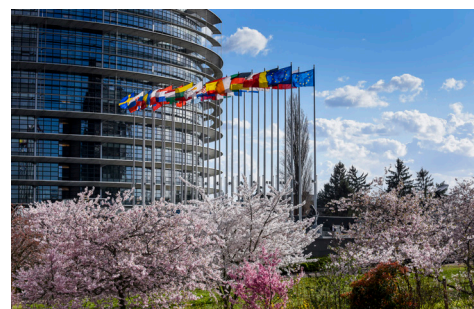


RELATIONS BETWEEN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND EU NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS ANNUAL REPORT 2018



PARLIAMENTS IN THE EUROPEAN UNION



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



751 MEPs



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

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



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



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



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



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



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



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



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



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



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

Annual report 2018
Relations between the European Parliament and
EU national Parliaments

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

Katrin RUHRMANN

Director

katrin.ruhrmann@europarl.europa.eu

Jesús GÓMEZ

Head of Unit, Legislative Dialogue Unit

jesus.gomez@europarl.europa.eu

Pekka NURMINEN

Head of Unit, Institutional Cooperation Unit

pekka.nurminen@europarl.europa.eu

Manuscript completed by:

Zsuzsanna BALÁZS

Administrator, Legislative Dialogue Unit

zsuzsanna.balazs@europarl.europa.eu

Hanneke WESTERBAAN

Administrator, Legislative Dialogue Unit

hanneke.westerbaan@europarl.europa.eu

Manuscript closed on 30 April 2019.

relnatparl@ep.europa.eu

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/relnatparl/en/home.html>

All photos and illustrations © European Union, 2019, unless otherwise stated.

ANNUAL REPORT 2018

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword by the European Parliament's Vice-Presidents responsible for relations with EU national Parliaments	8
1. INSTITUTIONAL INTERPARLIAMENTARY BODIES	15
1.1 The Conference of Parliamentary Committees for Union Affairs (COSAC)	15
1.2 Conference of Speakers of EU Parliaments (EUSC)	17
2. INTERPARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCES (IPCs)	19
2.1 European Parliamentary Week, the Interparliamentary Conference on Stability, Economic Coordination and Governance in the European Union (IPC SECG) and the European Semester Conference	19
2.2 Interparliamentary Conference for the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Common Security and Defence Policy (IPC CFSP/CSDP)	21
3. INTERPARLIAMENTARY SCRUTINY AND EVALUATION IN THE AREA OF FREEDOM, SECURITY AND JUSTICE	23
3.1 Joint parliamentary scrutiny of Europol: an innovative institutional set-up for parliamentary scrutiny	23
3.2 The European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation (Eurojust)	25
4. INTERPARLIAMENTARY MEETINGS	26
4.1 Interparliamentary Committee Meetings (ICMs)	26
4.2 Interparliamentary cooperation in the field of EU external action	28
4.3 Bilateral visits from EU national Parliaments to the European Parliament	30
4.4 Use of videoconferencing for bilateral exchanges	31
5. LEGISLATIVE COOPERATION WITH EU NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS	32
5.1 The Early Warning System and Protocol No 2 to the Treaty of Lisbon	32
5.2 Task Force on subsidiarity, proportionality and doing less more efficiently	34
5.3 Informal Political Dialogue and Protocol No 1 to the TFEU	35
6. NETWORKS AND EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION	37
6.1 Interparliamentary EU Information Exchange (IPEX)	37
6.2 European Centre for Parliamentary Research and Documentation (ECPRD)	38
6.3 Network of EU national Parliaments' representatives in Brussels	39
6.4 Staff seminars	40
7. TOOLS AND SUPPORT ACTIVITIES	41
7.1 CONNECT	41
7.2 Directory of Corresponding Committees (CorCom)	41
7.3 Presidency Parliament Support Programme	42
7.4 Publications of the Directorate for Relations with National Parliaments	43
8. The Directorate for relations with National Parliaments	44

9. ANNEXES	45
ANNEX I - COSAC meetings - Topics and keynote speakers 2018	45
ANNEX II	
Interparliamentary meetings organised by the European Parliament committees in Brussels in 2018	46
ANNEX III - EU national Parliaments' visits to the European Parliament (including videoconferences) 2018	48
ANNEX IV - Early Warning System data	54
ANNEX V - Contributions under Protocol 1- Informal Political Dialogue	56
ANNEX VI - European Centre for Parliamentary Research and Documentation (ECPRD)	57

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

2019 will be a year of change for the European Parliament. The 8th legislative term is coming to an end and a new European Parliament will constitute in July following the European elections. During this legislature (2014-2019), relations with national Parliaments have further developed and intensified. National Parliaments and the European Parliament have jointly debated many major political developments, and new formats of cooperation have been established and existing ones developed further.

