



43rd

Bi-annual Report

**Developments in
European Union
Procedures and Practices
Relevant to
Parliamentary Scrutiny**

Prepared by the COSAC Secretariat and presented to:

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for Union Affairs of Parliaments
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Conference of Parliamentary Committees for Union Affairs of Parliaments of the European Union

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Table of Contents

BACKGROUND	5
ABSTRACT.....	6
CHAPTER ONE	11
Agenda of the European Commission and the European Parliament in the new institutional cycle. EU strategic agenda.	
CHAPTER TWO	24
Multiannual Financial Framework	
CHAPTER THREE.....	27
Towards strengthening the EU's collective effort to improve cyber- resilience and tackle disinformation	

BACKGROUND

This is the Forty-Third Bi-annual Report from the COSAC Secretariat.

COSAC Bi-annual Reports

The XXX COSAC decided that the COSAC Secretariat should produce factual Bi-annual Reports, to be published ahead of each ordinary meeting of the Conference. The purpose of the Reports is to give an overview of the developments in procedures and practices in the European Union that are relevant to parliamentary scrutiny.

All the Bi-annual Reports are available on the IPEX website, either by accessing this [overview](#) or by navigating to the respective [meeting](#).

The three chapters of this Bi-annual Report are based on information provided by the national Parliaments of the European Union Member States and the European Parliament. The deadline for submitting replies to the questionnaire for the 43rd Bi-annual Report was 17 March 2025.

The outline of this Report was adopted by the meeting of the Chairpersons of COSAC, held on 26-27 January 2025, in Warsaw.

As a general rule, the Report does not refer to all Parliaments or Chambers that have responded to a given question. Instead, illustrative examples are used.

Please note that, in some cases, respondents are able to provide more than one answer to multiple choice questions. This may explain any perceived disparity in the total number of answers to a question and the total number of respondents can thus be accounted for.

Complete replies, received from 39 national Parliaments/Chambers of 27 Member States and of the European Parliament, can be found in the Annex on the [COSAC webpage](#) on the IPEX website.

Note on Numbers

Of the 27 Member States of the European Union, 15 have a unicameral Parliament and 12 have a bicameral Parliament. Due to this combination of unicameral and bicameral systems, there are 39 national parliamentary Chambers in the 27 Member States of the European Union.

Although they have bicameral systems, the national Parliaments of Austria, Ireland and Spain each submit a single set of replies to the questionnaire, therefore the maximum number of respondents per question is 37, including the European Parliament. There were 37 responses to the questionnaire.

ABSTRACT

Chapter 1: Agenda of the European Commission and the European Parliament in the new institutional cycle. EU strategic agenda.

In the first chapter of the 43rd Bi-annual Report, several questions related to how Parliaments/Chambers have dealt with the new institutional cycle of the EU institutions were raised. The first set of questions (questions 1-4) dealt with how Parliaments/Chambers were involved in the process of appointing a European Commissioner in each country. Eight out of 37 indicated that they were involved in the process; of these, five reported that the nomination was discussed in the EU affairs committee, and three Parliaments/Chambers specified another procedure. The Lithuanian *Seimas* was the only Parliament/Chamber where the nomination was discussed in plenary, and the only one where the nomination needed to be approved by the Parliament/Chamber. In ten cases, the candidate to become Commissioner presented their candidacy in person to the Parliament/Chamber. In seven cases, the candidacy was instead presented by a representative for the government.

Parliaments/Chambers were then asked (questions 5-7) if they were involved in shaping their government's input to the European Commission's priorities for the 2024-2029 term of office. Eight Parliaments/Chambers replied that they were. Of these, seven reported that it had been discussed in their EU affairs committees. Furthermore, the three parliaments of the Baltic states (Estonian *Riigikogu*, Latvian *Saeima* and Lithuanian *Seimas*) all reported that their committees adopted a binding opinion on the matter. In the Dutch *Tweede Kamer* and in the Italian *Senato della Repubblica* a non-binding opinion was instead adopted.

Parliaments/Chambers were then asked to provide thoughts on how they could better contribute to setting the strategic direction of the EU. A wide range of responses followed, where the most common set of proposals centred around the idea of an increased role of national Parliaments in the early phases of EU legislation.

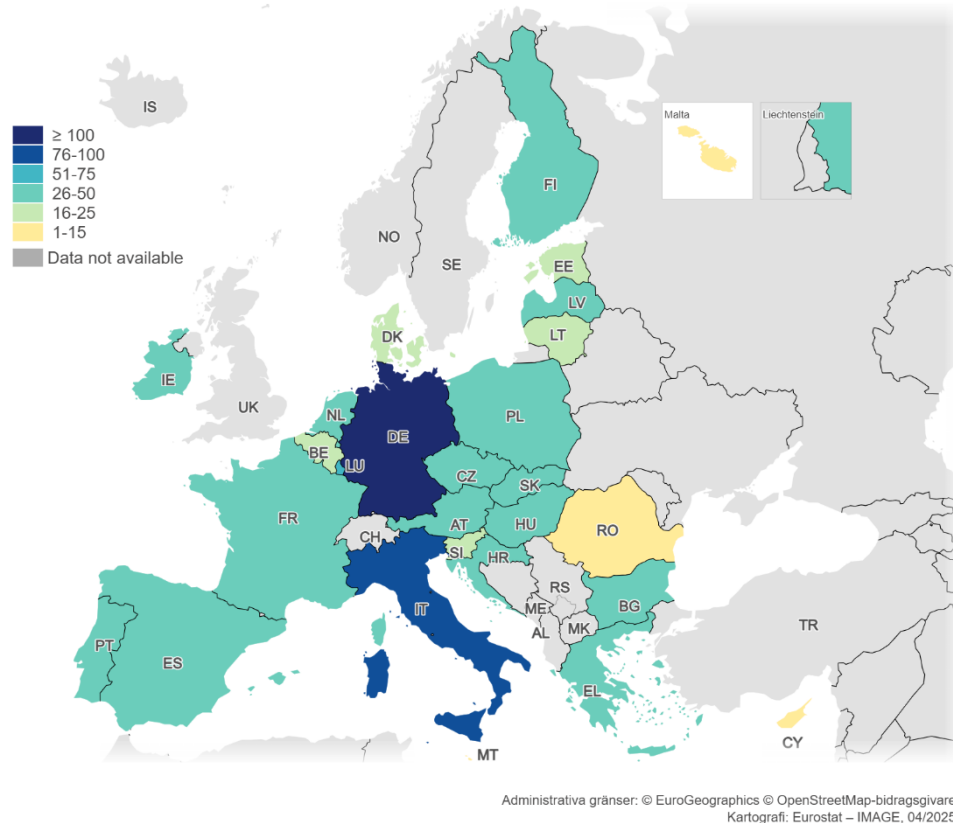
Following this (questions 9-12), Parliaments/Chambers were also asked if the [Political Guidelines](#) for the European Commission 2024-2029 had been debated. Thirteen Parliaments/Chambers replied that they had been debated, most often (in nine instances) at the level of the EU affairs committee. Parliaments/Chambers were then also asked whether they intended to take the Political Guidelines into account in their own activities. To this, 25 replied that they would - in 18 cases through meetings with Commissioners or representatives of the Commission, and in 17 cases through debates at committee level. Five Parliaments/Chambers indicated that they would issue a resolution or opinion on the Political Guidelines.

The next three questions concerned how national Parliaments' involvement in the EU decision making process could be enhanced. First, they were asked if they had any specific expectations for the Commission in terms of boosting national Parliaments' involvement. Thirteen Parliaments/Chambers replied that they did. In the next question, respondents were then asked to choose among a shortlist of four possible sets of measures to boost national Parliaments' involvement. Twenty-nine provided a response, the options most frequently chosen being "Better communication concerning legislative proposals" and "Enhanced role of parliamentary scrutiny concerning EU legislation". Some also took the opportunity to outline further ideas, beyond the predefined responses. In the next question, Parliaments/Chambers were asked to further define what form such an increased involvement could take, by choosing among five predefined alternatives. The most selected was "Regular exchange of views with EU Commissions at COSAC meetings and other inter-parliamentary conferences", which was chosen by 22 Parliaments/Chambers. Also to this question several respondents provided more detailed ideas of their own.

The last set of questions in the first part of the chapter (questions 16-19) dealt with visits to Parliaments/Chambers by Commissioners. First they were asked to indicate how many times Commissions had visited their Parliament/Chamber since the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty in December 2009; 35 responded and the amount of visits is indicated on the map below.

Vists by Commissioners to Parliaments/Chambers since 2009

In bi-cameral systems, the Chamber with the most reported visits is listed.



Parliaments/Chambers were then asked how many such visits they had during the last legislative term, 2019-2024. The Luxembourg *Chambres des Députés* and the Danish *Folketing* reported that they had been visited between 16 and 20 times, while the German *Bundesrat* and the Romanian *Senat* reported no visits during the time period. Most Parliaments/Chambers indicated a number in between: 10 reported having been visited between one and five times, and 12 had been visited between 11 and 15 times. Narrowing down, the question was then also put how many times each Parliament/Chamber had been visited by a Commissioner from their country during the same time span. The largest number of respondents (16 Parliaments/Chambers) indicated that they had between three and five such visits during the last legislative term. Lastly, Parliaments/Chambers were asked about the character of these meetings. Respondents were given the opportunity to choose one or several of five predefined options. The most commonly chosen was “Participation in the EU affairs committee meetings” (chosen by 23 Parliaments/Chambers), followed by “Participation in sectoral committee meetings” and “Meetings with the President of the Parliament/Chamber”, both chosen by 20 respondents.

Finally, Parliaments/Chambers were invited to provide any additional comments regarding their expectations towards the new European Commission in terms of cooperation with national Parliaments. To this question, 16 provided a variety of answers. A majority of these highlighted expectations for closer and constructive dialogue, including through increased in-person meetings.

In the second part of the first chapter (questions 21-26), a number of questions regarding the [strategic agenda 2024-2029](#) (as adopted by the European Council in October 2023) were asked.

First, Parliaments/Chambers were asked if the strategic agenda had been debated, to which 17 replied yes. When asked what the outcome of such a debate had been, 15 of the 17 who replied provided detailed descriptions based on the procedures in their Parliament/Chamber. Parliaments/Chambers were also asked if they found that the political guidelines for the Commission were complementary to the strategic agenda. To this question, 28 out of 36 replied that they did not have an opinion; of those who had formulated an opinion five replied yes, with only the Portuguese *Assembleia da República* replying no.

