded onto the ECPRD website.

The Final Summaries, providing in-depth analyses of responses to ECPRD requests, serve as an excellent means of spotlighting and disseminating the wealth of information available in the network. Recognising the importance of these summaries, efforts have been ongoing since 2020 to encourage their production. Notably, the 2020 version of the ECPRD website aimed to enhance the correspondents' dashboard, urging them to submit final summaries and offering visibility to these summaries on the ECPRD website.

Consequently, in 2020 there was a substantial increase in the ECPRD final summary rate, with 41 % of requests resulting in the publication of reply analyses (compared to 16 % in 2019). Regrettably, this upward trend has not been sustained. There was a decrease to 31 % in 2021, a rise to 38 % in 2022 and a further, albeit smaller, decrease in 2023, with only 34.5 % of requests resulting in Final Summaries being uploaded. Efforts to enhance final summary submissions and utilisation continue to be a focus for optimising the effectiveness of the ECPRD network.

6.2.3. Statutory meetings

In 2023, it was decided that two remote and one in-person Executive Committee meetings would be held annually. The Finnish Parliament generously offered to host the first face-to-face ECPRD Executive Committee meeting since the COVID-19 outbreak, in Helsinki in June 2023.

The Annual Conference of ECPRD correspondents was hosted by the UK's House of Commons and held on 19 and 20 October 2023. The Conference welcomed 52 members and provided an opportunity to introduce and guide new ECPRD correspondents. The growing number of ECPRD requests is putting increasing pressure on correspondents. The main objective of the meeting was therefore to seek a universally agreed solution to manage the growing influx of requests while enhancing their quality. Emphasis was also placed on advocating for the implementation of the Online Request procedure, presenting an innovative approach. Additionally, attention was given to the need to modernise an outdated website that no longer complies with current security standards or user expectations. The pre-conference focused on the theme of Parliaments engaging with the public and academics.

6.2.4. Seminars

ECPRD Seminars serve as pivotal forums for highly productive exchanges among participants, facilitating the sharing of information and best practices. These seminars are typically hosted by national Parliaments with an interest in the specific topics under discussion. In 2023, the return to normality was accelerated, manifesting as a strategic decision to alternate between the organisation of seminars and webinars, capitalising on the advantages offered by each format.

During 2023, the ECPRD Secretariat played a central role in organising a total of nine ECPRD webinars and seminars (See Annex VI C). Three webinars were organised by the European Parliament, the Greek Parliament, and the Czech Chamber of Deputies. Additionally, six in-person seminars were hosted by the Israeli *Knesset*, the Belgian House of Representatives and Senate, the Dutch *Tweede Kamer*, the Georgian Parliament, the Italian Chamber of Deputies, and the Austrian *Bundesrat* and *Nationalrat*.

Area of Interest – Economic and Budgetary Affairs

A webinar on '[National Recovery and Resilience Plans \(NRRPS\) - Parliamentary control of the government](#)' was organised by the Chancellery of the Czech Chamber of Deputies on 21 September 2023. This was part of a series of annual ECPRD meetings to discuss the role played by national Parliaments in monitoring the implementation of the National Recovery and Resilience Plans (RRPs). It focused on the ongoing procedure for updating the Plans and on the control exercised by Parliaments over the governments in the general process for monitoring the implementation of RRPs. The subject was discussed in the light of the results of ECPRD request 5 481 'The National Recovery and Resilience Plans - Parliamentary control of the Government'.

The Italian Chamber of Deputies organised a seminar in Rome on 5 and 6 October 2023 on '[The new European economic governance](#)'. The seminar aimed to analyse the key elements of the reform of economic governance set out in the legislative proposals recently adopted by the European Commission, and to consider the most important changes to the fiscal rules and monitoring procedures with respect to the previous system.

Area of Interest – ICT in Parliaments

An [ICT Seminar on 'Safety and Security'](#) was hosted by the Dutch *Tweede Kamer Der Staten-Generaal* on 16 and 17 March 2023 in The Hague. This seminar concerned not only physical security, but also digital or cybersecurity. It addressed issues such as the organisation of security in Parliament, promoting security awareness, how to secure data in the cloud, which techniques can be used for physical access security, how to deal with identity and access management and what to do about third-party risk management.

An [ICT Seminar on 'Innovation and digital transformation – good practices in European parliaments'](#) was hosted by the Austrian *Nationalrat* and *Bundesrat* on 6 and 7 November 2023 in Vienna, Austria. The seminar focused on digital transformation in parliaments in order to simplify parliamentary procedures and enhance efficiency (e.g. by automating tasks, streamlining workflows, or facilitating public participation). In this

seminar, innovation models and exemplary projects and best practices were presented and discussed.

Area of Interest Libraries, Research Services and Archives

A seminar on '[Parliamentary Research Services – Interfaces and Circles of Influence](#)' was organised by the Israeli Knesset on 22 and 23 March 2023 in Jerusalem. A total of 54 participants attended this seminar, which focused on the day-to-day work of parliamentary research services that interconnect with many types of actors from different circles of influence: the inner circle, including interaction with parliamentary clients; the governmental circle, consisting of government ministries and agencies; and the external circle, with actors such as the public, media, NGOs and academia.

A webinar on '[Strengthening Democracy: Research for effective parliamentary scrutiny](#)' was hosted remotely by the European Parliament Research Service (EPRS) on 1 and 2 June 2023. The webinar offered a forum of exchange among the parliamentary research services and libraries on scrutiny activities and democratic accountability. It examined several aspects of scrutiny and discussed how research services can contribute to further improving their parliaments' capacity to scrutinise the executive. In addition, it looked at how parliamentary research services can better assess the effects of past decisions for future legislative work.

A seminar on '[Professional development of the parliamentary researchers – facing contemporary challenges](#)' was hosted by the Georgian Parliament on 28 and 29 September 2023 in Tbilisi, Georgia. This seminar addressed issues related to the career and professional development of parliamentary researchers; how to advance their capacity, and skills, and keep them constantly interoperable with the changing environment. Discussions covered topics such as recruitment, retention and integration of staffers and researchers. In this context, participants of the seminar, speakers, and facilitators reviewed widespread methods, approaches, and best practices from different angles.

Area of Interest Parliamentary Practice and Procedure

A webinar on '[Upholding the rule of law and the role of parliamentary administrations](#)' was organised by the Greek Parliament (*Vouli Ton Ellinon*) on 30 January 2023. The webinar provided colleagues from the network with the chance to engage with Prof Dimitry Kochenov who is a prolific writer and consultant on the rule of law and democracy in Europe. Discussions focused on the mechanisms to promote and safeguard the rule of law in the EU and the webinar analysed various rule-of-law reports and assessments.

A seminar on '[Parliaments and Citizens' Assemblies](#)' was hosted by the Belgian *Chambre des Représentants* and Senate on 27 March 2023 in Brussels. Citizens' assemblies are intended to serve the interest of both citizens and politicians. On the one hand, citizens' assemblies stand for the qualified involvement of citizens in government decision-making; on the other hand, they are supposed to show new ways of solving questions on which there is political deadlock, or to challenge processes of change. The aim of the seminar was to explore the various experiences of engagement with citizens' assemblies from the

perspective of parliaments and parliamentary administrations. One of the key questions was how those 'democratic innovations' relate to Parliaments.

6.2.5 The ECPRD website

With the support and contribution of the European Parliament, the ECPRD website is regularly updated in order to facilitate the work of correspondents and to improve the ECPRD's efficiency.

In 2023, the major developments on the network's website focused on meeting correspondents' expectations on the use of the Online Request system. This initiative enhances and simplifies the process, aiming to streamline the analysis of extensive data derived from responses to ECPRD requests. The ultimate goal is to fully leverage the advantages offered by today's existing and emerging technologies in big data analytics and artificial intelligence.

Main developments in 2023:

- Increased in-person meetings.
- Higher participation in webinars.
- Focus on universally acceptable solutions to manage the growing number of ECPRD requests, alleviating correspondent pressure and improving quality.
- Advocacy for implementing the Online Request procedure and strategic consideration for modernising the outdated website in line with current security standards and to meet user expectations.

6.3 Interparliamentary cooperation in the field of EU external action and multilateral parliamentary assemblies

In the last few years, parliamentary democracy, support for capacity building and for actions in the area of fundamental rights have acquired strategic importance and have become a focus of common interest for Parliaments in the EU.

The satisfactory outcome of interparliamentary forms of exchange in these areas encouraged the Directorate for Relations with National Parliaments to promote strategic cooperation between EU Parliaments and the European Parliament in the field of parliamentary democracy. In cooperation with the Directorate-General for External Policies, the goal of this three-year project is to create a network of colleagues from EU Parliaments dealing with programmes with non-EU country Parliaments aimed at strengthening democracy in its various aspects.

By improving and consolidating informal contacts and channels, exchanges of documents and information, and preparing parliamentary meetings with national Parliament services, the ultimate goal is to contribute to strengthening the promotion of fundamental EU values through the external actions of the Union.

Exchanges between the European Parliament and the national Parliaments in the fields of EU external action have been growing over the years in terms of both the frequency and variety of events.