This annual activity report of the Directorate for Relations with National Parliaments gives an overview of all activities and developments in interparliamentary cooperation with national Parliaments in 2018. This cooperation involves 41 national Parliaments and Chambers across the 28 Member States and the European Parliament.

Issues such as Brexit, the EU budget, migration, security, foreign and defence policy, the Economic and Monetary Union, data protection, the future of food and farming and the European elections have been the focus of debates in various interparliamentary meetings. Exchanges between members of Parliaments across the EU are essential for the mutual understanding of concerns and challenges, and link national and European perspectives on topics with a view to finding common solutions.

In line with the Treaty of Lisbon, national Parliaments together with the European Parliament have been given the task of scrutiny and oversight in the area of Justice and Home Affairs, in particular regarding Europol and Eurojust. The work of the Joint Parliamentary Scrutiny Group on Europol (JPSG), established in 2017, has been a major new development in interparliamentary cooperation. Its main task is the political monitoring of Europol's activities in fulfilling its mission at a time when Europol's role in fighting terrorism and organised crime has become increasingly important.



Vice-Presidents Mairead McGuinness and Bogusław Liberadzki © EU - EP

National Parliaments have expressed a strong interest in getting involved in debates on draft legislation at an early stage. Where possible, this has been taken account of in Interparliamentary Committee Meetings and in bilateral exchanges. This dialogue can provide an insight into how legislative initiatives will work and what their impact will be in Member States. It also allows national Parliaments to better scrutinise their governments as co-legislators in the Council.

The European Union has brought stability and prosperity to our continent. In 2018 the European values of democracy, the rule of law and freedom of the press needed to be defended more than ever within the European Union and beyond. It is essential for national Parliaments and the European Parliament to defend these common European values together, as well as a well-functioning parliamentary democracy.

2019 will mark the 10th anniversary of the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon, the so-called Treaty of Parliaments. Indeed, the Lisbon Treaty has fundamentally changed interparliamentary cooperation in the EU and has made national Parliaments actors on the European level. Through the Subsidiarity Control Mechanism and Informal Political Dialogue, national Parliaments have their say on European legislation independently from their governments.

Cooperation between national Parliaments and the European Parliament has grown in importance in recent years and continues to intensify and broaden. We may not always share the same view, but debates with our counterparts in national Parliaments reflect mutual respect and a strong political will for constructive dialogue. We will continue to develop this dialogue and our working methods into the future.

Members of both national Parliaments and the European Parliament are directly elected. Together we represent citizens of the European Union. It is our common task to encourage citizens to actively participate in democratic life and to express their views in elections, be it at regional, national or European level.

In July 2019, a new legislative term will begin. The election of the Commission President and agreement on the political programme of the next European Commission will mark the political priorities of the next legislative term.

The next five years will be crucial for the European Union. Interparliamentary debate and cooperation will become even more important in addressing future challenges. We encourage all parties to remain committed to interparliamentary cooperation and to continue engaging in this dialogue in the next five years.



Mairead McGuinness
Vice-President



Bogusław Liberadzki
Vice-President

Key developments and main topics on the interparliamentary agenda in 2018

2018 marked an intensive and active year for interparliamentary cooperation. This was also reflected in the intensive work of the Directorate for Relations with National Parliaments (hereinafter 'the Directorate'). A high number of interparliamentary conferences, meetings and debates and a record number of bilateral visits took place throughout the year. The Directorate continued to cooperate closely with other European Parliament services and organised a number of meetings between the administrations of national Parliaments and the EP in areas of common interest, with a view to establishing closer contacts and networks between staff working on areas of common interest.

This work was conducted under the political leadership and guidance of Mr Antonio Tajani, EP President, Ms Mairead McGuinness and Mr Bogusław Liberadzki, EP Vice-Presidents responsible for relations with national Parliaments, and Ms Danuta Hübner, Chair of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs (AFCO). The work was also supported by the EP's committees, political groups and relevant political bodies (the Conference of Presidents and the Conference of Committee Chairs).

2018 was marked by an increasing consistency in the choice of topics of interparliamentary debates. A number of topics resurfaced in discussions in almost all interparliamentary fora, such as Brexit and the EU's new multiannual financial framework. Cohesion policies, the Western Balkans and the European neighbourhood policy were discussed on many occasions, not least because these topics were priorities of the EU presidencies in 2018.