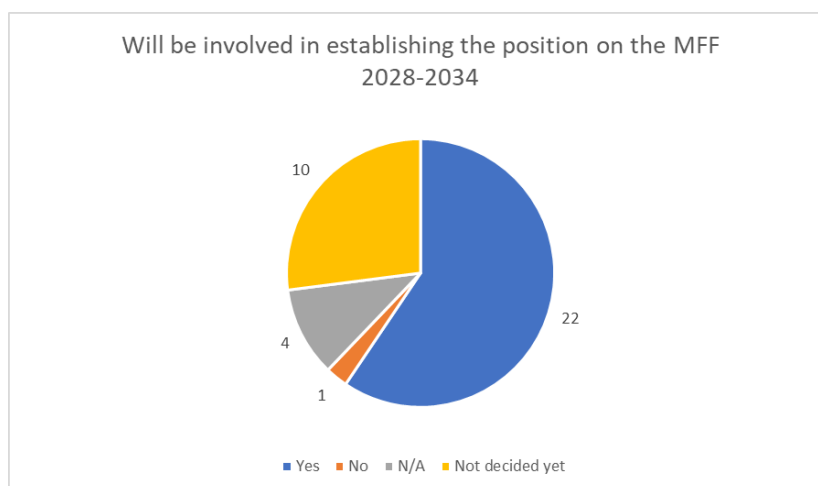
Parliaments/Chambers were then also asked if the Commission and the Council should hold a debate with national Parliaments on the priorities for the Commission's work programme and the Council's strategic agenda, and if so, in which form. Twenty-three Parliaments/Chambers replied that they thought such a debate should take place. Nineteen thought such a debate should take place during COSAC, and 18 were in favour of holding such discussions during individual visits to national Parliaments/Chambers.

Chapter 2: Multiannual Financial Framework

In the second chapter, Parliaments/Chambers responded to questions concerning how they were preparing to scrutinise the upcoming Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2028-2034.

The first question posed in this chapter was whether or not Parliaments/Chambers had been involved in establishing the position of their government on the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027. Twenty-seven out of 37 replied yes. They were then asked in what way they had been involved. Respondents could choose from one or more of seven predefined alternatives. Of the 27 who replied to this question, 21 indicated that the issue had been debated during the sessions of the EU affairs committee of their Parliament/Chamber. Eight Parliaments/Chamber replied that they had been involved in preparing the opinion for the government.

Parliaments/Chambers were then asked if they would be involved in establishing the position of their government on the MFF 2028-2034. Twenty-two replied yes, one replied no and a further ten replied that the matter was not yet decided. As a follow-up, Parliaments/Chambers were asked in what way they would be involved. Of the 23 who replied to this question, 17 indicated that they would be involved through their EU affairs committees, with somewhat fewer numbers indicating other committees and 10 replied that the position of the government would be debated in plenary.



Further exploring parliamentary engagement with the MFF, Parliaments/Chambers were then asked if they had organised any debate or conference on previous MFFs, with the participation of experts,

academics, social partners, or members of the government. Seventeen Parliaments/Chambers replied that they had done so, and eight replied that they were planning to do so concerning the upcoming MFF. They were also asked if they had discussed any possible changes in the structure of the MFF. Eleven Parliaments/Chambers replied that they had done so. Of these, nine indicated that such discussions had taken place within the EU affairs committee. Finally, Parliaments/Chambers were also asked if their EU affairs committee would be the body responsible for formulating the Parliament/Chamber opinion on the next MFF, a question to which 19 replied yes.

Chapter 3: Towards strengthening the EU's collective effort to improve cyber-resilience and tackle disinformation

In the third chapter the issue of cyber-resilience, particularly concerning disinformation, was raised. Several questions aimed at gathering best practices served to examine how Parliaments/Chambers have engaged with the EU legislation in this area and highlight measures implemented at the administration level.

The first several questions (questions 36-41) dealt with how these issues were addressed at a committee level. It revealed that most Parliament/Chambers did not have a special committee dealing with cyber-resilience and disinformation (with the exception of the Spanish *Cortes Generales* and the European Parliament), but that the issues in most cases were dealt with in another sectoral committee; 30 respondents indicated that this was the case. Parliaments/Chambers were also asked to indicate some main topics, choosing one or several from a list of predefined alternatives, that had been debated in the relevant committee(s). Twenty-nine Parliaments/Chambers replied, out of which 27 indicated “cybersecurity and resilience against cyberattacks”, making it the most indicated alternative in the list. A question was then raised about how committees dealing with cyber resilience and disinformation interacted with their respective governments. Again, respondents could pick one or several options from a predefined set of replies, and the most frequently chosen option (eight times) was “Presentation of government positions on specific EU legislative proposals by government’s representative at committee sitting”. Parliaments/Chambers were also asked to indicate the outcome of committee meetings in a similar way; the most frequently indicated response (picked by five respondents) was that the outcome was an opinion which is not binding for the government.

Following these questions, Parliaments/Chambers were asked if they had discussed the Action Plan against Disinformation ([Joint Communication to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic And Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions from 5 December 2018, JOIN\(2018\) 36 final](#)). A slight minority (16 of 36) answered that they had discussed the Action Plan against disinformation. As a follow-up, they were then asked to identify which area where they considered that further action should be to envisage closer cooperation among Parliaments/Chambers, again by being able to choose one or several of the four. The most frequently indicated option was “strengthening coordinated and joint responses to disinformation”.

Similarly, Parliaments/Chambers were also asked if they had scrutinised the Digital Services Act, DSA ([Regulation \(EU\) 2022/2065 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 October 2022 on a Single Market For Digital Services and amending Directive 2000/31/EC \(Digital Services Act\)](#)). To this, the vast majority (27 out of 36) replied positively. They were also asked to indicate the outcome of the scrutiny process. Eight indicated that they had adopted an opinion within the framework of the political dialogue. Furthermore, Parliaments/Chambers were asked to evaluate how the DSA tackled the threats of disinformation. Six considered the DSA as sufficient in this regard, while three expressed that they considered it to be insufficient. Most respondents (22) expressed no opinion on the matter.

Following this, Parliaments/Chambers were also asked if they considered there to be a need for more coordination and interaction of Member States' disinformation policies at an EU level. Of the 18 Parliament/Chambers who replied to this, 13 indicated that more coordination is necessary, but not full harmonisation.

The second last question concerned measures taken within the administration of Parliaments/Chambers to strengthen cyber-resilience. Thirty Parliaments/Chambers provided answers, mapping out a variety of different measures taken in this regard. Similarly, the last question was an invitation to Parliaments/Chambers to provide any additional information or examples of a best practice in dealing with disinformation. Ten Parliaments/Chambers chose to do so.

CHAPTER ONE

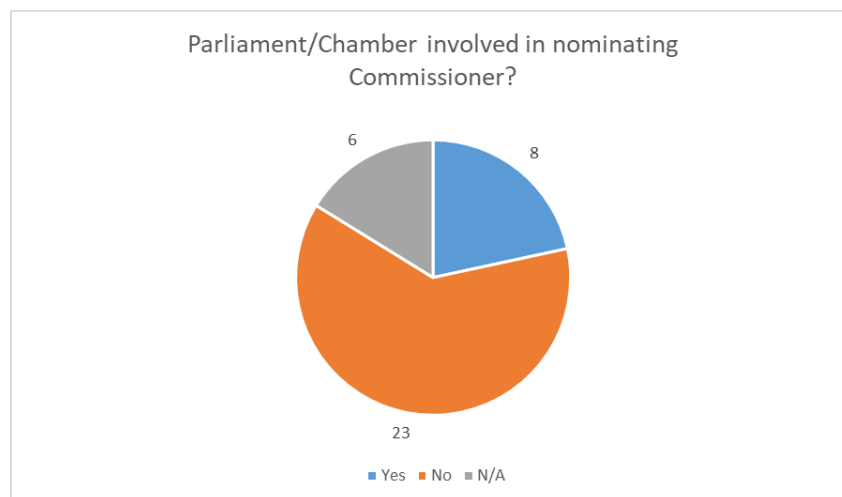
AGENDA OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION AND THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT IN THE NEW INSTITUTIONAL CYCLE. EU STRATEGIC AGENDA.

THE FIRST CHAPTER OF THE 43rd BI-ANNUAL REPORT explores best practices and assesses the resources available to parliaments for tackling the priorities set out in the [Political Guidelines](#) for the next European Commission 2024-2029 and the [strategic agenda 2024-2029](#) (as adopted by the European Council in October 2023).

Agenda of the European Commission and the European Parliament in the new institutional cycle

The first part of this chapter pertains to the agenda of the European Commission and the European Parliament in the new institutional cycle, whereas the second part refers to the EU strategic agenda.

1. In the first set of questions, Parliaments/Chambers were asked whether they were involved or not in the process of nominating their country's European Commissioner for the 2024-2029 term of office. All 37 Parliaments/Chambers replied to the first question. Eight Parliaments/Chambers replied that they were involved in the process of nomination of the European Commissioner: the Austrian *Nationalrat* and *Bundesrat*, Croatian *Hrvatski sabor*, Czech *Poslanecká sněmovna*, Lithuanian *Seimas*, Polish *Sejm*, Romanian *Camera Deputaţilor*, Romanian *Senat* and the Slovenian *Državni zbor*. Twenty-three Parliaments/Chambers replied that they were not involved in this process. Six Parliaments/Chambers stated that this question was not applicable: the Cypriot *Vouli ton Antiprosopon*, Estonian *Riigikogu*, French *Assemblée nationale*, German *Bundestag*, Hungarian *Országgyűlés* and the European Parliament.



2. As follow-up, the eight Parliaments/Chambers that had replied positively to the first question, were asked at what level they were involved in this process.

Five Parliaments/Chambers answered that the nomination of the European Commissioner was discussed at the EU affairs committee level: the Croatian *Hrvatski sabor*, Czech *Poslanecká sněmovna*, Lithuanian *Seimas*, Polish *Sejm* and the Slovenian *Državni zbor*. What is more, the Lithuanian *Seimas* combined this with a plenary debate. In Romania, the topic was discussed during a joint meeting of the EU affairs and the foreign affairs committees of both Chambers, the *Camera*

Deputaților and the *Senat*. In the Austrian *Nationalrat*, the Main Committee was involved in the nomination of the Commissioner-designate.

3. With regards to the form of the parliamentary involvement in the process of nomination of the European Commissioner, only the Lithuanian *Seimas* indicated that this required the approval of the *Seimas*, which was obtained through a plenary resolution.

The Austrian Parliament specified that the Federal Government had to reach an agreement with the Main Committee of the *Nationalrat* before adopting the proposal for the Austrian member of the European Commission to the EU. Six Parliaments/Chambers indicated that they issued non-binding opinions about the nomination: the Croatian *Hrvatski sabor*, Czech *Poslanecká sněmovna*, Polish *Sejm*, Romanian *Camera Deputaților*, Romanian *Senat*, and the Slovenian *Državni zbor*. The Greek *Vouli ton Ellinon* mentioned that the Committee on EU Affairs may call for a hearing of the Government's candidate for the post of the EU Commissioner, which is non-binding to the Government.

4. Parliaments/Chambers were then asked if the Commissioner candidate participated in the nomination procedure by presenting their candidacy and proposed agenda to the Parliament/Chamber. Thirty-four Parliaments/Chambers replied to this question, while three - the Czech *Senát*, Estonian *Riigikogu* and the Finnish *Eduskunta* - did not provide an answer to this question.