In response to the growing shared interest, and the promising outcome of the [section of the IPEX platform dedicated to the Democracy Support Network](#), the Directorate, together with the Directorate-General for External Policies (DG EXPO), launched a strategic project for 2022-2024 aimed at promoting the creation of a permanent exchange among Parliaments in the areas of multilateral parliamentary assemblies and forums, democracy support and pre-accession assistance, election observation delegations, human rights measures and mediation.

EU national Parliaments and the European Parliament have engaged in several democracy support activities with Parliaments of non-EU countries, with different levels of engagement, tools and priorities. The common objective of this strategic exchange between the administrations of European and national Parliaments is to improve synergies and prevent overlaps in the work in this area, as well as to enable better parliamentary oversight and scrutiny of the EU's external action.

The staff-level network seeks to improve mutual understanding through knowledge sharing and the exchange of best practices.

IPEX allows Parliaments' staff members involved in the Democracy Support Network to share their activities. The aim is to foster collaboration, at the administrative and political levels, by providing all stakeholders with a comprehensive overview of activities – whether in preparation, ongoing or concluded – in a given partner Parliament. Each EU national Parliament has selected up to two people responsible for the network in each Chamber.

Two online meetings of the Democracy Support Network took place on 26 May and 7 July 2023, with the principal focus on the support for the *Verkhovna Rada* of Ukraine.

The Democracy Support Network, once again, proved to be a useful platform to coordinate the multiplicity of initiatives being taken by a wide variety of actors such as providing support to construction activities, security issues, IT infrastructure and other material support, linguistic support, study visits, or providing expertise at administrative or political level. Given the importance of European integration as Ukraine's key priority, the highest priorities for National Parliaments' cooperation with the *Verkhovna Rada* in 2023 were legal harmonisation, strengthening financial oversight capacities and upgrading research services.

The objectives for 2024 are to continue working and supporting the existing cooperation tools, including the Democracy Support Network, in particular by supporting the organisation of an annual in-person meeting.

Main developments in 2023:

- Continued Democracy Support Network work with two online meetings mainly dealing with support to the *Verkhovna Rada* of Ukraine.

6.4 Presidency Parliament Support Programme

The European Parliament has constantly promoted close cooperation between its own administration and those of national Parliaments, in particular in the preparatory phase of the parliamentary dimension of each EU Council Presidency. The European Parliament offers each incoming Presidency Parliament the opportunity to participate in a programme organised for staff in Brussels with a view to preparing activities in the context of the parliamentary dimension of the Presidency.

The European Parliament can provide the Presidency Parliament with a tailor-made support programme, on the basis of specific requests, needs and priorities. This initiative offers an opportunity to network and build personal contacts with all those involved and allows for the effective sharing of information and expertise, thus facilitating further work and ensuring consistency. The European Parliament may contribute to the cost of the programme on a shared basis with the corresponding national Parliament.

The European Parliament's 'Presidency Parliament Support Programme' was originally created as a tool to assist Parliaments from EU Member States that were due to hold the EU Council Presidency for the first time. However, since it proved a helpful tool during the Presidencies' preparatory phase, and in view of the continuous developments in interparliamentary cooperation, the Directorate for Relations with National Parliaments decided to extend the Presidency Parliament Support Programme to all future Presidencies. In recent years, EU Council Presidencies have placed extra emphasis on and invested more in the parliamentary dimension to increase the number of events, meetings and initiatives they hold during their Presidency semester, as compared to a decade ago.

The Directorate for Relations with National Parliaments organised three meetings with future Presidency Parliaments in 2023, for the Spanish, Belgian and Hungarian national Parliaments. All three meetings were held on the European Parliament's premises in Brussels.



The programme for officials from the Spanish Congress of Deputies and the Spanish Senate took place on 13 and 14 April 2023. The participants from Madrid held exchanges with a number of colleagues from the Secretariat of the European Parliament, as well as national Parliaments' representatives from past Presidencies (Czechia, Sweden), who shared their experiences in the organisation of the full range of interparliamentary events and activities. The topics discussed at the meetings included the Conference of Speakers of the EU Parliaments and the Secretary Generals meeting; COSAC meetings (with the participation of the COSAC Secretariat Permanent Member); the visit of the European Parliament' Conference of Presidents to the Presidency capital; and the Interparliamentary

Conference on Stability, Economic Cooperation and Governance, the Interparliamentary Conference on CFSP/CSDP, and the Joint Parliamentary Scrutiny Group on Europol. A meeting was also organised on IPEX with the IPEX Information Officer.



On 28 and 29 September 2023 officials of the Belgian Federal Parliament visited the European Parliament. The visit was attended by a large group of officials from the Belgian House of Representatives and the Belgian Senate. A series of meetings between Belgian Parliament officials and the Secretariat of the European Parliament, as well as national Parliaments' representatives from previous Presidencies (Sweden, Spain), were organised.

During the meeting discussions were held on both the substance, and logistical and practical details, with Committee Secretariats on the standard interparliamentary meetings (Conference on Stability, Economic Cooperation and Governance; Conference on CFSP/CSDP; the Joint Parliamentary Scrutiny Group on Europol), as well as meetings on other regular activities organised during the Presidency period, such as the visit of the European Parliament's Conference of Presidents to the Presidency capital, and the COSAC meetings to be organised.

In the specific case of Belgium, part of the meeting was devoted to questions derived from the organisation of the Belgian Presidency COSAC Plenary – scheduled for March 2024 – at the European Parliament's premises. Dedicated meetings were arranged among the respective the Belgian and European Parliament services for Security, Conference organisation, Interpretation, Protocol, Ushers and Press and Communication to allow initial discussions on the preparation of this event.



A third Presidency Parliament Support Programme was organised in 2023 with a visit to Brussels by officials from the Hungarian National Assembly on 7 and 8 December 2023. The Hungarian Parliament had expressed interest in starting preparations for the country's Presidency in the second half of 2024 as early as possible. Given the European Parliament elections which will be held in June 2024, a few of the discussions – including a dedicated meeting on the calendar – revolved around the expected timing for the constitution of the newly elected European Parliament and its various bodies (Vice-Presidents, Conference of Presidents, Committees and their Chairs/Bureaux) after the elections.

The Hungarian officials coming from Budapest met colleagues from the European Parliament Secretariat and discussed the standard interparliamentary meetings (Conference on Stability, Economic Cooperation and Governance; Conference on CFSP/CSDP; Joint Parliamentary Scrutiny Group on Europol and Interparliamentary Committee Meeting on the Evaluation of Eurojust), as well as the traditional visit by the European Parliament's Conference of Presidents to the Presidency capital. Meetings were also organised on the Conference of Speakers of the EU Parliaments and the Secretary Generals meeting (which the Hungarian Presidency is due to organise in early 2025), as well as COSAC meetings (with the participation of the COSAC Secretariat Permanent Member) and IPEX.

In addition to these discussions, and the meeting with national Parliament representatives from previous presidency parliaments (Czechia, Sweden, Spain, Belgium), who shared useful lessons and advice, meetings were also organised with the interpretation and conference services on the interpretation regime of interparliamentary meetings and with the European Parliament Liaison Office in Hungary on the communication aspects and cooperation possibilities concerning the parliamentary activities of the Presidency.

Main developments in 2023:

- In the first half of 2023, a Presidency Parliament Support Programme was devised and offered to the Spanish Parliament, in order to prepare it for the Presidency in the second half of 2023.
- In the second half of 2023, two Presidency Parliament Support Programmes were organised for the Belgian and Hungarian Parliaments to prepare for their upcoming Presidencies, to be held in the first and second halves of 2024, respectively.

6.5 Network of EU national Parliaments' representatives in Brussels

The Directorate for Relations with National Parliaments welcomes and hosts the administrative representatives designated by the EU national Parliaments/Chambers to the European Parliament. Since 1991, with a view to strengthening interparliamentary cooperation within the EU, the European Parliament has offered representatives complimentary office space and other in-house facilities upon request, in its Brussels and Strasbourg premises.

EU national Parliaments send national officials to Brussels to facilitate relations with the EU. As of December 2023, 57 staff from the 27 national Parliaments in the EU (including COSAC secretariat and IPEX information officer) have been occupying 40 offices in the European Parliament's premises. These representatives are national officials who, in addition to administrative assignments, are tasked with mutual information sharing (in a two-way flow between the European Parliament and the EU national Parliaments), as a key factor in EU affairs.

The representatives work in the same building housing the Directorate. This creates numerous synergies and promotes easy exchanges.

A [list of the national Parliaments' representatives](#) is available on the website of the Directorate for Relations with National Parliaments.

Main developments in 2023:

- Conference for the national Parliaments' representatives with former Secretary-General of the European Parliament, Mr Klaus Welle, after the end of his term of office, which was held on 7 June 2023.
- Meeting between the national Parliaments' representatives and the European Parliament's Secretary-General Mr Alessandro Chiochetti in the first year of his term of office, which was held on 14 November 2023.

6.6 Staff seminars

As the European Parliament affirmed in its [2018 resolution on the implementation of the Treaty provisions concerning national Parliaments](#), 'better interaction and improved exchange of information between MEPs and MPs and also between national Parliaments' civil servants could help to improve scrutiny of the European debate at national level and thus foster a genuinely European parliamentary and political culture'. In 2019, the Directorate for Relations with National Parliaments organised a series of seminars for staff from EU national Parliaments/Chambers. Their aim was to bring together staff from national Parliaments and the European Parliament in order to present and discuss relevant European topics, learn from each other and exchange best practices.