EU national Parliaments also contributed substantially to major political and legislative debates in 2018, mainly in Interparliamentary Committee Meetings (ICMs), but also during bilateral visits and meetings with rapporteurs of the European Parliament.

National Parliaments were continuously involved in the political, legislative and institutional debate on European issues. One of the major achievements of interparliamentary debate has been to enable national Parliaments to look beyond national agendas and exchange views with Members of Parliament from across the European Union, helping to bring European debate to Member States and their citizens. Brexit and the multiannual financial framework have been consistently present in the political debate. The European elections were also widely discussed in 2018, with a view to encouraging citizens to participate actively in democratic life and to cast their votes in elections at regional, national and European level.

1. National Parliaments' contribution to the debate during negotiations on Brexit

The negotiations on the UK's withdrawal from the EU were discussed in many interparliamentary fora and bilateral meetings in 2018. The European Parliament will play an important role in the Brexit process, since it will be the only Parliament, aside from the UK Parliament, to vote on the Withdrawal Agreement. In line with Article 50 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), the EP has to give its consent to any Withdrawal Agreement.

The Conference of Speakers of EU Parliaments (EUSC) discussed Brexit in Tallinn in April 2018 within the framework of a debate on the Future of Europe. Speakers emphasised the importance of the United Kingdom's orderly withdrawal from the EU. The resulting conclusions underline the need to consider the rights of EU and UK citizens living in one another's territories, the financial settlement and the unique circumstances of the island of Ireland as priorities during the negotiation process. Speakers also called for the unity of the EU-27 to be maintained throughout the negotiations.

The Conference of Parliamentary Committees for Union Affairs (COSAC) plenary meeting in Vienna in November 2018 dedicated one session to a debate on Brexit. In its contribution, COSAC

acknowledged that EU heads of state and government had full confidence in Michel Barnier as the EU's Chief Negotiator and that they were determined to stay united. COSAC also stressed the need to preserve the integrity of the internal market and the jurisdiction of the Court of Justice of the European Union with regard to internal market principles. COSAC also emphasised the need for solidarity towards Ireland and the importance of interparliamentary cooperation with the United Kingdom after Brexit. However, the modalities for future interparliamentary cooperation with the UK will be examined only when the nature of the future relationship between the EU and the UK is known.

In addition, AFCO organised an ICM to reflect on the state of the debate on the Future of Europe, including Brexit, and other EP committees organised public hearings to explore the impact of Brexit on their policy areas. ICMs played a pivotal role in keeping EU national Parliaments informed on the status quo of the UK's withdrawal procedure.

Brexit was also regularly discussed during bilateral visits of national Parliaments to the European Parliament, most importantly during visits of British MPs, but also when speakers, committees and MPs of other Parliaments met with Members of the European Parliament, and in particular with the EP Brexit coordinator, Mr Guy Verhofstadt, and other members of the EP Brexit Steering Group.

2. Exchange of views on the new multiannual financial framework (MFF)

Another major concern discussed by national Parliaments and the EP in different fora and meetings in 2018 was the future financing of the EU. Discussions, often controversial, revolved around which policy areas should have priority in the future EU budget and how to deal with an increasing number of EU tasks at a time when the EU budget is likely to be reduced owing to the withdrawal of the UK.

Members of national Parliaments raised the issue during European Parliamentary Week (EPW) in February 2018, when the Commissioner for Budget and Human Resources, Mr Günther H. Oettinger, addressed them in advance of the Commission's presentation of its new proposal on the next multiannual financial framework (2021-2027)¹ in May. He underlined that the new tasks and challenges that the EU was facing, such as migration, the fight against terrorism, and internal and external security, also needed to be reflected in the EU budget. These were areas in which EU action would provide added value. However, the Commissioner also recalled that Brexit would result in a reduction of the EU budget.

The EUSC of April 2018 took note of the forthcoming Commission proposals and expressed its hope that the EU institutions would be able to make sufficient progress in the negotiations. COSAC's meeting in Sofia in June 2018 was partly dedicated to cohesion policy, and difficult compromise negotiations were required to finalise the text of the COSAC contribution.

3. Joint Parliamentary Scrutiny Group on Europol (JPSG): A new dimension of interparliamentary cooperation

The launch of the JPSG on Europol marked the development of a new form of interparliamentary cooperation. For the first time, EU national Parliaments and the European Parliament would jointly scrutinise and politically monitor an EU agency.