Ten Parliaments/Chambers explained that the Commissioners-designate were present at such meetings: the Austrian *Nationalrat* and *Bundesrat*, Croatian *Hrvatski sabor*, Czech *Poslanecká sněmovna*, Lithuanian *Seimas*, Luxembourgian *Chambre des Députés*, Polish *Sejm*, Romanian *Camera Deputaților*, Romanian *Senat*, Slovenian *Državni zbor* and the European Parliament. Seven replied that their candidacy was presented by a government representative: the Bulgarian *Narodno sabranie*, Dutch *Tweede Kamer*, Italian *Camera dei Deputati* and *Senato della Repubblica*, Latvian *Saeima*, Slovak *Národná rada*, and the Spanish *Cortes Generales*. Seventeen Parliaments/Chambers indicated that this question was not applicable.

5. When asked whether Parliaments/Chambers were involved in shaping their government's input to the European Commission's priorities for the new term of office (2024-2029), eight Parliaments/Chambers replied positively: the Bulgarian *Narodno sabranie*, Dutch *Tweede Kamer*, Estonian *Riigikogu*, Finnish *Eduskunta*, German *Bundestag*, Italian *Senato della Repubblica*, Latvian *Saeima* and the Lithuanian *Seimas*. The majority of the respondents, 28 out of 36, replied negatively. Only the European Parliament did not reply to this question.

6. As a follow-up, the eight Parliaments/Chambers that had replied positively to the previous question were asked at what level they were involved in shaping their government's input to the European Commission's priorities for the new term of the office.

Seven Parliaments/Chambers had discussed it in their EU affairs committee: the Dutch *Tweede Kamer*, Estonian *Riigikogu*, Finnish *Eduskunta*, German *Bundestag*, Italian *Senato della Repubblica*, Latvian *Saeima* and the Lithuanian *Seimas*. Three of them, the Dutch *Tweede Kamer*, Finnish *Eduskunta* and the Italian *Senato della Repubblica*, combined this with a plenary debate. The Lithuanian *Seimas* discussed it both in the EU affairs committee and the foreign affairs committee. The Finnish *Eduskunta* was the only Parliament/Chamber that selected all possible options for this reply: plenary debate, EU affairs committee, foreign affairs committee, and other sectoral committee/s.

7. When specifying the form of involvement in shaping their government's input to the European Commission's priorities for the new term of the office, three Parliaments/Chambers, the Estonian *Riigikogu*, Latvian *Saeima*, and the Lithuanian *Seimas*, mentioned adopting a binding opinion at the

committee level. Two Parliaments/Chambers, the Dutch *Tweede Kamer* and the Italian *Senato della Repubblica*, referred to a non-binding opinion adopted by the Parliament/Chamber.

Five Parliaments/Chambers specified different forms of involvement in this process.

The Italian *Senato della Repubblica* noted that before each European Council meeting the plenary of the Senate adopted a resolution laying down principles and guidelines, which should apply to Italian policy in respect of the preparatory work of the European institutions.

The Latvian *Saeima* explained that according to its Rules of Procedure, it should ascertain its participation in the European Union affairs through the European Affairs Committee, unless the *Saeima* has decided otherwise.

The German *Bundestag* indicated that it was involved through a debate in the EU affairs committee; the Bulgarian *Narodno sabranie* mentioned informal contacts, and the Finnish *Eduskunta* clarified that the Parliament's opinion was a political mandate for the Government.

Twenty-eight Parliaments/Chambers did not reply to this question.

8. In the next question, Parliaments/Chambers were asked to elaborate on the possible ways in which national Parliaments could better contribute to setting the strategic direction of the EU in the context of the European Commission's new 2024-2029 agenda.

- The key and most common set of proposals mentioned by the respondents were the ones which aimed at an increased role of national Parliaments in the EU legislative process during consultations and preparatory phases. This kind of early engagement would allow national Parliaments to contribute and shape the European Commission work programme and legislative proposals, and ensure the implementation of national priorities. Such ideas were mentioned by the Austrian *Nationalrat* and *Bundesrat*, Cyprus *Vouli ton Antiprosopon*, French *Sénat*, Luxembourgian *Chambre des Députés*, Polish *Sejm* and the Slovak *Národná rada*.
- Parliaments/Chambers such as the Austrian *Nationalrat* and *Bundesrat*, Italian *Senato della Repubblica* and the Maltese *Kamra tad-Deputati* called for structured and regular dialogue between national Parliaments and the European Commission, which could include meetings with the Commissioners, visits by members of the European Commission to national parliaments and by delegations from national parliaments to the European Commission, regular presentations by the European Commission to the permanent representatives of national parliaments in Brussels or consultations between European Commission and national parliaments regarding early identification of trends and problems.
- The Greek *Vouli ton Ellinon* also mentioned the promotion of further consultations between national governments.
- The Luxembourgian *Chambre des Députés* emphasised that national Parliaments should be involved in consultations before the European Commission finalizes its political guidelines or legislative proposals, not just after they are made public.
- The Austrian *Nationalrat* and *Bundesrat* also mentioned the active role of national Parliaments in the area of subsidiarity review, which could include submitting proposals for new legislation or amendments to the existing laws, e.g. through the Green Card mechanism or the analysis of the European Commission's political guidelines, as well as the European Commission work programmes by national Parliaments and possible adoption of opinion with regard to the programme's priorities and initiatives.
- The Lithuanian *Seimas* added that national Parliaments can enhance their contribution by strengthening interparliamentary cooperation, actively engaging in early EU legislative

processes, and ensuring timely scrutiny of the Commission's proposals to shape the EU's strategic direction effectively.

- In addition to that, the Slovak *Národná rada* advocated for a more proactive approach by national Parliaments and argued that Parliaments/Chambers should coordinate with their national governments to set key priorities for EU policy and communicate these priorities effectively to the citizens and the EU institutions. Close coordination between national Parliaments and their respective governments is crucial for ensuring that national priorities are reflected in EU policies, whereas building cross-party consensus on key EU priorities can strengthen the voice of national Parliaments and increase their influence on the EU agenda.
- The Italian *Senato della Repubblica* underlined that the concrete and constructive participation of national Parliaments in the European integration process, together with the European Parliament and the European Commission in a spirit of cooperation and dialogue contributes to the good functioning of the EU.
- Among the provided answers, there was also an emphasis on strengthening interparliamentary cooperation through existing formats, such as COSAC meetings (mentioned by the Austrian *Nationalrat* and *Bundesrat*, French *Sénat*, Italian *Senato della Repubblica*, and the Maltese *Kamra tad-Deputati*). Such meetings can facilitate regular exchanges on EU policy and legislative initiatives, allowing national Parliaments to align their positions and contribute more effectively to the EU's agenda. What is more, the *German Bundesrat* stated that this could also include inviting the Commission to the COSAC meeting prior to the finalization and publication of the agenda and consultation with the Commission in the realm of the COSAC after half of the institutional cycle in order to have a mid-term review.
- The Portuguese *Assembleia da República* and Slovak *Národná rada* also highlighted the role of their European affairs committees, which should review the European Commission work programme and assess its impact on their national interest.
- The Romanian *Camera Deputaţilor* and the Romanian *Senat* argued that national Parliaments should play a stronger role in overseeing the activities of their national representatives in the European Council, ensuring that their actions align with national priorities.
- The Czech *Senát* stated that this matter would require a more structured consultation on the basis of a white paper or a similar document.
- Some Parliaments/Chambers did not have an opinion to share about this topic yet (Czech *Poslanecká sněmovna*, German *Bundestag* and the Slovenian *Državni svet*).

9. Regarding the question of whether Parliaments/Chambers had debated the Political Guidelines for the European Commission 2024-2029, 13 out of 37 replied that they had done so (Belgian *Kamer van volksvertegenwoordigers/Chambre des représentants*, Belgian *Senaat/Sénat*, Bulgarian *Narodno sabranie*, Croatian *Hrvatski sabor*, Czech *Poslanecká sněmovna*, Danish *Folketing*, French *Assemblée nationale*, German *Bundestag*, Latvian *Saeima*, Lithuanian *Seimas*, Slovak *Národná rada*, Swedish *Riksdag*, and the European Parliament).

10. As a follow-up, the 13 Parliaments/Chambers that had replied positively were asked on what level the debate had taken place.

Nine respondents noted that they discussed the Political Guidelines at the EU affairs committee. The Bulgarian *Narodno sabranie* had debated it both at the EU affairs committee and at the plenary level, while the European Parliament discussed it in a plenary debate.

The German *Bundestag* and Lithuanian *Seimas* discussed it both in the EU affairs and in other committee/s.

Some Parliaments/Chambers shared additional information related to this question.

- The Belgian *Kamer van volksvertegenwoordigers/Chambre des représentants* mentioned that the topic was discussed at the LXXI COSAC, which took place in Brussels in March 2024.
- The Finnish *Eduskunta* added that the Grand Committee would debate and give its opinion on the Commission work programme for 2025 on the basis of a report from the government.
- The Slovak *Národná rada* recalled that on 12 December 2024 they hosted a public conference entitled “The New European Commission: Risks, Challenges, and Opportunities.” The conference analysed the political guidelines and priorities of the new European Commission 2024-2029.
- The Swedish *Riksdag* specified that the Political Guidelines had been discussed in the Committee on EU affairs on several occasions, among others in connection with the government’s consultation with the EU affairs committee on the Commission Work Programme, and prior to the approval of the Commission as a whole.

11. Parliaments/Chambers were furthermore asked whether they intended to take the Political Guidelines into account in their own activities. Thirty-six out of 37 Parliaments/Chambers responded to this question; only the Swedish *Riksdag* did not provide an answer.

Twenty-five Parliaments/Chambers stated that they would take the European Commission’s Political Guidelines for 2024-2029 into account in their activities. Six Parliaments/Chambers responded that they would not: the Czech *Poslanecká sněmovna* and Czech *Senát*, Polish *Sejm*, Romanian *Camera Deputaților*, Romanian *Senat*, and the Slovenian *Državni svet*. Five respondents marked the question as not applicable: the Austrian *Nationalrat* and *Bundesrat*, Croatian *Hrvatski sabor*, Finnish *Eduskunta*, Hungarian *Országgyűlés* and the Maltese *Kamra tad-Deputati*.

12. As a follow-up, the 25 Parliaments/Chambers that replied positively to the previous question were asked how they would take the Political Guidelines into account.

Eighteen Parliaments/Chambers indicated that they would be holding meetings with Commissioners or European Commission representatives. Seventeen Parliaments/Chambers noted they would organise debates at committee level. Five Parliaments/Chambers (French *Assemblée nationale*, French *Sénat*, Italian *Camera dei Deputati*, Slovak *Národná rada*, and the European Parliament) replied that they would issue a resolution or opinion expressing their opinions concerning the Political Guidelines. Two respondents, the Italian *Camera dei Deputati* and the Portuguese *Assembleia da República* indicated that the Political Guidelines would be taken into account through a partnership with rapporteurs and co-rapporteurs of relevant legislative proposals in the European Parliament.