In addition to interparliamentary cooperation at political level, an important development in recent years has been the organisation of staff seminars in order to facilitate technical exchanges at staff level. Staff seminars provide an important platform for Parliaments' administrations to hold more specific and focused exchanges on areas of common interest. They are a dynamic element of the work of both the European Parliament and the EU's national Parliaments.

6.6.1 Economic Governance

The Economic Governance Support Unit, in cooperation with the Directorate for Relations with National Parliaments, continued to organise staff seminars to share the latest information on the European Semester. This included topics such as economic priorities and strengthening cooperation on, and improving understanding of, the European Semester cycle through knowledge sharing, and the exchange of best practices. In 2023, five seminars of this kind were organised, three of which took place in person, in Brussels, Nicosia and Madrid, and two virtually, including a webinar on the economic and financial impacts on the EU of the war in Ukraine. Other important topics addressed were the implementation of the Recovery and Resilience Facility in Member States, the involvement of national Parliaments in the reform of EU economic governance or the reform of the stability and growth pact.

6.6.2 CSDP Hub

In the margins of the Interparliamentary Conference for the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Common Security and Defence Policy (IPC CFSP/CSDP), the first in-person meeting of the informal 'CSDP Hub' was organised. This involved parliamentary staff specialised in security and defence matters and was very well attended, with strong interest from the participants, mobilising representatives of 19 national delegations.

6.6.3 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

A good example of the success of staff seminars with EU national Parliaments was the second staff seminar on 'Equality, Diversity and Inclusion', which took place on 6 June 2023. The event was organised jointly by the Directorate for Relations with National Parliaments and colleagues from the Unit for Equality, Inclusion and Diversity in the

Directorate-General for Personnel (DG PERS). The aim of this event was to share human resources best practices related to inclusion and diversity with the administrations of national Parliaments. The meeting was also a forum for deepening the dialogue between the national Parliaments and the European Parliament, by facilitating the exchange of ideas on how to build a more diverse and inclusive workplace.

6.6.4 Medical Services

One of the most active staff seminars bringing together national Parliaments and the European Parliament is the network of colleagues working in Parliament Medical Services. Two such meetings were organised in 2023. The first, on 10 March 2023, was hosted by the European Parliament Medical Service and was held online. Presentations were made by a number of national Parliaments about the functioning of their Medical Services. Among other contributions the Assembly of the Republic of Portugal gave information about their 'Health Days' initiative in 2022 and the UK Parliament gave a presentation of their Parliamentary Health and Wellbeing Services. At the end of the online seminar, the European Parliament handed over responsibility for the network to the Hellenic Parliament.

The Hellenic Parliament hosted the next meeting in person in Athens on 28 and 29 September 2023. The meeting covered a diverse variety of themes, including the services, human resources and structures of parliamentary health units, promoting health, resilience and well-being in Parliaments and promoting a healthy lifestyle through changes in nutrition as well as the use of mass media as communication channels on health issues.

6.6.5 Security Departments

The third conference of the Security Departments of the Parliaments of the European Union was held on 13 October 2023 at the European Parliament in Brussels. It was organised by the European Parliament's Directorate-General for Security and Safety (DG SAFE), in cooperation with the Directorate for Relations with National Parliaments (DG PART). The Director-General of DG PART, Ms Saanaleena Lepola-Honig, and DG SAFE, Ms Maria José Martínez Iglesias, welcomed the participants. This conference followed, and built upon, the previous conferences of Parliaments' security services hosted by the European Parliament in Brussels in 2018 and by the Spanish Congress of Deputies in Madrid in 2019.

The conference was opened by the President of the European Parliament, Ms Roberta Metsola, with the participation of the Secretary-General of the European Parliament, Mr Alessandro Chiochetti, and the Managing Director for Peace, Security and Defence of the European External Action Service, Ms Benedikta Von SeherrThoss. The 2023 conference focused on hybrid threats and featured three working groups. These were on the integrity of electoral processes, the protection of sensitive information, and the fight against foreign interference. The invitees were the officials responsible for security and safety in the General Secretariats of national Parliaments. A special invitation was extended to officials of the Ukrainian *Verkhovna Rada* in recognition of the close cooperation between the European and Ukrainian Parliaments. They were invited to speak about the challenge of protecting a Parliament and its work in wartime.

Main developments in 2023:

- Staff cooperation continues to increase, with a larger number of staff seminars organised every year. In 2023, ten staff seminars were organised between the administrations of the European Parliament and national Parliaments.

7. TOOLS AND SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

7.1 Organisation of remote meetings and videoconferencing

The European Parliament had already begun using videoconferencing as a tool to facilitate interparliamentary cooperation several years before the pandemic. The European Parliament has developed technical solutions to enable videoconferencing with very high image and sound quality, as well as interpretation into several languages. The COVID-19 pandemic made it imperative to adapt and improve the new ways of working and cooperating remotely and led to a huge digital and technical leap in the organisation of remote parliamentary meetings.

Despite the end of the COVID-19 pandemic, videoconferencing, including through Interactio – a platform for multilingual meetings with interpretation – has become an integral part of work at the European Parliament. Adequate resources were invested in supporting its development during the pandemic, and considerable progress was made in developing digital technologies and their use in the workplace as they represent a cost-effective and environmentally friendly tool for organising meetings, including interparliamentary meetings with national Parliaments.

In 2023, technical work continued on the project for a joint videoconferencing platform between the European Parliament and EU national Parliaments that will allow Members of Parliament and other participants to take part in meetings, with or without interpretation. The project was first proposed in 2021 by the German *Bundestag* together with the European Parliament, and both took on a coordinating role.

This will be the first time that a joint contracting procedure of this nature has been used and it is expected to result in economies of scale and therefore lower costs for all the parties involved, as well as ensuring that the videoconferencing solution is adapted to the EU's legal and security standards. The process to establish the contracts for access to the multilingual videoconferencing platform and the provision of remote simultaneous interpretation services should be concluded in early 2024.

Main developments in 2023:

- Remote or hybrid meetings held via videoconferencing remain an important tool for interparliamentary exchanges.
- Technical work continued on the project for a common multilingual European videoconferencing system for the European Parliament and EU national Parliaments and should be completed in early 2024.

7.2 CONNECT – the European Parliament’s database of national Parliaments’ submissions

CONNECT

The Directorate for Relations with National Parliaments provides MEPs (in particular rapporteurs) and political bodies and services of the European Parliament with specific expertise on national Parliaments’ submissions under Protocol Nos 1 and 2 throughout the legislative cycle. In this context, the Directorate manages the [CONNECT](#) database, which includes all documents received from national Parliaments under Protocols Nos 1 and 2 since the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon. Reasoned opinions related to the Early Warning System are available in all official EU languages.

Since 2017, the CONNECT database can be consulted on the Directorate’s website. All information in CONNECT, including reasoned opinions and contributions received from national Parliaments, is directly available on the Committee pages on the European Parliament’s intranet, the common working space of DGs IPOL and EXPO, under the procedure to which they relate. This applies not only to reasoned opinions but also to all contributions received from EU national Parliaments under Protocols Nos 1 and 2.

CONNECT enables rapporteurs, Members, assistants and staff of the committee secretariats, as well as all external stakeholders, to have an up-to-date and complete overview of all submissions received from national Parliaments at any moment of a given legislative procedure. In 2023, a total of 425 submissions were received: 294 (70 %) were submitted within the framework of the Protocol No 2 subsidiarity checks, and 131 (30 %) under the Informal Political Dialogue (Protocol No 1).

As of 1 January 2024, a total of 7 275 submissions (reasoned opinions and contributions) from EU national Parliaments could be found in the CONNECT database. 4 250 (58 %) were submitted within the framework of the Protocol No 2 subsidiarity checks and 3 025 (42 %) were submitted under the Informal Political Dialogue.

Main developments in 2023:

- The CONNECT database is in the process of being updated to make it compatible with automatically receiving submissions via the new National Parliaments Submissions (NPS) tool platform.
- The new submission tool NPS has become operational and some national Parliaments have started using it to submit their contributions (see Section 7.4).

7.3 Directory of Corresponding Committees (CorCom)

CORCOM

The Directory of Corresponding Committees (CorCom) is an information source on national Parliaments' committees corresponding to the committees of the European Parliament. It also provides information about the various committee secretariats of EU national Parliaments and the European Parliament. The information included in the Directory is provided by the Brussels-based permanent representatives of EU national Parliaments.

CorCom is a useful tool for establishing links between European Parliament committees and the corresponding committees of the national Parliaments. It also serves to identify the chairperson and secretariat of the committees, which is always particularly useful for enhancing cooperation between the European Parliament and the national Parliaments.

Following the adoption of the [European Parliament resolution of May 2009 on the relations between EU national Parliaments and the European Parliament under the Treaty of Lisbon](#) (rapporteur: Mr Elmar Brok (EPP)), the Rules of Procedure of the European Parliament were revised accordingly. The rules state that 'a committee may directly engage in dialogue with national Parliaments at committee level within the limits of the budgetary appropriations set aside for that purpose. This may include appropriate forms of pre-legislative and post-legislative cooperation' (Rule 156(3)).

