

PLENARY MEETING OF THE LXXV COSAC

Questionnaire for the 45th COSAC Bi-annual Report

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FILOXENIA CONFERENCE CENTRE – NICOSIA

Questionnaire for the 45th COSAC Bi-annual Report

Please provide the name of your Parliament/Chamber and your contact details.

- Name of Parliament/Chamber: Eerste Kamer der Staten-Generaal (Senate), the Netherlands
- Contact person:
- Phone:
- E-mail:

Chapter I: Multiannual Financial Framework 2028–2034

Introductory paragraph

The European Commission presented in 2025 its proposal for the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2028–2034, which sets out the Union's long-term budgetary priorities and expenditure ceilings. The proposal aims to align the EU's financial planning with evolving political, economic and social challenges, including the green and digital transitions, enlargement, competitiveness, and security needs. This chapter seeks to gather information on the scrutiny activities carried out by national parliaments in relation to the MFF package, as well as their positions regarding its main priorities, flexibility mechanisms and potential reforms to ensure that the EU budget remains transparent, sustainable and responsive to future developments.

- 1. Which policy areas should the next MFF prioritise in your Parliament's/Chamber's view?**
Please select up to three policy areas that you consider the highest priorities for the next MFF.

- ☐ Defence and strategic autonomy
- ☐ Climate adaptation and environment
- ☐ Cohesion policy
- ☐ Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)
- ☐ Digital transformation
- ☐ Migration and border management
- ☐ EU enlargement support
- ☐ Reform of EU own resources
- ☒ No opinion
- ☐ Other - please briefly specify below

The Senate has not adopted an opinion on priorities within the MFF

2. Has your Parliament/Chamber discussed the flexibility of the current MFF to respond to crises?

- ☒ Yes
☐ No

2.1. If yes, please share your Parliament's/Chamber's opinion on this matter:

The overall MFF structure was discussed, however the Senate did not adopt an opinion.

3. Should flexibility mechanisms in the next MFF be:

- ☐ Limited to specific areas (e.g., disaster relief, defence)
☐ Applied across the entire budget
☒ No opinion

4. Would your Parliament/Chamber support introducing a mid-term mandatory review of the MFF by the European Commission every 3 or 4 years?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Only in case of major external events (e.g. wars, pandemic, economic shocks e.t.c.)
☒ No opinion

If you have any further information to share on this chapter, please briefly do so below

The Senate has been working on the MFF in several ways. A technical briefing by Dutch government officials was held to get more information about the overall setup of the new MFF and the position of the Dutch government in this matter. The MFF has also been an important topic of discussion in the General Debate on European Affairs, a debate held yearly with the minister of Foreign Affairs. Finally, the Senate is routinely informed of the developments in the (European) Council by the Government: it receives annotated agendas prior to the meetings and reports afterwards. The Senate may decide to have a written dialogue with the government further to these agendas or reports. It is not custom for the Dutch Senate to adopt political opinions.

Introductory paragraph

The European Union's enlargement policy remains a cornerstone of its external action, serving as a key driver for stability, democracy and prosperity in candidate and potential candidate countries. In this context, national parliaments play an essential role by scrutinising legislative and policy proposals related to enlargement, engaging in dialogue with their governments and EU institutions, and contributing to the political debate on the future of the Union. This section aims to gather information on how Parliaments/Chambers are involved in the examination of the Commission's proposal on EU enlargement, the procedures they follow during this process, their views on the institutional reforms required for future enlargements, and the mechanisms through which they oversee and support the accession process.

5. Has your Parliament/Chamber examined the Commission proposal COM(2025) 690 on EU enlargement?

If No proceed to Question 6

☒ Yes

☐ No

5.1. If yes, at what level:

☐ Plenary

☒ Parliamentary Committee

☐ Other - please briefly specify below

(max.100 words)

5.2. If yes, did your Parliament/Chamber consult its government before or during the examination?

☒ Yes

☐ No

5.3. If yes, did your Parliament/Chamber adopt a political opinion in the framework of the political dialogue:

☐ Yes

☒ No

6. What reforms does your Parliament/Chamber believe are necessary for the EU to better integrate new members?

Multiple answers possible

- ☐ Adjustments to the EU budget
- ☐ Reform of European Parliament seat allocation
- ☐ Streamlined decision-making procedures
- ☐ Other - please briefly specify below

The Senate has not adopted an opinion in this matter. However enlargement is a priority in the committee for European Affairs. Decision-making procedures for enlargement is a recurring theme in the debate.

7. What tools does your Parliament/Chamber use to oversee the enlargement process?
Multiple answers possible

- ☒ Pre-accession monitoring reports
- ☐ Thematic hearings and debates
- ☒ Scrutiny of government action in the Council
- ☐ Regular dialogues with candidate country parliaments
- ☐ Other - please briefly specify below

(max.100 words)

If you have any further information to share on this chapter, please briefly do so below

Chapter III: Scrutiny of EU Legislative Proposals by National Parliaments

Introductory paragraph

The scrutiny of EU legislative proposals by national parliaments represents a cornerstone of parliamentary involvement in the Union's decision-making process. Effective scrutiny not only strengthens democratic accountability but also ensures that EU legislation reflects the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality while remaining closely aligned with national priorities and concerns. This chapter seeks to explore how parliaments organise and conduct scrutiny, the analytical capacities and expertise available to them and the extent of coordination with Members of the European Parliament (MEPs).