Six Parliaments/Chambers indicated that they would take the Political Guidelines of the next European Commission 2024-2029 into account in their activities in a different way:

- The Danish *Folketing* noted that the relevant parliamentary committees would provide oversight of the commitments set out by the European Commission in its Political Guidelines.
- The Dutch *Eerste Kamer* indicated that its committee on EU affairs took the Political Guidelines into account through its annual working visit to the European institutions in Brussels, where these guidelines could be discussed during meetings with European Commissioners or representatives of the European Commission.
- The Dutch *Tweede Kamer* and the Lithuanian *Seimas* replied that they organised plenary debates on the State of the European Union, covering the Political Guidelines.
- The Slovenian *Državni zbor* noted that it had taken into account the Political Guidelines as a key document underpinning its Declaration on Slovenia's operation in EU institutions from January 2025 to June 2026.
- The Spanish *Cortes Generales* answered that no debate on the Political Guidelines was planned, but that the joint committee for EU affairs intended to use the Commission's Political

Guidelines to identify future draft legislative acts for subsidiarity checks under Protocol 2 of the Lisbon Treaty.

13. The Parliaments/Chambers were then asked whether they had specific expectations for the new European Commission in terms of boosting national Parliaments' involvement in the EU decision-making process. A majority composed of 15 Parliaments/Chambers responded that they did not have an opinion on this question.

Thirteen Parliaments/Chambers replied that they had specific expectations: the Austrian *Nationalrat* and *Bundesrat*, Danish *Folketing*, Dutch *Tweede Kamer*, Dutch *Eerste Kamer*, French *Sénat*, German *Bundesrat*, Italian *Camera dei Deputati*, Italian *Senato della Repubblica*, Latvian *Saeima*, Lithuanian *Seimas*, Polish *Sejm*, Polish *Senat*, and the European Parliament.

The Czech *Poslanecká sněmovna*, Luxembourgian *Chambre des Députés*, and the Portuguese *Assembleia da República* replied that they had no specific expectations, while four Parliaments/Chambers (Cypriot *Vouli ton Antiprosopon*, French *Assemblée nationale*, Greek *Vouli ton Ellinon*, and Slovak *Národná rada*) marked the question as not applicable. The Cypriot *Vouli ton Antiprosopon* specified that this was due to the fact that the matter has not been examined.

Only the Irish *Houses of the Oireachtas* and the Swedish *Riksdag* did not provide an answer to this question.

14. In the next question, Parliaments/Chambers were then asked to choose among a shortlist of four possible sets of measures to boost national Parliaments' involvement in the decision-making process, with multiple answers being possible. This question was answered by 29 Parliaments/Chambers: The Belgian *Kamer van volksvertegenwoordigers/Chambre des représentants*, Belgian *Senaat/Sénat*, Finnish *Eduskunta*, Irish *Houses of the Oireachtas*, Slovenian *Državni zbor*, Slovenian *Državni svet*, Spanish *Cortes Generales* and the Swedish *Riksdag* did not answer the question.

The measures “Better communication concerning legislative proposals” and “Enhanced role of parliamentary scrutiny concerning EU legislation” were the most popular options, with each of them selected by 23 out of the 29 Parliaments/Chambers who responded to this question.

The option “Earlier consultation with national parliaments” was chosen by 19 Parliaments/Chambers.

The measure suggesting “Greater involvement in the implementation of EU legislation” was selected by eight Parliaments/Chambers: the Bulgarian *Narodno sabranie*, French *Assemblée nationale*, French *Sénat*, Italian *Camera dei Deputati*, Dutch *Tweede Kamer*, Portuguese *Assembleia da República*, Slovak *Národná rada* and the European Parliament.

A large majority of respondents chose two or three measures from the shortlist; only five Parliaments/Chambers selected all four options: the French *Assemblée nationale*, French *Sénat*, Italian *Camera dei Deputati*, Dutch *Tweede Kamer* and the European Parliament.

Seven Parliaments/Chambers made use of the “Other” option to indicate additional comments and their own proposals to boost national parliaments' involvement in the decision-making process.

- The French *Sénat* called for closer consultations with national Parliaments in the preparation of the annual Commission Work Programme, and of concrete legislative proposals.
- The Dutch *Tweede Kamer* called for more use of rapporteurs on crucial EU topics, while the European Parliament noted the potential of more innovative and stronger tools of cooperation including more intensive exchange and dialogue with European political families and groups.

- The Italian *Senato della Repubblica* argued that the [conclusions and proposals made by the COSAC working group on the role of national parliaments in the European Union](#), during the French Presidency of 2022, should be better considered.
- The Portuguese *Assembleia da República* noted that their EU affairs committee proposed organising an initiative labelled “Europe in Parliament”, which aims to create a forum for discussion on European affairs, involving parliamentarians, civil society, the business sector and citizens.
- The Romanian *Camera Deputaţilor* noted that in the past years it had opted for an enhanced informal political dialogue as provided by Protocol 1 TEU.
- The Slovak *Národná rada* called on the European Commission to enhance its approach to the Green Cards (proposals for legislative initiatives) submitted by national Parliaments as a way to strengthen democratic legitimacy within the EU.

15. As a follow-up question, Parliaments/Chambers were asked what form such an increased involvement could take, by choosing among five possible options, with multiple answers being possible. This question was answered by 28 Parliaments/Chambers, the same as the previous question, with the exception of the European Parliament.

The option “Regular exchange of views with EU Commissioners at COSAC meetings and other inter-parliamentary conferences such as: Inter-parliamentary Conference for the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Common Security and Defence Policy (IPC CFSP/CSDP), Interparliamentary Conference on Stability, Economic Coordination and Governance in the EU (IPC SECG), Joint Parliamentary Scrutiny Group on Europol (JPSG on Europol)” was selected by 22 Parliaments/Chambers.

Twenty-one Parliaments/Chambers selected the option “Better taking account of national parliaments' opinions in the EU legislative process”.

The “Presentation of the European Commission's key legislative proposals by EU Commissioners to national parliaments, through in-person meetings” was chosen by 20 Parliaments / Chambers, while the “On-line meetings” version of this option was selected by only 14 Parliaments / Chambers.

Lastly, the option “Regular presentation of the Commission Work Programme by EU Commissioners in national parliaments” was selected by 19 Parliaments / Chambers.

Eight Parliaments/Chambers selected all five available options indicated above: the Austrian *Nationalrat* and *Bundesrat*, Croatian *Hrvatski sabor*, Dutch *Tweede Kamer*, French *Sénat*, Greek *Vouli ton Ellinon*, Italian *Camera dei Deputati*, Portuguese *Assembleia da República* and the Romanian *Senat*.

In addition, 11 Parliaments/Chambers used the “Other” option to provide additional comments and indicate other possible forms to boost national Parliaments' involvement in the EU decision-making process. Many of these replies pointed to a clear demand for closer and intensified dialogue between the European Commission and national Parliaments.

- Concerning the formal mechanisms for the involvement of national Parliaments foreseen in the Treaty of the EU (TEU), the French *Sénat* made a recommendation to extend the examination period and to lower the threshold of the number of Parliaments/Chambers needed to trigger action by the Commission, as part of the subsidiarity control provided by Protocol 2 TEU.
- The Lithuanian *Seimas* noted a desire for enhanced participation in political dialogue with the European Commission, whereas the Latvian *Saeima* called for Commission representatives to

present the Commission annual Work Programme and key legislative proposals to national Parliaments.

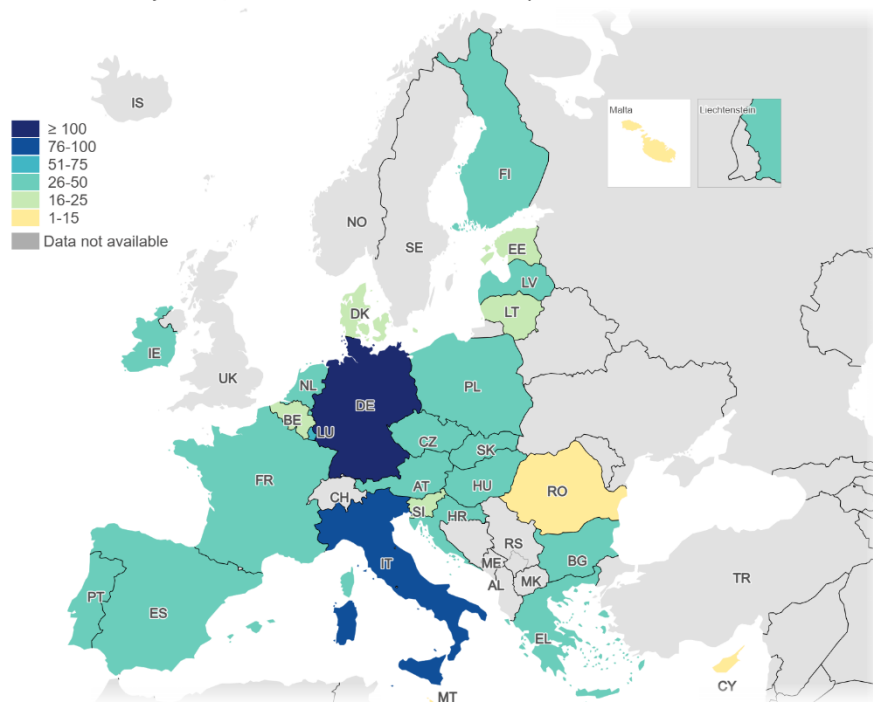
- This call for closer dialogue was echoed by the Austrian *Nationalrat* and *Bundesrat*, calling for national Parliaments to be involved as early as possible in the EU legislative process, ideally during the consultation phase. They also called on the European Commission to respond more quickly and substantially to the reasoned opinions of national Parliaments, as the replies are sometimes a few months late and strictly formal, which prevents lively and more in-depth political exchange on legislative proposals.
- The Dutch *Eerste Kamer* also noted that the quality of the responses of the European Commission with regard to political dialogue at times fell short, leading to certain questions or remarks not being addressed.
- The Danish *Folketing* indicated the potential of informal discussions with Commissioners at committee level as a possible mechanism to boost national Parliaments' role, while the Polish *Senat* also noted the value of informal contacts.
- The Luxembourgian *Chambre des Députés* for its part called for better communication between national Parliaments and the government ministries.
- The Italian *Senato della Repubblica* called on COSAC to discuss and adopt common positions on EU legislative and non-legislative proposals, while the Slovak *Národná rada* called on Commissioners to actively participate in inter-parliamentary conferences, particularly COSAC, as a genuine commitment to transparency and democratic accountability and to allow more direct and meaningful exchanges on key legislative and policy matters.

16. The Parliaments/Chambers were asked approximately how many times European Commissioners had visited their Parliaments/Chambers since the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty in December 2009.

Thirty-five Parliaments/Chambers responded; neither the Swedish *Riksdag* nor the Slovenian *Državni svet* provided an answer. The amount of visits is indicated on the map below.

Vists by Commissioners to Parliaments/Chambers since 2009

In bi-cameral systems, the Chamber with the most reported visits is listed.



Administrativa gränser: © EuroGeographics © OpenStreetMap-bidragsgivare
Kartografi: Eurostat – IMAGE, 04/2025

Seven Parliaments/Chambers (Cypriot *Vouli ton Antiprosopon*, Dutch *Eerste Kamer*, French *Assemblée nationale*, Maltese *Kamra tad-Deputati*, Polish *Senat*, Romanian *Camera Deputaților* and the Romanian *Senat*) had been visited between one and fifteen times.