The CorCom application has been continuously improved and updated to meet the changing needs of its users. In the past couple of years, it has been converted into a web-based application for internal use only with restricted user access. Available on the intranet of the European Parliament, it has been made much more user-friendly and now includes a range of new features. In 2023, there were 434 visits to the application, with 559 184 application hits and 146 509 individual hits on its web pages.

7.4 National Parliaments' Submission Tool (NPS Tool)

The National Parliaments' Submission Tool (NPS Tool) is a user-friendly European Parliament online platform specifically created for the transmission of EU national Parliaments' contributions on Protocol Nos 1 and 2.

Its aim is to secure, simplify and officialise the procedure of sending a submission to the European Parliament by any national Parliament.

The development of the NPS Tool project started in 2019 in the framework of the Parliamentary Project Portfolio of the European Parliament. The aim of the NPS Tool is to offer an automated online user-friendly registration tool for the submission of reasoned opinions and contributions from EU national Parliaments. By filling in an online form, national Parliaments are able to provide information about the submission (filling in the necessary data) and upload it. It is then automatically sent to the European Parliament responsible services and attributed and forwarded to an internal pre-defined distribution list.

The benefit of the NPS Tool is that it is a user-friendly, rapid and a more secure system for sending the submissions of national Parliaments on Protocol Nos 1 and 2. It is more secure in terms of hacking and data phishing.

This tool makes it easier to obtain correct and accurate data about submissions. It provides immediate confirmation of the official receipt of the submission by the European Parliament. Speeding up the process means the submission can reach the relevant Parliament committee and the rapporteur in a timely way, while the file is still on the committee's agenda. It increases the efficiency of the legislative dialogue between the European Parliament and EU national Parliaments, as well as intensifying interparliamentary cooperation.

Main developments in 2023:

- Following the pilot and test phases, as well as a series of training sessions organised with the participation of colleagues from national Parliaments, the tool was finally launched in July 2023 and a growing number of national Parliaments have started to use it, with 62 submissions received via the NPS Tool in 2023 – 14 under the Informal Political Dialogue (Protocol No 1), and 48 within the framework of the Protocol No 2 subsidiarity checks.

7.5 Publications of the Directorate for Relations with National Parliaments

The Directorate for Relations with National Parliaments produces a number of publications.

The 'Annual Report on relations between the European Parliament and EU national Parliaments' contains all the activities and developments in interparliamentary cooperation in the EU in a given year, with detailed statistics.

'Spotlight on Parliaments in Europe', summarises information on selected topical matters exchanged between Parliaments in the ECPRD network.

In addition, the 'Weekly Agenda' provides information about activities involving national Parliaments with a view to increasing the transparency and visibility of the numerous interparliamentary activities undertaken.

The 'State of Play Note' provides information on the submissions received from national Parliaments.

7.5.1 Annual Report on relations between the European Parliament and EU national Parliaments

[Reports on EU interparliamentary relations are available as of 2010](#). Moreover, Annual Reports as of 2017 are available on the dedicated website of the Directorate for Relations with National Parliaments.

7.5.2 Spotlight on Parliaments in Europe

The 'Spotlight' publication summarises information on selected topical matters exchanged between Parliaments in the ECPRD network.

In 2023, the Directorate prepared nine issues of 'Spotlight':

- Spotlight n°38 – February 2023 - curbing propaganda and disinformation
- Spotlight n°39 – March 2023 - Internationalisation in higher education
- Spotlight n°40 – April 2023 - Abstentions during state elections
- Spotlight n°41 – April 2023 - Sustainability in Parliament
- Spotlight n°42 – April 2023 - Legal Status of internet influencers
- Spotlight n°43 – May 2023 - Gifts and donations
- Spotlight n°44 – May 2023 - Rights of MEPs in national Parliaments
- Spotlight n°45 – June 2023 - Integration of immigrants
- Spotlight n°46 – December 2023 - Editorial quality of draft legislation

7.5.3 Weekly Agenda

The Weekly Agenda is sent on Fridays by email to all Members of the European Parliament and to the services of the European Parliament. In 2023, 44 Weekly Agendas were sent.

The publication covers interparliamentary events during the upcoming two weeks, such as bilateral visits, interparliamentary conferences and Interparliamentary Committee Meetings.

Information is given on the date and venue and on the European Parliament services involved.

7.5.4 State of Play Note

The Directorate also produces a monthly [State of Play Note](#) on reasoned opinions and contributions submitted by national Parliaments (see Chapter 5.1).

7.5.5 Calendar of Interparliamentary Activities

The [Calendar of Interparliamentary Activities](#) is published every six months, following its endorsement by the Conference of Presidents. It covers interparliamentary events organised by the Presidency Parliament and by the European Parliament, such as Interparliamentary Conferences, High-Level Conferences and ICMs, and it is sent biannually by the President of the European Parliament to the Speakers of national Parliaments.

7.5.6 Factsheets on EU national Parliaments

Finally, each of the 39 EU national Parliament/Chamber's has a [fact sheet](#) published on the Directorate's website. Each fact sheet is a concise document containing a description of each Parliament/Chamber, which is regularly updated.

8. DIRECTORATE FOR RELATIONS WITH NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS

The year 2023 provided an almost full return to normal after the COVID-19 pandemic, with most interparliamentary meetings taking place in-person, even if remote participation remains a useful tool for interparliamentary cooperation. This was also the first year of activity for the Directorate for Relations with National Parliaments within the European Parliament's new Directorate-General for Parliamentary Democracy Partnerships (DG PART), created in November 2022, with Ms Saanaleena Lepola-Honig as Director-General.

The Directorate was able to provide high-quality support to the Members of the European Parliament and its various partners, to continue pursuing institutional cooperation and legislative dialogue with the EU's national Parliaments, and to assist with numerous interparliamentary events.

The Directorate organises and provides support for interparliamentary activities, contributes to the implementation of the Treaty provisions on interparliamentary cooperation and acts as a knowledge centre for information on the EU's national Parliaments. It represents the European Parliament in the administrative networks of interparliamentary cooperation. It ensures relations with the officials who represent EU national Parliaments in Brussels and maintains close links with their administrations.

The Directorate is grateful for the continuous support of the Secretary-General, the Director-General of DG PART and all services in the European Parliament Directorates-General with which it cooperates.

Ms Katrin Ruhrmann, Director for Relations with National Parliaments, retired on 30 June 2023. On 10 July 2023 the European Parliament's Bureau appointed Ms Leticia Zuleta de Reales Ansaldo as the new Director, although she will take up the post only at a later date. In the interim, Mr Jesús Gómez, Head of the Legislative Dialogue Unit, is the Acting Director.

The Directorate consists of two units: the Legislative Dialogue Unit and the Institutional Cooperation Unit.

Legislative Dialogue Unit

The Legislative Dialogue Unit is mainly responsible for political and legislative dialogue with national Parliaments. It plans, coordinates and organises interparliamentary meetings at committee level, including ICMs, the European Parliamentary Week and the JPSG on Europol. It also ensures monitoring of the subsidiarity check and follow-up with rapporteurs and committees of the implementation of Protocol No 2 on the application of the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality. The Unit also organises thematic seminars bringing together European Parliament and national Parliament administrations, and is responsible for the CONNECT and CorCom databases.

Head of Unit: Mr Jesús Gómez

Institutional Cooperation Unit

The areas of responsibility of the Institutional Cooperation Unit include multilateral regulated cooperation, i.e. the EU Speakers Conference, meetings of Secretaries-General of EU Parliaments and COSAC. The Unit also deals with established networks, in particular IPEX and the ECPRD, as well as handling cooperation with DG EXPO and coordinating the Presidency Parliament Support Programme and capacity-building visits and seminars.

Head of Unit: Ms Anne Louise McLauchlan

This report, as well as further information related to the European Parliament's relations with the EU's national Parliaments, can be found on the European Parliament's [website for the Directorate](#).