Section I. Subsidiarity Assessments and Analytical Capacity

Introductory paragraph

Under Protocol No. 2 to the Treaty on European Union, national Parliaments are entrusted with ensuring that draft EU legislative acts comply with the principle of subsidiarity. Conducting these assessments requires both procedural clarity and adequate analytical capacity, particularly when proposals are of a technical or complex nature. This section examines the practice of selecting legislative initiatives for examination, the procedures followed, the sources used, and the adequacy of information provided by the Commission.

8. Does your Parliament/Chamber scrutinise the Commission Work Programme (CWP)?

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No

8.1. If yes, how are the topics or legislative initiatives listed in the Commission Work Programme allocated within your Parliament/Chamber for scrutiny? (Multiple answers possible)

- ☐ The Committee on European Affairs examines the entire CWP
- ☐ The Committee on European Affairs examines the entire CWP and distributes individual topics to competent standing committees
- ☒ Each sectoral committee autonomously selects relevant CWP initiatives for scrutiny
- ☒ Coordination is done jointly by the Committee on European Affairs and the sectoral committees
- ☐ A central coordination body (e.g. EU Affairs Unit) decides on allocation
- ☐ No formal procedure is in place for allocating CWP initiatives
- ☐ Other - please briefly specify below

Each year, the Senate draws up their European Work Programme which lists the priority initiatives from the CWP. The procedure is that first, the initiatives listed in the CWP are circulated to all political groups in the Senate. They indicate which initiatives they wish to prioritise. On the basis of this list, the next step is that each Senate committee selects the priority initiatives in their field. The committee on European Affairs has a coordinating role: it collates the lists. The Senate adopts the final work programme in the plenary session.

9. Does your Parliament/Chamber rely on in-house experts to analyse legislative proposals? Multiple answers possible

- ☐ Yes, there is a dedicated internal team of experts for this purpose
- ☐ Yes, analysis is carried out by committee secretariats or legal services
- ☐ No, but external experts are consulted when needed
- ☒ No, such analysis is not systematically carried out
- ☒ No, analysis is provided by the government
- ☐ Other - please briefly specify below

(max.100 words)

10. When an EU legislative proposal is of high complexity or strategic importance, how does your Parliament/Chamber ensure adequate analysis and support for scrutiny?

Multiple answers possible

- ☐ By assigning it to specialised staff or advisors
- ☒ By requesting explanatory material from the Government or Permanent Representation
- ☒ By consulting external experts (academics, stakeholders, etc.)
- ☐ No special approach is followed
- ☐ Other - please briefly specify below

(max.100 words)

11. Which sources of information or analytical tools does your Parliament/Chamber consult when conducting subsidiarity assessments?

Multiple answers possible

- ☒ The Commission's explanatory memorandum accompanying the proposal
- ☒ The Commission's impact assessment
- ☐ Internal services or legal/policy experts within Parliament
- ☐ External academic or third-party analyses
- ☒ Input from the government
- ☒ Reasoned opinions and comments from other national parliaments (via IPEX)
- ☐ Other - please briefly specify below

(max.100 words)

12. After submitting a reasoned opinion or political dialogue contribution on a legislative proposal, does your Parliament continue to follow the progress of the proposal in the EU legislative process?

- ☒ Yes, in all cases
- ☐ Yes, in selected/high-priority cases
- ☐ No

12.1. If yes, what kind of follow-up does your Parliament/Chamber carry out on a legislative proposal after submitting an opinion and receiving a reply from the European Commission?

Multiple answers possible

- ☐ Requests updates from the national Permanent Representation in Brussels
- ☐ Requests updates from the national government
- ☐ Monitors discussions in the European Parliament
- ☐ Monitors changes to the legislative text in Council working groups
- ☒ Continues scrutiny through parliamentary committee meetings
- ☐ Prepares follow-up contributions if needed
- ☒ Tracking via IPEX updates
- ☒ Other - please briefly specify below

The file on the proposal on our website is updated with the state of play of the procedures in the relevant European institutions (EP, Council).

Section II. Coordination with Members of the European Parliament (MEPs)

Introductory paragraph

Given that the European Parliament and the Council act as co-legislators, coordination between national parliaments and MEPs can enhance coherence and improve the effectiveness of parliamentary scrutiny. This section examines the forms of information exchange and cooperation between national parliaments and their MEPs, as well as possible initiatives to strengthen such interaction.

13. Does your Parliament/Chamber exchange information with MEPs from your country regarding EU legislative proposals examined at the national level?

If No, proceed to Question 14

- ☐ Yes

☒ No

13.1. If yes, is this process provided for under the Constitution of your country or the Rules of Procedure of your Parliament/Chamber?