- Eight Parliaments/Chambers welcomed Commissioners between 16 and 25 times (Belgian *Kamer van volksvertegenwoordigers/Chambre des représentants*, Belgian *Senaat/Sénat*, Czech *Senát*, Danish *Folketing*, Estonian *Riigikogu*, German *Bundesrat*, Lithuanian *Seimas*, and the Slovenian *Državni zbor*).
- Sixteen Parliaments/Chambers had received visits between 26 and 50 times since December 2009. The Latvian *Saeima* noted that this did not include the visits during the Presidency of the Council of the EU or other structural visits.
- Only the Luxembourgian *Chambre des Députés* had received visits from Commissioners between 51 and 75 times, while only the Italian *Camera dei Deputati* had been visited between 76 and 100 times.
- The German *Bundestag* and the European Parliament had received visits from Commissioners more than 100 times since the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty in December 2009.

17. The Parliaments/Chambers were then asked how many members of the European Commission visited them during the 2019-2024 term of office. Thirty-six provided a response, only the Slovenian *Državni svet* did not.

Two Parliaments/Chambers declared having had zero visits from members of the European Commission in the 2019-2024 term, the German *Bundesrat* and the Romanian *Senat*.

Ten stated that between one and five members of the European Commission visited their Parliaments/Chambers. The Czech *Senát* noted that figures did not take into account videoconferences, events organised by the executive, or activities held within the framework of the parliamentary dimension of the Presidency.

The Belgian *Senaat/Sénat*, Bulgarian *Narodno sabranie*, Cypriot *Vouli ton Antiprosopon*, Polish *Sejm*, Slovenian *Državni zbor*, and the Spanish *Cortes Generales* each had between six and ten visits.

Twelve Parliaments/Chambers had visits of between 11 and 15 European Commission members.

Only two Parliaments/Chambers, the Luxembourgian *Chambre des Députés* and the Danish *Folketing*, had been visited by 16 to 20 members of the European Commission.

Four Parliaments/Chambers (Finnish *Eduskunta*, German *Bundestag*, Italian *Camera dei Deputati* and the European Parliament), had welcomed more than twenty members of the European Commission during the 2019-2024 term of office.

18. Parliaments/Chambers were then asked how many times a Commissioner from their country visited their Parliament/Chamber during the 2019–2024 term of office. The question was answered by 33 out of 37 potential respondents: the German *Bundestag*, German *Bundesrat*, Slovenian *Državni svet* and the European Parliament did not provide an answer.

Four respondents, the Romanian *Camera Deputaților*, Romanian *Senat*, Slovak *Národná rada*, and the Spanish *Cortes Generales* reported having had one visit.

Nine Parliaments/Chambers had one to two visits by the Commissioner from their country visiting. They were the Austrian *Nationalrat* and *Bundesrat*, Czech *Poslanecká sněmovna*, Czech *Senát*, Dutch *Tweede Kamer*, Dutch *Eerste Kamer*, Estonian *Riigikogu*, Italian *Camera dei Deputati*, Italian *Senato della Repubblica*, and the Polish *Senat*. The Czech *Senát* specified that figures did not take into

account videoconferences, events organised by the executive, or activities held within the framework of the parliamentary dimension of the Presidency.

The largest number of respondents, 16 Parliaments/Chambers, had between three and five visits by their national Commissioners visiting during the 2019-2024 term of office.

Three Parliaments/Chambers, the Croatian *Hrvatski sabor*, Latvian *Saeima*, and the Polish *Sejm* had Commissioners from their country visiting between six and ten times.

Finally, only one Parliament/Chamber, the Danish *Folketing*, had more than ten visits from the Danish Commissioner during the 2019-2024 term of office.

19. As a follow-up question, respondents were asked about the character of the meetings of EU Commissioners when visiting their Parliament/Chamber. This question was answered by 36 Parliaments/Chambers, with only the Slovenian *Državni svet* not replying. Respondents were asked to choose among a shortlist of four different types of meetings, with multiple answers being possible.

“Participation in the EU Affairs Committee meetings” was indicated by 30 Parliaments/Chambers. “Participation in the sectoral committee meetings” was selected by 23 Parliaments/Chambers. “Meeting with the President of the Parliament/Chamber” was chosen by 23 Parliaments/Chambers. “Meetings with committee representatives” was noted by 20 Parliaments/Chambers.

A very a large majority of respondents selected two or three options among the possible types of meetings, and eight Parliaments/Chambers selected all four options: the French *Sénat*, German *Bundestag*, Greek *Vouli ton Ellinon*, Irish *Houses of the Oireachtas*, Polish *Sejm*, Romanian *Camera Deputaţilor*, Romanian *Senat* and the Slovenian *Državni zbor*.

In addition, six Parliaments/Chambers used the “Other” option to provide additional comments and indicate other possible formats.

- The Italian *Senato della Repubblica* noted that Commissioners had met members in Joint Committee Meetings of the EU Affairs and sectoral committees.
- The Luxembourgian *Chambre des Députés* indicated the organisation of exchanges of views in plenary; this format was also noted by the European Parliament, which also indicated interinstitutional meetings and negotiations.
- The Latvian *Seimas* referred to the participation of Commissioners in special events organised by the Parliament, while the Hungarian *Országgyűlés* indicated participation of Commissioners in interparliamentary events organised as part of the parliamentary dimension of the Hungarian Presidency of the Council of the EU.
- The Dutch *Eerste Kamer* noted that their committee on EU affairs visited the European institutions yearly, and on these occasions, they met with several Commissioners in Brussels.

20. Parliaments/Chambers were invited to provide any additional comments regarding their expectations towards the new European Commission in terms of cooperation with national Parliaments. Sixteen Parliaments/Chambers provided additional comments.

- A majority of the responses highlighted the expectations for closer and constructive dialogue and cooperation between the European Commission and national Parliaments, including through increased in-person visits and the participation of Commissioners in the meetings of national Parliaments, as well as interparliamentary conferences, notably COSAC. This was mentioned by the Belgian *Senaat/Sénat*, Bulgarian *Narodno sabranie*, Czech *Poslanecká sněmovna*, Danish *Folketing*, German *Bundestag*, Italian *Senato della Repubblica*, Polish *Sejm* and the Slovak *Národná rada*.

- The Czech *Poslanecká sněmovna* and the Italian *Senato della Repubblica* complemented this by also arguing that the European Commission should take into better consideration the reasoned opinions and contributions sent by national Parliaments.
- The Slovak *Národná rada* called for a more proactive approach to engaging with national parliaments by the European Commission, through regular and structured dialogue that allows for the exchange of ideas and concerns before policies are finalised. This could involve more regular meetings between Commissioners and parliamentarians and even joint working groups on key legislative priorities.
- On the subject of contacts between institutions, the Polish *Sejm* noted the high value of the study visits to Brussels organised by the Commission Representation in Warsaw for members of the EU affairs committee.
- The Dutch *Tweede Kamer* also echoed the call for earlier involvement in the legislative cycle and establishment of the annual Commission Work programme, in order to improve the early warning system and possibilities for parliamentary scrutiny. It also called for legislative forms that give national Parliaments a greater involvement, for example more directives instead of regulations and delegated acts.
- The French *Sénat* referred to the recommendations included in their recent report on the “normative drift” of the European Union ([Rapport n°190](#) du Sénat français sur la dérive normative de l’Union européenne)
- Lastly, the European Parliament used this question to clarify the role which this institution plays in the election of the Commission President, in the assessment of the Commissioners’ designate and in the confirmation vote on the whole college of Commissioners in accordance with Article 17(7) TEU. The European Parliament also referred to the report of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs (AFCO) on the “Implementation of the Treaty provisions on national parliaments”, which examined possible ways to enhance the role of national Parliaments in the EU legislative process (European Parliament resolution of 17 January 2024 on the implementation of the Treaty provisions on national parliaments ([2023/2084\(INI\)](#))).

The EU strategic agenda

The second part of the first chapter of the Bi-annual Report covers how Parliaments/Chambers have dealt with the EU strategic agenda.

21. In the first question of this part of the Report, Parliaments/Chambers were asked whether or not the priorities of the EU strategic agenda 2024-2029, as adopted by the European Council, had been debated. A slight majority (20 of 37 respondents) replied that they had not been debated, while 17 reported that the priorities had been debated.

22. Parliaments/Chambers were then asked to indicate the outcome of any such debate (as described in question 21), being able to choose from four pre-selected options, or choose “other” and specify what the outcome of the debate had been in their Parliament/Chamber. Of the 17 who replied, 15 indicated “other” and subsequently provided more detailed descriptions of the outcome of the debate on the priorities of the strategic agenda in their Parliament/Chamber. Out of those who indicated “other”, one (the Luxembourg *Chambre des Députés*) simply remarked that the question was inapplicable since they had replied “no” to the previous question. The Cyprus *Vouli ton Antiprosopon* indicated, in their reply to the last question of the chapter, that the matter had not yet been examined.

Six Parliaments/Chambers (Estonian *Riigikogu*, Czech *Poslanecká sněmovna*, Dutch *Eerste Kamer*, Latvian *Saeima*, Slovak *Národná rada* and the Swedish *Riksdag*) specified that the priorities had been discussed in some form in the Committee on European Union Affairs, or the equivalent body. In the case of the Latvian *Saeima* and the Slovak *Národná rada*, the replies specified that a position or

opinion had been formally endorsed by the committee. In the Lithuanian *Seimas*, a debate was held at a joint meeting of the Committee on European Affairs and the Committee on Foreign Affairs. The Finnish *Eduskunta* replied that its Grand Committee had given its opinion more broadly on the Finnish objectives for the new legislative cycle.

In some Parliaments/Chambers, the priorities had been brought to the plenary (Dutch *Eerste Kamer*, Maltese *Kamra tad-Deputati*, Czech *Senát*, Swedish *Riksdag* and the European Parliament), and in the Irish *Houses of the Oireachtas*, the strategic agenda featured in discussions relating to Parliamentary Questions. The Danish *Folketing* replied that the issue had been debated with the Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs without specifying in which format.

In addition to these replies, three Parliaments/Chambers replied, using the pre-selected alternatives, that the outcome of the debate had been an opinion of the committee (Latvian *Saeima*, Slovak *Národná rada*, Swedish *Riksdag*), one that the outcome had been a report of the committee (Swedish *Riksdag*), and in one case the outcome had been an opinion of the Parliament/Chamber (Italian *Senato della Repubblica*)

23. The Parliaments/Chambers were asked if they found that the political guidelines for the next European Commission 2024-2029 were complementary to the EU strategic agenda 2024-2029 as adopted by the European Council. A majority of 28 out of 36 responding Parliaments/Chambers answered that they did not have an opinion on the matter. The Austrian *Nationalrat and Bundesrat*, Estonian *Riigikogu*, Italian *Camera dei deputati*, Italian *Senato della Repubblica*, Latvian *Saeima* and the Lithuanian *Seimas* answered yes, while only the Portuguese *Assembleia da República* answered no.