ANNEXES

ANNEX I – COSAC meetings – Topics and keynote speakers 2023

COSAC event	Place, date	Topics	European Parliament keynote speakers/panellists
COSAC Chairpersons' Meeting	Stockholm, 29-30 January 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. What can EU do in the area of organised crime? II. Presentation on the Priorities of the Swedish Presidency 	Mr Othmar KARAS, First Vice-President of the European Parliament
Exchange of views with Ylva Johansson, European Commissioner for Home Affairs	Videoconference, 30 March 2023	What can more be done both nationally and at EU level in the area of preventing and fighting corruption?	
Plenary Meeting of the LXIX COSAC	Stockholm, 14-16 May 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. The Swedish Presidency of the Council of the European Union II. 30 years of the single market III. Towards a green transition IV. Ukraine 	Mr Othmar KARAS, First Vice-President of the European Parliament Mr Salvatore DE MEO, Chair of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs (AFCO) of the European Parliament Ms Helène FRITZON, Member of the ENVI Committee, European Parliament
COSAC Chairpersons' Meeting	Madrid, 17-18 September 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> V. Presentation of the priorities of the Spanish Presidency VI. The future of Ukraine in Europe VII. Current issues related to the European Union 	Mr Othmar KARAS, First Vice-President of the European Parliament
LXX COSAC Plenary Meeting	Madrid, 26-28 November 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> VIII. Spanish Presidency of the Council of the EU IX. The Pact on Migration and Asylum of the EU X. Energy crisis and green transition XI. Situation in Ukraine and relations with the European Union XII. Open Strategic Autonomy and relations with Latin America 	Mr Othmar KARAS, First Vice-President of the European Parliament

For more detailed information on the agendas of COSAC meetings as published by the Presidencies, please consult the [IPEX website](http://www.ipex.eu) (www.ipex.eu)

ANNEX II – Interparliamentary Committee Meetings and Interparliamentary Conferences organised by the European Parliament in Brussels in 2023

Date	European Parliament committee	Event		Number of Participants			
		Type of meeting	Title of meeting	National Parliaments Members	National Parliaments	National Parliament Chambers	MEPs
27-28 January 2023	ECON-BUDG-EMPL	European Parliamentary Week: Interparliamentary Committee Meeting	Interparliamentary Conference on Stability, Economic Coordination and Governance in the European Union	102	23	32	28
1 March 2023	FEMM	Interparliamentary Committee Meeting	Gender aspects of energy poverty	28	23	27	9
21 March 2023	ING2	Interparliamentary Committee Meeting	Legislative resilience, electoral laws and information manipulation campaigns	14	9	10	17
26 April 2023	AFCO	Interparliamentary Committee Meeting	Reform of the European Electoral System	35	17	23	10
25 May 2023	TRAN	Interparliamentary Committee Meeting	Reaching the transport objectives of fit for 55 at national level- opportunities and challenges	34	16	20	15
26 June 2023	CONT	Interparliamentary Committee Meeting	The role of national Parliaments in overseeing the spending of EU funds and the NextGenerationEU plan	33	15	19	8
27 June 2023	AFET	Interparliamentary Committee Meeting	Moving the EU enlargement forward: 20 years since the Thessaloniki declaration	27	14	17	10

Date	European Parliament committee	Event		Number of Participants			
		Type of meeting	Title of meeting	National Parliaments Members	National Parliaments	National Parliament Chambers	MEPs
28 June 2023	EMPL	Interparliamentary Committee Meeting	Children at the heart of Europe: Two years of the European Child Guarantee	19	10	12	10
19 July 2023	DROI	Interparliamentary Committee Meeting	Coordination between EU Delegations and EU MS embassies on Human rights in third countries	24	15	15	5
20 September 2023	PETI	Interparliamentary Committee Meeting	Cooperation with the Committees on Petitions in national Parliaments: Exchanging best practices and reflecting on new approaches	26	16	17	5
20-21 September 2023	LIBE	Joint Parliamentary Scrutiny Group	13th meeting of the Joint Parliamentary Scrutiny Group on Europol	49	21	25	10
25 October 2023	AFCO	Interparliamentary Committee Meeting	Preparing the European elections 2024	36	17	20	7
25 October 2023	FISC	Interparliamentary Committee Meeting	Tax Symposium - The future of taxation in the EU	40	19	22	10
07 November 2023	LIBE	Interparliamentary Committee Meeting	Interparliamentary Committee Meeting on the evaluation of Eurojust's activities	21	12	13	11
07 November 2023	REGI	Interparliamentary Committee Meeting	The Future of Cohesion Policy post 2027: Opportunities, Challenges and Next Steps	24	23	26	17
27-28 November 2023	CULT	Interparliamentary Committee Meeting	European citizenship education	36	17	18	15

Date	European Parliament committee	Event		Number of Participants			
		Type of meeting	Title of meeting	National Parliaments Members	National Parliaments	National Parliament Chambers	MEPs
29 November 2023	DROI	Interparliamentary Committee Meeting	75th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights	15	9	9	24
04 December 2023	LIBE	Interparliamentary Committee Meeting	The Situation of the Rule of Law	30	15	18	15
04 December 2023	EMPL	Interparliamentary Committee Meeting	The participation of persons with disabilities in the electoral process	30	20	23	15
Total number of participants				623			241

ANNEX III – Visits of EU national Parliaments to the European Parliament in 2023 (including videoconferences facilitated by the Directorate)

Date	Country and Chamber	Visitor	Meeting counterparts in the European Parliament	Type of visit	Number of Participants - MPs	Number of Participants - staff
19 January 2023	ROMANIA Senat	Committee on Agriculture, Food Industry and Rural Development	AGRI Secretariat, APAs (Accredited Parliamentary Assistants) of MEPs Carmen Avram and Dacian Ciolos	Staff	0	2
23 January 2023	THE NETHERLANDS - Tweede Kamer	Staff	National Parliament Representative, MEPs/ APAs (Accredited Parliamentary Assistants)	Staff	0	23
27 January 2023	THE NETHERLANDS - Tweede Kamer	Social Affairs Committee	MEPs Kim van Sparrentak and Jeroen Lenaers	MPs	4	2
8 February 2023	SPAIN - Cortes Generales	Staff	MEPs, Director-General DG COMM Jaume Duch Guillot	Staff	0	26
13 February 2023	LATVIA - Saeima	Chair of the European Affairs Committee Andris Sprūds	Katrin Ruhmann, Director Directorate for Relations with National Parliaments - DG PART	MPs	1	0
27-28 February 2023	PORTUGAL - Assembleia da República	Staff	Staff from DG COMM, DG PART, DG PRES, DG TRAD	Staff	0	4
6 March 2023	BALTIC ASSEMBLY AND NORDIC COUNCIL	MPs	Baltic and Nordic MEPS : Bergur Lokke Rasmussen, Marianne Vind, Silvia Modig, Andrius Kubilius, Karin Karlsbro, Evin Incir, Carina Ohlsson	MPs	8	9
6 March 2023	THE NETHERLANDS -Tweede Kamer	Environment Committee	ENVI MEPs Bas Eickhout, Anja Hazekamp, Javi Lopez and Jan Huitema	MPs	5	4

Date	Country and Chamber	Visitor	Meeting counterparts in the European Parliament	Type of visit	Number of Participants - MPs	Number of Participants - staff
8 March 2023	GERMANY - Bundestag	Sub-Committee on European Law	MEPs Evin Incir, Alexandra Geese, Christine Schneider, Maria Noichl, Sabine Verheyen, Petra Kammervert, Ramona Strugariu, Romania, Javier Zarzalejos, Sergey Lagodinsky, Petri Sarvamaa, Moritz Körner, Daniel Freund	MPs	6	3
20 March 2023	IRELAND - Oireachtas	Oireachtas Ag Committee	Staff, DG PART and DG EPRS	MPs	0	12
22 March 2023	PORTUGAL - Assembleia da República	Staff	DG PART, European Parliament Archives Unit	Staff	0	3
22 March 2023	POLAND - Sejm	European Union Affairs Committee	MEPs of the ING2 Committee	MPs	24	6
27 March 2023	FRANCE - Assemblée Nationale	Committee on European Affairs	MEP Marie-Pierre Vedrenne	MPs	2	1
30 March 2023	ROMANIA - Senat	Committee on Human Rights, Gender Equality, Religious Affairs and Minorities	LIBE Chair Juan Fernando López Aguilar and European Data Protection Supervisor Wojciech Wiewiórowski	MPs	2	0
13-14 April 2023	SPAIN - Cortes Generales	Officials of the Spanish Congress of Deputies and Senate preparing for the Presidency	Parliament Staff from DG PART, DG PRES, DG IPOL, DG EXPO, National Parliaments' Representatives, Permanent Member COSAC Secretariat, IPEX information officer	Staff	0	8
26-27 April 2023	POLAND - Sejm	Committee on Petitions	PETI Committee, PETI Chair Dolors Montserrat, PETI Vice-Chair Ryszard Czarnecki, MEP Kosma Zlotowski, MEP Jaroslaw Duda	MPs	8	2

Date	Country and Chamber	Visitor	Meeting counterparts in the European Parliament	Type of visit	Number of Participants - MPs	Number of Participants - staff
22 May 2023	DENMARK - Folketinget	Transport Committee	MEP Jan-Christoph Oetjen, Chair of the Committee on Transport, MEPs Asger Christensen, Pernille Weiss, Kira Marie Peter-Hansen, Morten Helveg Petersen, Karen Melchior, Bergur Løkke Rasmussen, Rasmus Andreasen	MPs	9	2
22 May 2023	THE NETHERLANDS - Tweede Kamer	Agricultural Committee	AGRI and ENVI Dutch MEPs	MPs	12	1
31 May 2023	DENMARK - Folketinget	Visit of consultants	MEPs Cesar Luena and Jessica Polfjärd	MPs	0	7
31 May 2023	GERMANY - Bundestag	Finance Committee	ECON MEPs	MPs	7	4
31 May 2023	NORWAY - Stortinget	Working visit by the Norwegian Parliaments Delegation to the Asia-Europe Parliamentary Partnership (ASEP) and ASEAN's Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA)	MEPs Daniel Caspary, Niels Fuglsang and Karolin Braunsberger-Reinhold	MPs	3	2
5 June 2023	FRANCE - Sénat	Committee on European Affairs	MEP Ciaran Cuffe	MPs	4	2
6 June 2023	FRANCE - Assemblée Nationale	Committee on European Affairs	Former MEP Pascal Durand	MPs	2	1
6 June 2023	FRANCE - Sénat	Committee on European Affairs	MEPs Bellamy and Karleskind	MPs	3	2
12 June 2023	THE NETHERLANDS Tweede Kamer	Policy Lawyers	DG PART, DG EPRS, ECON Secretariat	Staff	0	4