(max.100 words)

13.2. If yes, in which ways does this exchange of information usually take place?

Multiple answers possible

- ☐ Through formal meetings
- ☐ Through informal contacts
- ☐ Through the national Parliament's representation in Brussels
- ☐ Through written communication or reports shared with MEPs
- ☐ MEP attendance of national committee meetings
- ☐ Other - please briefly specify below

(max.100 words)

14. Do MEPs from your country inform your Parliament/Chamber on the outcome of discussions in the European Parliament on EU proposals previously scrutinised at national level?

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No

15. Has your Parliament/Chamber taken any initiatives to strengthen cooperation or information-sharing with MEPs?

- ☒ Yes (please briefly specify below):
- ☐ No, but such initiatives are being considered
- ☐ No

In the past, MEPs have been invited for meetings with Members of the Senate, and the committee on European Affairs has met MEPs in Brussels, but these initiatives have not become structural or recurrent. At the start of the term of the MEPs, the national parliamentary representative gets in touch with MEPs. They are also invited to receive regular updates via our newsletter.

If you have any further information to share on this chapter, please briefly do so below

The Senate does not organise or provides facilities for regular, structured contact between MPs and MEPS. However, some are in contact with each other - either on their own initiative or via their political parties.

Chapter IV: Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools in Parliaments

Introductory paragraph:

Emerging AI tools are increasingly being explored by national parliaments to improve internal workflows, facilitate timely scrutiny of EU proposals, and support Members and staff in managing growing legislative complexity. As these technologies evolve, they present both opportunities and challenges for parliamentary institutions, raising questions about efficiency, ethics, transparency, and governance. The purpose of this chapter is to examine the extent to which Parliaments/Chambers are integrating AI into their daily operations, the areas in which such tools are applied, the challenges encountered, and the measures adopted to ensure responsible and effective use of AI in parliamentary environments.

16. Has your Parliament/Chamber developed or adopted any AI tools to support its work?

- ☐ Yes, one or more tools have been developed in-house specifically for parliamentary use
- ☒ Yes, externally developed or commercially available tools are used
- ☐ No, but AI adoption is being considered
- ☐ No, and there are currently no plans to use AI tools

If yes, please answer Questions 16.1, 16.2 and 16.3 below.

16.1. What is the purpose of the AI tools?

Multiple answers possible

- ☐ Analyzing legislative proposals
- ☐ EU legislation tracking
- ☐ Supporting translation or multilingual access
- ☐ Drafting / summarizing documents
- ☐ Research/information retrieval
- ☐ Managing citizen correspondence
- ☒ Other - please briefly specify below

We use a speech-to-text application for transcription of plenary sessions, several tools to detect network traffic patterns and anomalies (cybersecurity) and an automated redaction software to automatically anonymize incoming items such as letters from citizens.

16.2. What are the main challenges or risks your Parliament faces in adopting AI-based tools?

Multiple answers possible

- ☒ Accuracy/Reliability issues
- ☐ Lack of technical expertise
- ☒ Data protection and legal/ethical concerns
- ☐ Budgetary constraints
- ☐ Resistance to change or institutional inertia
- ☒ Lack of tailored tools for parliamentary needs
- ☐ Lack of / Difficulty in adopting a formal policy or ethical framework governing AI use
- ☐ No opinion
- ☐ Other - please briefly specify below

(max.100 words)

16.3. What benefits have been observed from the use of AI tools?

Multiple answers possible

- ☐ Time savings in drafting/research
- ☐ Improved access to legislative information
- ☒ Facilitated work process
- ☒ Enhanced citizen engagement
- ☐ Cost efficiency
- ☐ No opinion
- ☐ Other - please briefly specify below

(max.100 words)

17. Has your Parliament/Chamber provided training to Members of Parliament and/or staff on the use or implications of AI?

- ☐ Yes, for Members of Parliament

- ☐ Yes, for parliamentary staff
- ☐ Yes, for both Members and staff
- ☒ No, but training is planned
- ☐ No

18. Does your Parliament/Chamber have a dedicated team, unit or designated staff responsible for AI?

- ☒ Yes, a dedicated AI team exists
- ☐ Yes, responsibilities are assigned to an existing department
- ☐ No, but under consideration
- ☐ No

18.1. If yes, what is their main role? *(Multiple answers possible)*

- ☒ Monitoring developments in AI and emerging technologies
- ☒ Advising Members of Parliament and/or committees on AI-related issues
- ☒ Developing or coordinating the use of AI tools in parliamentary work
- ☒ Providing training and guidance to parliamentary staff
- ☒ Drafting internal guidelines or strategies on AI use
- ☐ Other - please briefly specify below

(max.100 words)

If you have any further information to share on this chapter, please briefly do so below

We conducted a pilot (partly inspired by the AI-literacy requirements as stated in the AI-Act) to test and implement several public generative AI-tools in a transparent and responsible manner. Nearly half of the employees participated in this pilot. In addition, we developed an AI-strategy and guidelines for using generative AI within the parliament.