24. Parliaments/Chambers were also asked if the European Commission and the Council should hold a debate with national Parliaments on the priorities for the Commission's work programme and the Council's strategic agenda. Out of the 27 respondents a majority of 23 Parliaments/Chambers answered that they were in favour, while the Belgian *Chambre des représentants/Kamer van volksvertegenwoordigers*, the Dutch *Eerste Kamer* and the Hungarian *Országgyűlés* were against. As for the European Parliament they did not have an opinion.

25. Parliaments/Chambers were then asked in which form a possible debate with national Parliaments on the priorities for the Commission's work programme and the Council's strategic agenda should be held. Parliaments/Chambers had the possibility of responding to three options or to otherwise specify an alternative. Out of the 25 respondents 18 Parliaments/Chambers answered "During individual visits to national Parliaments/Chambers" and 19 answered "During COSAC". Further, ten Parliaments/Chambers answered "During special Interparliamentary Committee Meetings (ICM) organised by the European Parliament". In addition to these replies the Dutch *Tweede Kamer* specified that preferably, a possible debate should be before the finalisation of the Commission Work Programme, so suggestions could be used as input.

26. Rounding off the first topic of the Bi-annual Report, Parliaments/Chambers were asked if there was anything else they would like to add in the context of expectations for the EU's priorities included in the strategic agenda adopted by the European Council.

The Bulgarian *Narodno sabranie* added that in the context of expectations for the EU's priorities included in the strategic agenda, national Parliaments should be consulted on the strategic agenda.

The Italian *Senato della Repubblica* added that they had adopted a resolution on 26 June 2024 in view of the European Council meeting of 27-28 June 2024. The resolution listed a number of government commitments, where one of them revolved around agreeing with the government's European partners. The focus should be on some major priorities such as a strong common foreign policy, an

effective industrial policy, a balanced economic policy that can combine financial stability and economic growth, a strong agricultural policy, sustainable environmental policies, an effective migration policy and active population policies that promote the birth rate. Moreover, the resolution also committed the government to ensuring that the next European multi-year budget matches the Union's challenges and appropriately reflects the priorities of the strategic agenda.

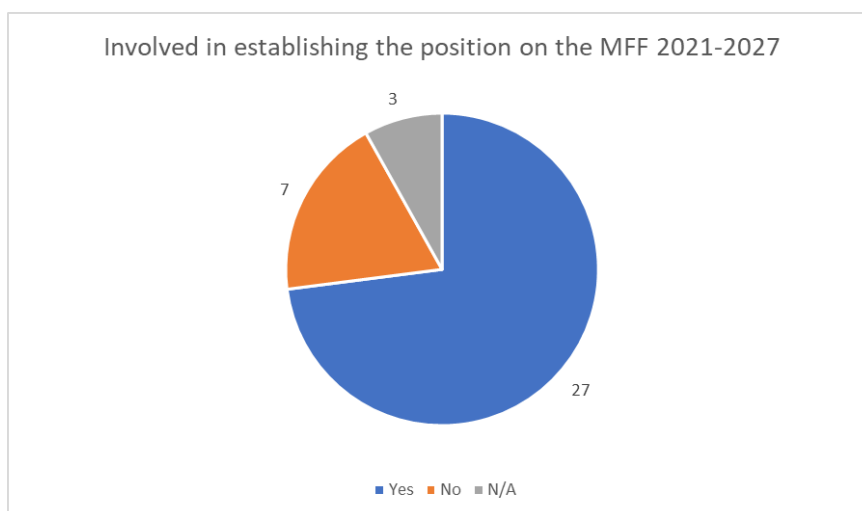
The *Slovak Národná rada* acknowledged that the strategic agenda had set out ambitious goals, but it stressed the importance of effective implementation and expected the Commission to translate these priorities into concrete actions and measurable outcomes. In that regard they believed that the strategic agenda should reflect the concerns and aspirations of European citizens. Furthermore, they were of the opinion that enhancing democratic legitimacy and public trust in the EU as well as inter-institutional cooperation was essential for the success of the strategic agenda. They therefore called for closer collaboration between the EU institutions and national parliaments to ensure a coherent approach to policy making. Summing up, the *Slovak Národná rada* emphasized the need for the strategic agenda to be flexible and adaptable, allowing the EU to respond effectively to unforeseen events and evolving priorities.

CHAPTER TWO

MULTIANNUAL FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK

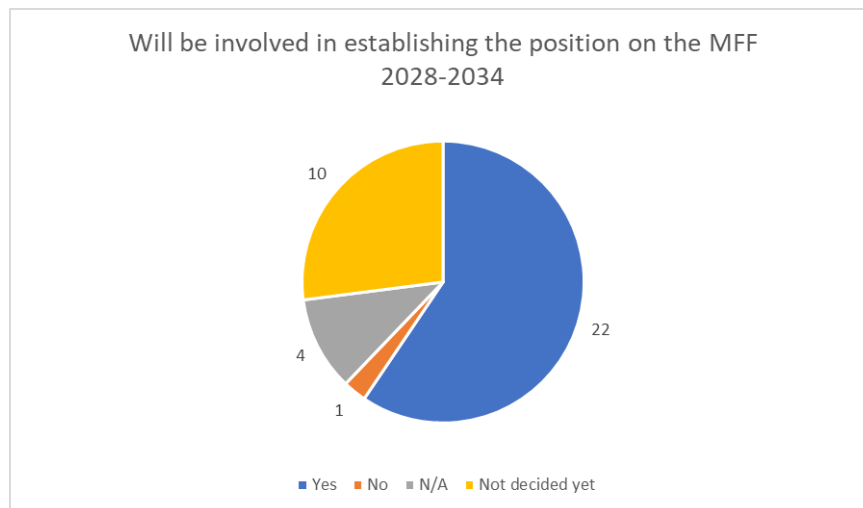
THE SECOND CHAPTER OF THE 42nd BI-ANNUAL REPORT concentrates on how Parliaments/Chambers are preparing to scrutinise the upcoming Multiannual Financial Framework 2028-2034.

27. In the first question of the second chapter of the Bi-annual Report, Parliaments/Chambers were asked if they had been involved in establishing the position of their government on the MFF 2021-2027. To this, almost three fourths replied yes (27 out of 37 replies). Seven replied no, while three replied that the question was not applicable.



28. As a follow-up, Parliaments/Chambers were then asked in what way they had been involved in establishing the position of their government on the MFF 2021-2027. Respondents could choose from one or more of seven pre-determined alternatives. More than three fourths of respondents (21 out of 27) replied that the issue had been debated during the sessions of the EU affairs committee of their Parliament/Chamber. In addition, more than half (15 of 27) replied that the issue had been debated during sessions of the committee responsible for budgetary matters, and 11 of 27 indicated that it had been debated in another committee. Furthermore, eight Parliaments/Chambers (Austrian *Nationalrat* and *Bundesrat*, Czech *Senát*, French *Assemblée nationale*, German *Bundesrat*, Italian *Camera dei Deputati*, Hungarian *Országgyűlés*, Portuguese *Assembleia da República* and the Slovenian *Državni svet*) replied that the issue had been debated in the plenary, and five (Czech *Senát*, Finnish *Eduskunta*, German *Bundesrat*, Hungarian *Országgyűlés* and the Swedish *Riksdag*) that they had been involved in preparing the opinion for government. Lastly, five Parliaments/Chambers indicated that their involvement had taken place in another way. The Czech *Senát* remarked that while it had no budgetary committee, budgetary issues in a broader sense, including the MFF, were debated within the Committee on Economy, Agriculture and Transport.

29. Parliaments/Chambers were then asked if they would be involved in establishing the position of their government on the MFF 2028-2034. To this, 22 out of 37 replied yes. One Parliament/Chamber replied no. A further 10 replied that the matter was not yet decided, and four marked the question as not applicable.



30. As a follow-up, Parliaments/Chambers were then asked to indicate in what way they would be involved, by choosing from one or several of seven pre-defined alternatives. A total of 23 Parliaments/Chambers replied to this question. Of these, 17 indicated that they would be involved in establishing the position of their government on the MFF 2028-2034 through debate during the sessions of the EU affairs committee. Furthermore, 12 Parliaments/Chambers indicated that it would be done through debate during the sessions of the committee for budgetary affairs, and seven indicated that it would be done through debate in other committee(s).

Moreover, 10 replied that it would be done through debate during plenary sessions. Six Parliaments/Chambers (Czech *Senát*, Finnish *Eduskunta*, French *Sénat*, German *Bundesrat*, Greek *Vouli ton Ellinon* and the Swedish *Riksdag*) indicated that they would be involved in establishing the position of their government on the MFF 2028-2034 through preparing the opinion of the government. The Czech *Senát* clarified that this meant expressing the chamber's opinion on the Government position and/or requesting the Government to take other specific positions. However, the Government is not bound by this, it should only take the position of the *Senát* into account.

Four Parliaments/Chambers replied that it was done in another way.

31. Still on the topic of preparations for the MFF, Parliaments/Chambers were also asked whether they had organised a debate/conference on previous MFFs with the participation of experts, academics, social partners, or members of the government. To this question 23 Chambers/Parliaments replied negatively, while 17 replied yes.

32. Similarly, Parliaments/Chambers were then asked if they were planning on organising such a debate/conference on the MFF 2028-2034. The majority, 25 respondents, replied that they had not decided yet. Three (Czech *Poslanecká sněmovna*, French *Assemblée nationale* and the Slovenian *Državni zbor*) replied no, while eight (Estonian *Riigikogu*, Finnish *Eduskunta*, French *Sénat*, Latvian *Saeima*, Lithuanian *Seimas*, Polish *Sejm*, Slovak *Národná rada* and the European Parliament) replied that they were planning to do so.

33. The question was then posed whether or not Parliaments/Chambers had discussed possible changes in the structure of the MFF. To this question 26 replied no, while 11 replied yes.

34. To follow up on this question, Parliaments/Chambers were then asked to indicate in what form any such discussion had taken place, being able to choose from five pre-selected alternatives. Eleven Parliaments/Chambers responded to the question.

Nine (Austrian *Nationalrat* and *Bundesrat*, Belgian *Senaat/Sénat*, French *Sénat*, German *Bundestag*, German *Bundesrat*, Dutch *Tweede Kamer*, Portuguese *Assembleia da República*, Slovenian *Državni*

zbor, Slovenian *Državni svet*, and Spanish *Cortes Generales*) indicated that the discussion had taken the form of a debate during the sessions of the EU affairs committee. In four cases (German *Bundesrat*, French *Sénat*, Dutch *Tweede Kamer* and the European Parliament), a debate was held in the committee for budgetary affairs, and in six cases (Austrian *Nationalrat* and *Bundesrat*, German *Bundesrat*, Dutch *Tweede Kamer*, Portuguese *Assembleia da República*, Spanish *Cortes Generales* and the European Parliament) in some other committee. In three cases (German *Bundesrat*, Dutch *Tweede Kamer* and the European Parliament), a plenary debate was held. Three Parliaments/Chambers indicated that another kind of debate had taken place (German *Bundesrat*, Latvian *Saeima*, and the European Parliament).