Date	Country and Chamber	Visitor	Meeting counterparts in the European Parliament	Type of visit	Number of Participants - MPs	Number of Participants - staff
27 June 2023	FRANCE - Assemblée Nationale	Committee on Foreign Affairs	AFET Committee	MPs	2	1
29 June 2023	FRANCE - Sénat	Committee on European Affairs	MEP Christophe Grudler	MPs	2	2
3 July 2023	THE NETHERLANDS Tweede Kamer	EU advisers	MEP Malik Azmani, DG PART	Staff	0	10
17 July 2023	AUSTRIA - Nationalrat	Wolfgang Sobotka, President	MEP Axel Voss	MPs	1	3
5 September 2023	MALTA - House of Representatives	Members of the Maltese Parliament	President Metsola	MPs	19	3
18 September 2023	FINLAND - Eduskunta	New elected Finnish MPs	Mr Pekka Nurminen, Head of Unit, Members Administration Unit DG PRES, Finnish MEPs Henna Virkkunen, Petri Sarvamaa, Miapetra Kumpula-Natri, Eero Heinäluoma, Nils Torvalds, Pirkko Ruohonen-Lerner, Silvia Modig, Cristian-Silviu Buşoi	MPs	19	5
19 September 2023	NORWAY - Stortinget	Study visit by the research unit of the Norwegian Parliament	MEP Łukasz KOHUT	Staff	0	17
20 September 2023	FINLAND - Eduskunta	New elected Finnish MPs	Mr Pekka Nurminen, Head of Unit, Members Administration Unit DG PRES, Finnish MEPs: Henna Virkkunen, Petri Sarvamaa, Miapetra Kumpula-Natri, Eero Heinäluoma, Elsi Katainen, Mauri Pekkarinen, Nils Torvalds, Alviina Alametsä, Ville Niinistö, Teuvo Hakkarainen, Silvia Modig	MPs	17	5

Date	Country and Chamber	Visitor	Meeting counterparts in the European Parliament	Type of visit	Number of Participants - MPs	Number of Participants - staff
21 September 2023	FRANCE - Assemblée Nationale	Committee on Foreign Affairs	MEPs Christophe Grudler and Nicolas Gonzalez Casares	MPs	2	1
26 September 2023	SWEDEN - Riksdagen	Committee on EU Affairs	MEPs Arba Kokalari, Jessica Polfjärd, Ilan de Basso and Emma Wiesner	MPs	11	2
27 September 2023	FINLAND - Eduskunta	Finnish Parliament Research Service	DG EPRS	Staff	0	6
28-29 September 2023	BELGIUM - Federal Parliament	Officials of the House of Representatives and Senate preparing for the Presidency	Parliament Staff from DG PART, DG PRES, DG IPOL, DG EXPO, DG SAFE, DG LINC, National Parliaments' Representatives, Permanent Member COSAC Secretariat, IPEX information officer	Staff	0	48
9 October 2023	BELGIUM - House of Representatives	Staff	Parliament Staff from DG COMM, National Parliaments' Representatives,	Staff	0	34
23-26 October 2023	IRELAND - Oireachtas	Staff	DG TRAD, DG ITEC, DG PART	Staff	0	7
9 November 2023	NORWAY - Stortinget	Staff members from Ministry of Transport	National Parliament Representative of Norway	Staff	0	5
13 November 2023	THE NETHERLANDS Tweede Kamer	Management Team Research and Analysis Department	DG EPRS	Staff	0	5
13 November 2023	DENMARK - Folketinget	Fiscal Affairs Committee	MEPs Kira Marie Peter-Hansen and Niels Fuglsang, MEP Paul Tang, Chair of subcommittee on Tax Matters	MPs	9	2

Date	Country and Chamber	Visitor	Meeting counterparts in the European Parliament	Type of visit	Number of Participants - MPs	Number of Participants - staff
13 November 2023	IRELAND - Oireachtas	Parliament STAFF + MEP Frances Fitzgerald' staff assistant	Staff + MEP Frances Fitzgerald' staff assistant	Staff	0	12
14 November 2023	FINLAND - Eduskunta	Grand Committee	Finnish MEPs : Sirpa Pietikäinen, Petri Sarvamaa, Miapetra Kumpula-Natri, Eero Heinäluoma, Mauri Pekkarinen, other MEPs Teuvo Hakkarainen, Silvia Modig, Johan Van Overtveldt, Petras Auštrevičius, Pedro Silva Pereira	MPs	16	4
14 November 2023	THE NETHERLANDS Tweede Kamer	Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs	DG PART	Staff	0	7
14 November 2023	SWEDEN - Riksdagen	Study visit by Swedish members	MEP Sara Skyttedal and MEP Ilan de Basso	MPs	21	2
28 November 2023	CYPRUS - House of Representatives	Standing Committee on Refugees-Enclaved-Missing-Adversely Affected Persons of the House of Representatives of the Republic of Cyprus	MEPs of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE), EPP LIBE Coordinator, MEP Jeroen Lenaers, Cypriot MEPS: Loucas Fourlas, Demetris Papadakis, Costas Mavrides, Giorgos Georgiou, Niyazi KIZILYÜREK, MEP Isabel Santos, Standing Rapporteur on Missing Persons in Cyprus	MPs	6	3
4 December 2023	DENMARK - Folketinget	Committee on Environment and Food	Staff + Danish MEP Pernille Weiss	Staff	0	6

Date	Country and Chamber	Visitor	Meeting counterparts in the European Parliament	Type of visit	Number of Participants - MPs	Number of Participants - staff
5 December 2023	GREECE - The Hellenic Parliament	European Affairs Committee	Greek MEPs representing the corresponding political group, Vangelis Meimarakis, Manolis Kefalogiannis, Anna Michel Asimakopoulou, Stelios Kypouropoulos, Maria Spyraiki, Elissavet Vozemberg-Vrionidi, Kostas Arvanitis, Elena Kountoura , Nikos Papandreou , Kostas Papadakis + staff from DGs IPOL, EPRS, EXPO and PART	MPs	19	10
7-8 December 2023	HUNGARY - Országgyűlés	Officials of the National Assembly preparing for the Presidency	Parliament Staff from DG PART, DG PRES, DG IPOL, DG EXPO, DG LINC, National Parliaments' Representatives, Permanent Member COSAC Secretariat, IPEX information officer	Staff	0	13

ANNEX IV – Early Warning System Data

The Committee on Legal Affairs, which is responsible for issues in relation to compliance with the principle of subsidiarity within the European Parliament, has provided the following definitions for submissions from national Parliaments:

- **'Reasoned opinions'** are submissions which indicate the non-compliance of a draft legislative act with the principle of subsidiarity and have been communicated to the European Parliament within the eight-week deadline referred to in Article 6 of Protocol No 2 to the Treaties.
- **'Contributions'** indicate any other submissions which do not fulfil the criteria listed above for a reasoned opinion.

Submissions received from national Parliaments in 2023

Member State	Parliament/Chamber	Reasoned Opinions	Contributions
Austria	Nationalrat	0	1
Austria	Bundesrat	0	5
Belgium	Chambre des Représentants / Kamer van volksvertegenwoordigers	0	0
Belgium	Sénat/Senaat	0	0
Bulgaria	Narodno Sabranie	0	0
Croatia	Hrvatski sabor	0	1
Cyprus	Vouli ton Antiprosópon	1	1
Czechia	Poslanecká sněmovna	1	32
Czechia	Sénat	0	38
Denmark	Folketinget	0	2
Estonia	Riigikogu	0	0
Finland	Eduskunta	0	1
France	Assemblée Nationale	1	3
France	Sénat	2	7
Germany	Bundestag	0	0
Germany	Bundesrat	0	30
Greece	Vouli ton Ellinon	0	0
Hungary	Országgyűlés	1	0
Ireland	Seanad Éireann	0	8
Ireland	Dáil Éireann	0	0
Italy	Camera dei deputati	6	23
Italy	Senato	3	23
Lithuania	Seimas	0	0
Luxembourg	Chambre des Députés	0	1

Member State	Parliament/Chamber	Reasoned Opinions	Contributions
Latvia	Saeima	0	0
Malta	Kamra tar-Rappreżentanti	0	0
The Netherlands	Tweede Kamer	1	0
The Netherlands	Eerste Kamer	1	8
Poland	Sejm	0	0
Poland	Senat	0	1
Portugal	Assembleia da República	0	36
Romania	Camera Deputaţilor	1	2
Romania	Senat	0	22
Spain	Congreso de los Diputados / Senado	0	27
Sweden	Riksdag	4	0
Slovenia	Državni Zbor	0	0
Slovenia	Državni Svet	0	0
Slovakia	Národná rada	0	0
TOTAL		22	272

ANNEX V – Contributions under Protocol 1 – Informal Political Dialogue

Contributions under the Informal Political Dialogue in 2023

Member State	Parliament/Chamber	Contributions
Austria	Nationalrat	0
Austria	Bundesrat	0
Belgium	Chambre des Représentants / Kamer van volksvertegenwoordigers	0
Belgium	Sénat/Senaat	3
Bulgaria	Narodno Sabranie	0
Croatia	Hrvatski sabor	2
Cyprus	Vouli ton Antiprosópon	0
Czechia	Poslanecká sněmovna	22
Czechia	Sénat	19
Denmark	Folketinget	0
Estonia	Riigikogu	0
Finland	Eduskunta	0
France	Assemblée Nationale	9
France	Sénat	4
Germany	Bundestag	0
Germany	Bundesrat	7
Greece	Vouli ton Ellinon	0
Hungary	Országgyűlés	0
Ireland	Houses of Oireachtas	5
Italy	Camera dei deputati	13
Italy	Senato	3
Lithuania	Seimas	0
Luxembourg	Chambre des Députés	0
Latvia	Saeima	0

Member State	Parliament/Chamber	Contributions
Malta	Kamra tar-Rappreżentanti	0
The Netherlands	Tweede Kamer	0
The Netherlands	Eerste Kamer	3
Poland	Sejm	0
Poland	Senat	0
Portugal	Assembleia da República	0
Romania	Camera Deputaţilor	33
Romania	Senat	5
Spain	Congreso de los Diputados / Senado	1
Sweden	Riksdag	2
Slovenia	Državni Zbor	0
Slovenia	Državni Svet	0
Slovakia	Národná rada	0
TOTAL		131

ANNEX VI – European Centre for Parliamentary Research and Documentation (ECPRD)

A. Issues on which political bodies and administrative services of the European Parliament consulted the ECPRD network through comparative requests in 2023

Date	Title of request	Request number
12.01.2023	Right to petition - Rules, procedures and practices	5307
23.01.2023	Strengthening integrity, independence and accountability - Benchmarking-measures undertaken by national Parliaments	5318
14.02.2023	Use of <i>passerelle</i> clauses under EU Treaties	5337
30.03.2023	Greek legislation on wiretapping	5404
11.04.2023	Draft publication EPRS - Rules and practices on financial disclosure obligations by MPs	5417
11.04.2023	(Online request) Gender budgeting in national Parliaments and governments	5418
14.04.2023	(Online request) Use of fidelity benefits collected by Members for travels financed by budget of Parliament	5424

B. Issues to which the European Parliament provided replies to requests from other ECPRD parliaments in 2023 (request number and title)

5. 5677 Artificial Intelligence (AI) Regulations and Legislation
6. 5668 Digital archiving projects in 2024
7. 5661 Physical/Sports Activity in Public Institutions
8. 5659 Persons with mental and/or intellectual disabilities in criminal proceedings
9. 5656 Role and Involvement of Observers in Parliamentary Committee Meetings
10. 5654 Internship at Parliament (Update of Request #3541)
11. 5647 Electronic voting (Urgent)
12. 5640 Green budgeting and climate-sensitive public finance management
13. 5632 Request Collaboration activities
14. 5629 Unfair trading practices in the food supply chain
15. 5627 Rules and practices related to the start of the parliamentary year or the presentation of the state budget
16. 5623 Parliamentary Records Management - File Plans
17. 5617 Preschool Education

18. 5609 Exceptions and Limitations Regarding the Accepting of Beverages and Food as Protocol Gifts
19. 5603 Specific regulations relating to the parental authority/parental responsibility
20. 5600 Early Access Rights to Retirement Savings
21. 5596 Number of employees of national patent and trademark offices
22. 5594 Advantages provided for former speakers/MPs and ministers
23. 5594 Advantages provided for former speakers/MPs and ministers (updated reply)
24. 5591 Remote Election
25. 5588 MPs' Educational and Professional Qualifications
26. 5586 Parliamentary Procurement Organisation
27. 5584 Former Parliament Buildings
28. 5583 Parliaments' consideration of Russian influence on the decisions of public authorities
29. 5580 Donation of leftover/not consumed school meals from school canteens to eligible local food banks or charitable organisations
30. 5578 Assisted Reproduction Technologies with focus on in-vitro fertilisation
31. 5577 Regulation of investments
32. 5575 Prosecution of the Member of Parliament
33. 5567 Parliamentary rules and practices in the implementation of control for compliance with applicable domestic law of proposals for legislative amendments
34. 5561 PACE request on Asylum procedures in your country
35. 5558 Survey on democracy centres and democracy education in parliaments
36. 5554 Parliamentary and Governmental Bodies and Legislation on Creative Industries
37. 5553 How parliament and MPs engage with the scientific community
38. 5552 Questionnaire for Research Seminar 'Professional Development of the Parliamentary Researchers Facing Contemporary Challenges', Tbilisi, 28-29 September 2023
39. 5550 Parliamentary bookshop
40. 5548 Requesting a press pass for a parliamentary term (accreditation of the press)
41. 5545 Thematic (Parliamentary) inquiry
42. 5541 National policies for the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases

43. 5538 Telephone switchboard service in Parliament
44. 5537 Corruption prevention and avoiding conflicts of interest among staff of Members of Parliament
45. 5536 Impact Assessment and Ethics
46. 5535 Online Request: Visitor Access, Movement, and Permanence in the Parliamentary Building
47. 5534 Dress Code for Parliamentary Staff/Employees of Parliament
48. 5533 Experience and use of speech recognition software in the preparation of verbatim minutes of committee and plenary sittings
49. 5533 Experience and use of speech recognition software in the preparation of verbatim minutes of committee and plenary sittings (updated reply)
50. 5532 Use of artificial intelligence technologies
51. 5530 Innovation and Digital Transformation in Parliaments - Survey for the ECPRD ICT-Seminar 2023
52. 5529 The New European Economic Governance
53. 5527 Ex ante Impact Assessment/Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) on draft legislation
54. 5524 Rules governing photography/video on Parliament's premises
55. 5521 House arrest as a restraint measure
56. 5516 Illumination of parliamentary buildings to support third-party campaigns
57. 5515 Artificial Intelligence (AI) Projects in Parliaments
58. 5515 Artificial Intelligence (AI) Projects in Parliaments (updated reply)
59. 5513 Bus Station Service Fees and an Inspection Approach
60. 5508 Women in the economy: employment, entrepreneurship and gender budgeting
61. 5506 Public measures to support persons experiencing the menopause
62. 5493 Questionnaire on Access to historical documents in your country
63. 5489 Sexual crimes and violence against women
64. 5481 The National Recovery and Resilience Plans- Parliamentary control of the Government
65. 5477 Powers of Chairs of permanent committees to maintain order
66. 5475 Parliamentary Archive Status
67. 5470 Role of Parliament(s) in informing and raising awareness to the youth on the EU integration process

- 68. 5470 Role of Parliament(s) in informing and raising awareness to the youth on the EU integration process (updated reply)
- 69. 5461 Additional guarantees of career stability for parliamentary employees
- 70. 5454 Parliamentary library software
- 71. 5448 Communication Strategy
- 72. 5436 Guidelines for a Successful Public-Private Dialogue
- 73. 5435 Rules and practice of organisation of events in Parliaments
- 74. 5434 Abortion for minors
- 75. 5431 Legal regulations for the organisation of remote work: Remote work not in the COVID-19 period
- 76. 5430 Blurring or editing livestreams
- 77. 5426 Risk Management Strategy of Parliament
- 78. 5423 Parliament's Self Jurisdiction
- 79. 5419 Urgent request: Adoption of the stepchild
- 80. 5410 Certification/accreditation of the experts/specialists on the regulatory impact assessment
- 81. 5397 Protocol department/office/service in parliament
- 82. 5382 Parliamentary Official in Charge of Protocol During Travel Abroad by the Speaker of Parliament
- 83. 5380 Deaf and Hard of Hearing People in Parliament
- 84. 5378 Members of parliament responsibilities
- 85. 5377 Anti-corruption committee
- 86. 5376 Child protection measures against online violence
- 87. 5369 Templates for the creation of political maps (Infographics)
- 88. 5366 Foreign interference in the political, social and economic life of democratic states
- 89. 5362 Warning system in Parliament
- 90. 5361 Video surveillance / CCTV in Parliament
- 91. 5356 Legal status of the internet influencers
- 92. 5346 Parliamentary Research Services 'Interfaces and Circles of Influence'
- 93. 5338 Sustainability in Parliament
- 94. 5337 Use of *passerelle* clauses under EU Treaties.
- 95. 5335 Regulation for Members of Parliament regarding undesirable behaviour