35. The final question in this Chapter sought to reveal if indeed the EU affairs committee in the respective national Parliament/Chamber would be the one responsible for formulating the Parliaments/Chambers opinion on the 2028-2034 MFF. Out of the 38 total responses 19 Parliaments/Chambers replied 'yes', nine gave 'no' as an answer and eight indicated that there is no decision made on that subject yet.

CHAPTER THREE

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

THE THIRD CHAPTER OF THE 43rd BI-ANNUAL REPORT seeks to delve deeper into the issue of cyber-resilience, particularly concerning disinformation. By gathering best practices from the parliaments of the European Union, it will examine how Parliaments/Chambers have engaged with the EU legislation in this area and highlight the relevant measures implemented at the parliamentary administration level.

Cyber-resilience and disinformation

36. In the first question of this part of the Report, Parliaments/Chambers were asked if they had a special committee dealing with cyber-resilience and disinformation. A large majority (35 of 37 Parliaments/Chambers) did not have a special committee dealing with cyber-resilience and disinformation. Only the European Parliament and the Spanish *Cortes Generales* had such a committee.

37. Parliaments/Chambers who did not have a special committee dealing with the topic, were then asked to indicate if cyber resilience and disinformation was dealt with in another sectoral committee. Out of the 33 respondents, 30 Parliaments/Chambers specified which sectoral committees then dealt with it.

Six out of the 30 responding Parliaments/Chambers indicated that one other committee dealt with cyber resilience and disinformation.

- In the Bulgarian *Narodno sabranie* the Committee on Defence was responsible.
- In the Croatian *Hrvatski sabor* the Committee on Information, Digitalisation and the Media was responsible.
- In the Czech *Poslanecká sněmovna* the Committee on Security was responsible.
- In the German *Bundesrat* the Committee for Internal Affairs was responsible.
- In the Luxembourg *Chambre des Députés* the Committee of Defence is responsible.
- In the Slovenian *Državni svet* the Commission for International Relations and European Affairs was responsible.

The remaining responses indicated that several committees across Parliaments/Chambers dealt with cyber resilience and disinformation. Some respondents elaborated, that the responsible committee was chosen based on, among other things, the context and agenda (the Czech *Senát*, Dutch *Eerste Kamer*, Finnish *Eduskunta*, German *Bundestag*, Greek *Vouli ton Ellinon*, Italian *Camera dei deputati*, Italian *Senato della Repubblica*, and the Polish *Senat*). Other respondents listed the different committees dealing with the topic without further clarification. Besides the responses on which committees dealt with the topic, the Polish *Sejm* clarified that a Permanent Subcommittee on Cybersecurity was in the process of being established in their chamber.

38. Those Parliament/Chambers with a special committee dealing with cyber-resilience and disinformation were asked to indicate how often their committee meets per year. The Danish *Folketing*, Polish *Sejm* and the European Parliament indicated that their committees met more than six times per year, while the Spanish *Cortes Generales* responded that they met one to six times per year. It should be noted that the respondents to this question were different from those who had

indicated that their Parliament/Chamber indeed has a special committee dealing with cyber-resilience and disinformation.

39. As a follow-up, Parliaments/Chambers were asked to indicate the main topics that had been debated in relevant committees dealing with cyber-resilience and disinformation. The Parliaments/Chambers could indicate several answers. The following table shows the results:

Possible answers	Number of replies
Need for a coordinated strategy against foreign interference (2020 EU Cybersecurity Strategy, NIS2, Cyber Resilience Act)	16
Building resilience through situational awareness, media and information literacy, media pluralism, independent journalism and education	20
Foreign interference using online platforms	21
Enhance the resilience of critical infrastructure and strategic sectors	23
Foreign interference during electoral processes	20
Covert funding of political activities by foreign actors and donors	14
Cooperation of EU Member States, institutions, agencies, delegations and missions in terms of detecting, monitoring and sharing information during and/or to prevent cyber-attacks	11
Cybersecurity and resilience against cyberattacks	27
Interference through global actors via elite capture, national diasporas, universities and cultural events	7
Deterrence and collective countermeasures, including sanctions	8
Global cooperation and multilateralism	12
Total respondents	29

Moreover, the European Parliament added that a topic related to cyber-resilience and disinformation highlighted by their committee on Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE) was secure satellite communications for public and private sectors IRIS.

40. Parliaments/Chambers were asked in what way the committees dealing with cyber resilience and disinformation interacted with the respective governments. Multiple choices were possible, and 13 Parliaments/chambers responded. Firstly, eight Parliaments/Chambers selected the answer “Presentation of government positions on specific EU legislative proposals by government’s representative at committee sitting”. Secondly, the Dutch *Tweede Kamer* selected the answer “Presentation of government positions on relevant agenda points to be discussed during the Council of the European Union meetings in advance by government’s representative at committee sitting”. The Dutch *Tweede Kamer* also marked the third option, namely “Presentation of government positions on relevant agenda points discussed during the Council of the European Union meetings by government’s representative at committee sitting (ex-post)”.

Parliaments/Chambers were also able to specify other interactions the committees had with their governments related to cyber resilience and disinformation.

The Romanian *Camera Deputaţilor* specified that questions and interpellations could be addressed to the government or ministers. The Spanish *Cortes Generales* responded that they had hearings of ministers before the Joint Committee (Congress-Senate) on National Security and an annual presentation of the National Security Report as well as debate of non-binding parliamentary resolutions. Moreover, the Lithuanian *Seimas* highlighted interaction with their government regarding consideration of draft legislative proposals implementing the second directive on network and information systems (NIS2) and the digital service act (DSA). Similarly, the Austrian *Nationalrat* and *Bundesrat* responded that “sectoral committees can hold debates on the federal ministers’ reports on the projects of the Council and the European Commission to be expected and also on the Austrian position to such projects”.

The *Italian Senato della Repubblica* did not mention any interaction, but highlighted that the competent committees take government positions into account. Similarly, the Czech *Senát* responded that they had no specific method of interaction and the Danish *Folketing* responded that it varies from case to case.

Finally, the European Parliament responded by choosing “Exchanges of views with representatives of the European Commission, the EEAS, CSDP and the European Defence Agency (EDA)”.

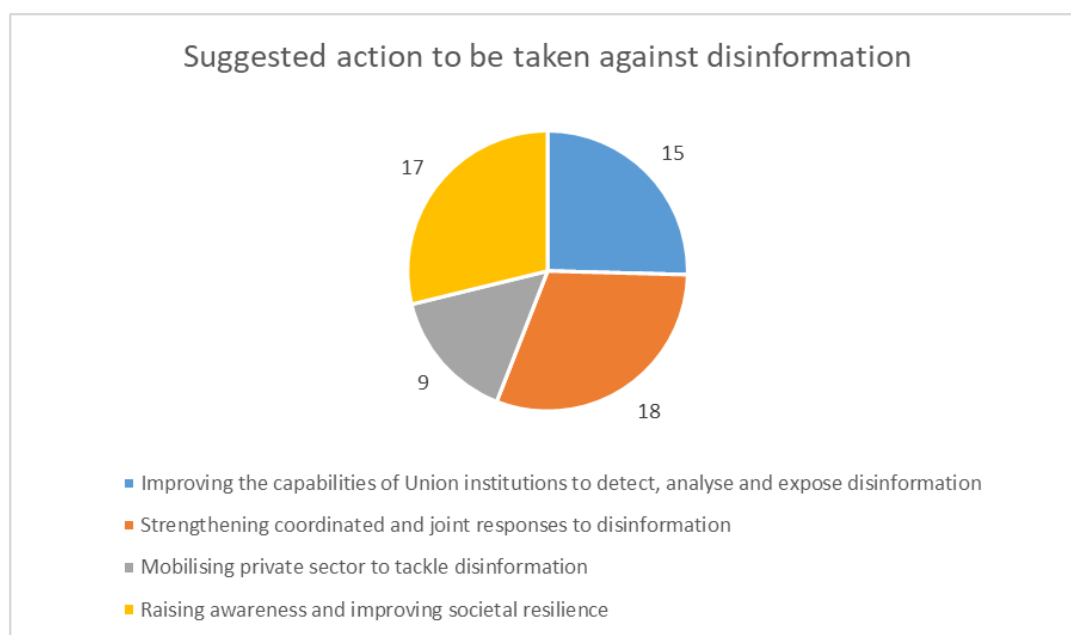
41. The Parliaments/Chambers were then asked what the outcomes of the sittings of the special committee dealing with cyber resilience and disinformation were. In that regard, there were five possible answers and an opportunity to specify.

Six Parliaments/Chambers (the Dutch *Tweede Kamer*, Lithuanian *Seimas*, Romanian *Camera Deputaţilor*, Romanian *Senat*, Spanish *Cortes Generales* and the European Parliament) answered that the outcome was an opinion which is not binding for the government. Five Parliaments/Chambers (the Dutch *Tweede Kamer*, Romanian *Camera Deputaţilor*, Romanian *Senat*, Spanish *Cortes Generales* and the European Parliament) answered that the outcome was a resolution of Chambers/Parliaments, and three answered that the outcome was an opinion in the framework of the political dialogue. Three Parliaments/Chambers (the Bulgarian *Narodno sabranie*, Romanian *Camera Deputaţilor* and the Romanian *Senat*) answered that the outcome was an opinion in the framework of the political dialogue.

No Parliaments/Chambers answered that the outcome was a reasoned opinion, but three parliaments/chambers specified other outcomes than the abovementioned. The European Parliament specified public hearings as an outcome of the sittings of the special committee dealing with cyber resilience and disinformation. The Italian *Senato della Repubblica* specified that the outcome of the work of the competent committees was a debate and approval of legislation. Lastly, the Polish *Sejm* explained that a discussion on government actions conducted with the participation of members of parliament, representatives of government and local administration, social partners, and academic circles had been an outcome of the committee work.

42. Parliaments/Chambers were asked to indicate if their Parliament/Chamber had discussed the Action Plan against Disinformation ([Joint Communication to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic And Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions from 5 December 2018, JOIN\(2018\) 36 final](#)). A slight minority (16 of 36) answered that they had discussed the Action Plan against disinformation, while a small majority (20 of 36) had not done so.

43. As a follow-up, Parliaments/Chambers were then asked to indicate on which of the following pillars action should be taken to envisage closer cooperation among EU Parliaments/Chambers, by choosing one or several of four predefined answers. A total of 23 Parliaments/Chambers replied to this question. Of these, 18 indicated that strengthening coordinated and joint responses to disinformation would be a good solution, while 17 Parliaments/Chambers chose raising awareness and improving societal resilience. Moreover, 15 replied that the option of improving the capabilities of Union institutions to detect, analyse and expose disinformation. Lastly, nine Parliaments/Chambers (the Czech *Senát*, Estonian *Riigikogu*, French *Sénat*, Latvian *Saeima*, Maltese *Kamra tad-Deputati*, Romanian *Camera Deputaţilor*, Romanian *Senat*, Polish *Senate* and the European Parliament) indicated that mobilising private sector to tackle disinformation could be a solution.