96. 5334 Request for information concerning wiretapping
97. 5331 Reforms to streamline public administration
98. 5324 Remuneration in Civil Service System
99. 5316 Physical tools to ensure order during a parliamentary sitting
100. 5315 The state funding provided for the purpose of elections
101. 5313 Digital Preservation Plan
102. 5312 Parliamentary procedure and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
103. 5308 Specific regulations relating to the protection of adult children living with their parents
104. 5300 Online sports betting games regulations
105. 5300 Online sports betting games regulations (updated reply)
106. 5297 Restrictions on the number of motions proposed
107. 5296 Parliament's external and internal security
108. 5295 Specific regulations relating to the use of artificial intelligence in the healthcare sector
109. 5293 The limits on the amount of cash money in Financial disclosure by public officials
110. 5288 Questions regarding the right of entry to parliamentary premises
111. 5282 Request on anonymisation of personal data in the minutes
112. 5282 Request on anonymisation of personal data in the minutes (updated reply)
113. 5277 Library and research services, performance and resourcing
114. 5275 Voting procedures in selected European parliaments
115. 5272 Parliaments and Citizens' Assemblies
116. 5252 Bilingual Parliaments, follow-up survey

C. ECPRD seminars and statutory meetings in 2023

Date	Meeting type	Event title	Place
30 January 2023	Webinar - Area of Interest: Parliamentary Practice and Procedure	The Role of Parliaments in Safeguarding the Rule of Law	Athens (Vouli Ton Ellinon)
16-17 March 2023	Seminar - Area of Interest: ICT in Parliaments	ICT 2023 - Safety and Security	The Hague (Tweede Kamer Der Staten-Generaal)
22-23 March 2023	Seminar - Area of Interest: Libraries, Research Services and Archives	Parliamentary research services – interfaces and circles of influence	Jerusalem (Knesset)
23-24 March 2023	Seminar - Area of Interest: Parliamentary Practice and Procedure	Parliaments and citizens' assemblies	Brussels (Belgian Federal Parliament)
30 March 2023	Statutory meeting	Executive Committee	Brussels (European Parliament) Remote
1-2 June 2023	Seminar - Area of Interest: Libraries, Research Services and Archives	Parliaments and citizens' assemblies	Brussels (European Parliament)
6 June 2023	Statutory meeting	Executive Committee	Helsinki (Eduskunta)
7 September 2023	Statutory meeting	Executive Committee	Brussels (European Parliament) Remote
21 September 2023	Webinar - Area of Interest: Economic and Budgetary affairs	National Recovery and Resilience Plans : Parliamentary control of the Government	Czechia (Chancellery of the Chamber of Deputies)
28-29 September 2023	Seminar - Area of Interest: Libraries, Research Services and Archives	Professional development of research and library staff	Tbilisi (Parliament of Georgia)
5-6 October 2023	Seminar - Area of Interest: Economic and Budgetary affairs	Reform of the European Economic Governance	Rome (Camera dei Deputati)
19-20 October 2023	Statutory meeting	Annual Conference of Correspondents	London (House of Commons)
6-7 November 2023	Seminar - Area of Interest: ICT in Parliaments	ICT 2023 - Innovation and Digital Transformation - Good Practices within European parliaments	Vienna (Austrian Parliament)

Glossary of terms and acronyms

- **AFCO:** Committee on Constitutional Affairs, European Parliament.
- **AFET:** Committee on Foreign Affairs, European Parliament.
- **BUDG:** Committee on Budgets, European Parliament.
- **CONT:** Committee on Budgetary Control, European Parliament.
- **CORCOM:** The Directory of Corresponding Committees. An information source on national Parliaments' committees corresponding to the committees of the European Parliament. Provides information about the different committee secretariats of EU national Parliaments and the European Parliament.
- **COSAC:** Conference of Parliamentary Committees for Union Affairs. Treaty-based conference of Members of the European Parliament and Members of national Parliaments from parliamentary committees responsible for European Union affairs.
- **CULT:** Committee on Culture and Education, European Parliament.
- **DG EXPO:** Directorate-General for External Policies of the Union, European Parliament Secretariat.
- **DG IPOL:** Directorate-General for Internal Policies of the Union, European Parliament Secretariat.
- **DG ITEC:** Directorate-General for Innovation and Technological Support, European Parliament Secretariat.
- **DG PART:** Directorate-General for Parliamentary Democracy Partnerships.
- **DROI:** Subcommittee on Human Rights, European Parliament.
- **ECPRD:** European Centre for Parliamentary Research and Documentation. Information exchange network for the administrations of Parliaments in Europe, functioning on the basis of comparative requests.
- **ECON:** Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs, European Parliament.
- **EMPL:** Committee on Employment and Social Affairs, European Parliament.
- **EP:** European Parliament.
- **EPW:** European Parliamentary Week. The Interparliamentary Conference on Stability, Economic Coordination and Governance in the European Union (**IPC SECG**) and the European Semester Conference bring together parliamentarians from all over the European Union to discuss economic, budgetary and social matters.
- **Eurojust:** European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation.
- **Europol:** The European Union's law enforcement agency.
- **EUSC:** European Union Speakers' Conference. Annual meeting of the Speakers of the Parliaments of EU Member States, organised by the national Parliament of the country holding the previous autumn's EU Council Presidency.
- **EWS:** Early Warning System. A review mechanism set out in Protocol No 2 to the Treaties on the application of the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality. It provides for national Parliaments to send a reasoned opinion to the Presidents of the institutions.
- **FEMM:** Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality, European Parliament.

- **ICM:** Interparliamentary Committee Meeting. Meetings co-organised by committee secretariat(s) and the Legislative Dialogue Unit of the Directorate for Relations with National Parliaments of the European Parliament. ICMs function as a forum for dialogue between Members of national Parliaments and MEPs.
- **ING2:** Special Committee on Foreign Interference in all Democratic Processes in the European Union, including Disinformation, European Parliament. It was created on 24 March 2022 with the mandate to follow-up on the INGE report.
- **IPC CFSP/CSDP:** Interparliamentary Conference for the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Common Security and Defence Policy. Interparliamentary platform for debate on the EU's foreign, security and defence policy. Organised twice a year by the Parliament of the EU Member State holding the EU Council Presidency, in close cooperation with the European Parliament.
- **IPD:** Informal Political Dialogue. The contributions of the EU national Parliaments under Protocol No 1 to the Treaties that comment on legislative files falling under the exclusive competence of the EU as well as on non-legislative documents such as white papers or communications of the European Commission.
- **IPEX:** Interparliamentary EU Information Exchange. Platform for the mutual exchange of EU-related documents and information between national Parliaments and the European Parliament.
- **JPSG:** Joint Parliamentary Scrutiny Group on Europol. Interparliamentary scrutiny group that ensures that Europol is fully accountable and transparent. The JPSG holds two meetings per year: one at the Parliament of the country holding the Presidency of the Council of the EU, and one at the European Parliament.
- **JURI:** Committee on Legal Affairs, European Parliament.
- **LIBE:** Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs, European Parliament.
- **MPs:** Members of (national) Parliament.
- **MEPs:** Members of the European Parliament.
- **NPS:** National Parliaments' Submissions Tool. An online platform for EU national Parliaments to submit reasoned opinions and contributions to the European Parliament.
- **SEDE:** Subcommittee on Security and Defence, European Parliament.
- **TEU:** Treaty on European Union.
- **TFEU:** Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS OF THE EU MEMBER STATES

December 2023



Member State	Parliament/Chamber	Directly elected	Indirectly elected/ appointed/other
Belgique/België/ Belgien Belgium	Kamer van volksvertegenwoordigers/ Chambre des représentants/ Abgeordnetenversammlung	150	0
	Senaat/ Sénat/ Senat	0	60
България Bulgaria	Народно събрание (Narodno sabranie)	240	0
Česká republika Czechia	Poslanecká sněmovna	200	0
	Senát	81	0
Danmark Denmark	Folketinget	179	0
Deutschland Germany	Deutscher Bundestag	736	0
	Bundesrat	0	69
Eesti Estonia	Riigikogu	101	0
Éire/Ireland Ireland	Dáil Éireann	160	0
	Seanad Éireann	0	60
Ελλάδα Greece	Βουλή των Ελλήνων (Vouli ton Ellinon)	300	0
España Spain	Congreso de los Diputados	348	0
	Senado	207	57
France France	Assemblée nationale	577	0
	Sénat	0	348
Hrvatska Croatia	Hrvatski sabor	151	0
Italia Italy	Camera dei Deputati	400	0
	Senato della Repubblica	200	6
Κύπρος Cyprus	Βουλή των Αντιπροσώπων (Vouli ton Antiprosopon)	56	0
Latvija Latvia	Saeima	100	0
Lietuva Lithuania	Seimas	141	0
Luxembourg Luxembourg	Chambre des Députés	60	0
Magyarország Hungary	Országgyűlés	199	0
Malta Malta	Il-Kamra Tad-Deputati	79	0
Nederland The Netherlands	Tweede Kamer	150	0
	Eerste Kamer	0	75
Österreich Austria	Nationalrat	183	0
	Bundesrat	0	60
Polska Poland	Sejm	460	0
	Senat	100	0
Portugal Portugal	Assembleia da República	230	0
România Romania	Camera Deputatilor	330	0
	Senat	136	0
Slovenija Slovenia	Državni zbor	90	0
	Državni svet	0	40
Slovensko Slovakia	Národná Rada	150	0
Suomi/ Finland Finland	Eduskunta	200	0
Sverige Sweden	Riksdagen	349	0



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