44. The Parliaments/Chambers were then asked if they had scrutinised the Digital Services Act, DSA ([Regulation \(EU\) 2022/2065 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 October 2022 on a Single Market For Digital Services and amending Directive 2000/31/EC \(Digital Services Act\)](#)). To this, the vast majority (27 out of 36) replied positively. Nine Parliament/Chamber stated they had not scrutinised the DSA (Belgian *Kamer van volksvertegenwoordigers/Chambre des représentants* and *Senaat/Sénat*, Cypriot *Vouli ton Antiprosopon*, French *Assemblée nationale*, Greek *Vouli ton Ellinon*, Luxembourgian *Chambre des Députés*, Dutch *Tweede Kamer*, Romanian *Camera Deputaţilor* and the Slovenian *Državni svet*), whilst one skipped the question (Bulgarian *Narodno sabranie*). The Cypriot *Vouli ton Antiprosopon* explained that the relevant bill is pending before the Standing Committee on Internal Affairs.

45. Twenty-eight Parliaments/Chambers responded to the question regarding the outcome of the DSA scrutiny process. The responses varied, with seven of the Parliaments/Chambers informing that the DSA was approved without remarks, while eight others stated that an opinion within the framework of the political dialogue had been adopted. No reasoned opinions on the DSA had been submitted by any Parliament or Chamber.

Thirteen responses fell under the "other" category. The Latvian *Saeima* approved a position on the DSA proposal at the level of the European Affairs Committee on behalf of the *Saeima*, while in the Slovak *Národná rada* the draft regulation was also discussed in the Committee on Economic Affairs. In the Austrian *Nationalrat*, the Subcommittee on EU Affairs issued an opinion addressed to the government.

The Danish *Folketing* and the Estonian *Riigikogu* formed an opinion on the Digital Service Act by giving the government a mandate for EU-level negotiations.

The Dutch *Tweede Kamer* noted that the standing committee on Justice and Security and the standing committee on Asylum and Integration/Justice and Home Affairs jointly posed questions to the European Commission in light of the political dialogue regarding the DSA proposal.

The German *Bundestag* and the Belgian *Kamer van volksvertegenwoordigers/Chambre des représentants* provided information on the national legislation through which the DSA was implemented.

In the European Parliament's Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO), the DSA is scrutinised mainly through meetings of the Working Group on the Implementation of the DSA. The outcome of these meetings depended, and could among other things include questions addressed to the European Commission or to designated platforms. Other ways in which the DSA was scrutinised included frequent exchanges of views with the European Commission in the IMCO committee meetings and at other events, such as public hearings.

46. Subsequently, Parliaments/Chambers were asked to evaluate how the DSA tackled the threats of disinformation. Out of the 31 Parliaments/Chambers that responded to this question, only six assessed it as sufficient (Austrian *Nationalrat* and *Bundesrat*, Italian *Senato della Repubblica*, Lithuanian *Seimas*, Romanian *Senat*, Slovenian *Državni zbor* and the European Parliament), while three (French *Sénat*, Dutch *Tweede Kamer* and the Polish *Senat*) considered that it was not sufficiently addressing the threats of disinformation and was in need of changes. The vast majority (22) of respondents expressed no opinion on the matter, and six skipped the question.

47. When asked whether there is a need for more coordination and interaction of Member States' disinformation policies at the EU level, only 19 Parliaments/Chambers responded by selecting from four predefined answers. Nearly half (18) skipped the question.

Out of those Parliaments/Chambers who replied the question, 13 indicated that more coordination is necessary (Estonian *Riigikogu*, Finnish *Eduskunta*, French *Sénat*, Hungarian *Országgyűlés*, Italian *Senato della Repubblica*, Latvian *Saeima*, Maltese *Kamra tad-Deputati*, Polish *Sejm* and *Senat*, Romanian *Camera Deputaţilor* and *Senat*, Slovak *Národná rada* and the European Parliament), though without full harmonisation, while only one Parliament (Portuguese *Assembleia da República*) called for full harmonisation. Five Parliaments/Chambers felt that the current level of coordination is sufficient (Austrian *Nationalrat* and *Bundesrat*, Bulgarian *Narodno sabranie*, Czech *Poslanecká sněmovna*, Lithuanian *Seimas* and the Dutch *Tweede Kamer*), and none opposed any EU interference in this matter.

48. The question on measures taken within the administrations of Parliaments/Chambers to strengthen cyber-resilience sought to map Parliaments/Chambers' activity on that matter. A total of 30 responses were submitted, where Parliaments/Chambers provided information on a wide range of measures that have been taken or are planned to be taken.

The measures that were most frequently taken by administrations can be grouped into following main categories:

- Introducing a post in the organisational structure equivalent to Chief Information Security Officer: Austrian *Nationalrat* and *Bundesrat*, Belgian *Kamer van volksvertegenwoordigers/Chambre des représentants* and *Senaat/Sénat*, Estonian *Riigikogu*, Luxembourgian *Chambre des Députés*, Dutch *Eerste Kamer* and the Portuguese *Assembleia da República*;

- Establishing of a cybersecurity department/team: Austrian *Nationalrat* and *Bundesrat*, Portuguese *Assembleia da República* and the Slovak *Národná rada*;
- Introducing internal cybersecurity regulations: Hungarian *Országgyűlés* and the Romanian *Camera Deputaţilor*;
- Implementing measures referring to the 2020 EU Cybersecurity Strategy, NIS2, Cyber Resilience Act, and/or international standards: Austrian *Nationalrat* and *Bundesrat*, Czech *Poslanecká sněmovna* and the Portuguese *Assembleia da República*;
- Implementing government initiatives and policies: Austrian *Nationalrat* and *Bundesrat*, Lithuanian *Seimas* and the Spanish *Cortes Generales*;
- Cooperation with national institutions dealing with cybersecurity: Austrian *Nationalrat* and *Bundesrat*, Latvian *Saeima* and the Romanian *Senat*
- Trainings and seminars on cybersecurity: Austrian *Nationalrat* and *Bundesrat*, Belgian *Kamer van volksvertegenwoordigers/Chambre des représentants*, Cypriot *Vouli ton Antiprosopon*, Czech *Senát*, Estonian *Riigikogu* and the French *Sénat*.

For the full responses, please consult the annex attached to the report. Some of them are as follows:

- The Austrian *Nationalrat* and *Bundesrat* took a number of measures to strengthen the Parliament's cyber resilience against cyber threats. These included organisational measures such as the establishment of processes and procedures as well as directives and guidelines. Operational measures included a dedicated Security Operations Centre (SOC) team overseeing Security Information and Event Management (SIEM), firewalls, network intrusion detection and prevention, endpoint protection, regular vulnerability scanning and penetration testing, distributed-denial-of-service (DDoS) protection as well as regularly conducted awareness trainings and exercises, e.g. phishing exercises. Moreover, the Austrian *Nationalrat* and *Bundesrat* informed that the Chief Information Security Officer (CISO) had conducted internal audits as well as risk assessments and reports directly to the Secretary General following current best-practice as well as recommendations by international standards (i.e. the German BSI-Standard 200-1 for Information Security Management Systems (ISMS)). Furthermore, it was mentioned that the Cybersecurity unit co-operated closely with relevant Austrian authorities such the Austrian Government Computer Emergency Response Team (GovCERT) at the Federal Chancellery and the Cyber Security Center (CSC) at the Federal Ministry of Interior.
- The Cypriot *Vouli ton Antiprosopon* reported that it had implemented several measures to protect its systems including its digital archive (no external access), remote access systems like email and e-cooperation (handled by a separate government authority), the Parliament's website (hosted on a Cloud Flared system by an external company), classified documents (not circulated digitally), Cloud systems (not used until the state establishes its own Cloud infrastructure), internal networks (secured with a double firewall), Visitor Wi-Fi (open, but transferring sensitive information or materials is prohibited), seminars on cybersecurity for MPs and staff.
- The Greek *Vouli ton Ellinon* highlighted some measures like the use of Content Delivery Networks, Multi Factor Authentication, Layered Backup, Endpoint protection, Securing the perimeter, Network Access Control, Recovery Plan, Incident response, and Security Operations Centre (SOC) as a Service.
- The Polish *Sejm* listed several security tools, ranging from standard procedures such as two-step verification and hardware keys, through regular renewal of strong passwords.

- The Polish *Senate* mentioned examples of technical solutions that had been introduced, such as encryption of connections and multifactor authentication. Among the conceptual solutions, the introduction of administrative procedures created to improve security, a strategy of diversification, and the selection of brand vendors were mentioned.

49. In the last question in this chapter Parliaments/Chambers were invited to leave additional information or examples of a best practice in their Parliament/Chamber in dealing with disinformation.

In total, 10 Parliaments/Chambers did so.

Concerning the strong and reliable information channels, and to specifically counter disinformation targeting the Austrian *Nationalrat* and *Bundesrat*, a so-called “Newsroom” was established within the Parliamentary Administration. It is monitoring communication on social media that concern the Parliament. Moreover, the information was provided that when wrongful reports appear, it is decided on a case-by-case basis whether they will be corrected or not. In addition, to prevent the emergence of fake news, the Department for Communication of the Parliamentary Administration is regularly providing information on the Parliaments official website and social media accounts (Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, also via podcasts and short videos), so that they are positioned as platforms where people can get verified news/information. The Austrian *Nationalrat* and *Bundesrat* highlighted that it is now also active on TikTok, and among other things goes live at plenary sessions, thus reaching new target groups.

The Belgian *Senaat/Sébat* regularly participates in end-user awareness campaigns with the SafeOnWeb institution to encourage good user behavior. On the other hand, the Belgian *Kamer van volksvertegenwoordigers/Chambre des représentants* informed that the staff awareness campaign involving a fake “spear phishing” e-mail (a government e-mail looking for volunteers to prepare the 195th anniversary of the Kingdom of Belgium) was particularly effective in raising staff awareness.

The Italian *Senato della Repubblica* informed that the issue of foreign interferences in democratic processes of Member States and candidate countries has been referred jointly to the EU Affairs Committee and Foreign affairs Committee. Furthermore, it stated that the need of this initiative, also at the national level, was perceived following the European Parliament's adoption, on 1 June 2023, of a resolution entitled “Foreign interference in all democratic processes in the European Union, including disinformation”, which followed a similar resolution of the previous year that led to the establishment of the Special committee to contribute to institutional resilience against foreign interference, hybrid threats and disinformation. The Italian *Senato della Repubblica* took also notice of other events: in December 2024 annulment of elections in Romania due to suspected foreign interference; referendum and interfered election procedures in Moldova and Georgia; and, lastly, on 18 December 2024, the setting up by the European Parliament of a new special Committee on the European Democracy Shield.

The European Parliament highlighted that the Special Committee on Foreign Interference in all Democratic Processes in the European Union, including Disinformation (INGE) presented their report that was adopted by the European Parliament on 9 March 2022. In the resolution, MEPs adopted recommendations on how to strengthen the EU's response to foreign interference in its democracy.

The Bulgarian *Narodno sabranie* added that committee hearings are a very useful practice in this respect.