¹ The European Parliament adopted its interim report on the MFF 2021-2027 on 14 November 2018 (European Parliament resolution of 14 November 2018 on the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027 – Parliament's position with a view to an agreement). The resolution outlines the EP's priorities for the next MFF, including explicit figures for the MFF ceilings and for each of the sector-specific programmes for the period 2021-2027, in addition to changes to the draft legal texts tabled by the European Commission. Discussions on the MFF will continue after the European elections in the next European Parliament.

The debates on effective police and judicial cooperation, including timely sharing of information among national authorities through Europol and Eurojust, confirmed the importance and urgency of finalising discussions on the practical modalities of the parliamentary scrutiny of Europol.

The JPSG reached a consensus on its working methods and adopted its Rules of Procedure at its second meeting in Sofia on 18 and 19 March 2018. The adoption of the Rules of Procedure has allowed the JPSG to shift its focus from procedural to substantial matters. The first meeting under the new Rules of Procedure, namely the third JPSG meeting, took place on 24 and 25 September 2018 in Brussels.

In line with its tasks and responsibilities, as set out in the Europol Regulation², the JPSG held an exchange of views on the 2019-2021 Europol multiannual work programme. The Chairperson of the Europol Management Board and the European Data Protection Supervisor also attended the JPSG discussions. A broad range of topics was discussed, including how to tackle illegal content online, cybersecurity, and the fight against terrorism and organised crime.

4. Interparliamentary debates on migration

Migration has continued to dominate EU policy and interparliamentary debates throughout 2018. The EU has been striving towards a comprehensive and effective approach encompassing both internal and external action. Recalling the principle of solidarity and fair distribution of responsibility in matters relating to migration, the EP has repeatedly pointed out that saving lives must be a top priority.

The EUSC in Tallinn pointed out that EU migration policy should be based on the strong protection of external borders and focus on tackling the root causes of migration in countries of origin, in Africa in particular, with support from an EU plan for the continent. With regard to the management of refugee flows, Speakers considered that the reform of the European common asylum system was essential and underlined that the EU should work actively towards resolving conflicts in its neighbouring regions, with a view to helping to save lives and reducing migratory pressure and irregular migration.

COSAC debated security and the fight against illegal migration at its meeting in Vienna. It adopted recommendations in favour of a reformed Common European Asylum System, including a fully-fledged EU Asylum Agency, based on a fair balance between responsibility and solidarity, and underlined that readmission agreements should be fully implemented, in a non-discriminatory way towards all EU Member States.

5. External dimension of EU policies

Security and defence, and the EU's Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) were also high on the agenda for interparliamentary debate and were discussed by the EUSC in Tallinn, COSAC and the Interparliamentary Conference for the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP).

The EUSC in Tallinn dedicated one full session to European security and defence. On this occasion, EU Speakers reaffirmed the guiding principles of the Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy that emphasise the need for a stronger Europe. They called on Member States to work more closely together in the areas of security and defence and to strengthen the CSDP with a view to developing a common and credible defence capacity complementary to

² Regulation (EU) 2016/794 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 May 2016 on the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Europol) and replacing and repealing Council Decisions 2009/371/JHA, 2009/934/JHA, 2009/935/JHA, 2009/936/JHA and 2009/968/JHA (OJ L 135, 24.5.2016, p. 53).

that of NATO, while respecting the specific character of the security and defence policy of certain Member States. The Speakers also welcomed the launch of the European Defence Fund (EDF).

Speakers underlined that the establishment of PESCO strengthens security and defence cooperation between the Member States that are willing and able to work together closely and that this increases the EU's capacity as an international security partner, thus contributing to the security of EU citizens.

COSAC also welcomed PESCO as an integral part of the CSDP and as an instrument to strengthen European defence and contribute to stability and security.

At the Interparliamentary Conference on the CFSP and the CSDP in Vienna, participants exchanged views on the issue. The discussion revolved around the adoption of the joint Action Plan³ and an increased need for EU national Parliaments and the EP to oversee PESCO projects (17 were set to begin in 2018 and another 17 in 2019) and to promote more hybrid projects in the context of military mobility.

Stability and prosperity in the Eastern and Southern Neighbourhoods of the EU and in particular the Western Balkans were also in the focus of many interparliamentary debates throughout 2018. The EUSC underlined that enlargement should remain a key policy of the EU and that it should be based on respect for the values of the EU, strict compliance with the membership criteria and the principle of own merit. Speakers also warned that, in the light of the growing external influence in the Western Balkans, it was of the utmost importance that the EU continued to protect its values and interests in the region.

During its meetings in Sofia and Vienna, COSAC also reiterated its support for developing a concrete EU perspective with measurable results for the Western Balkans in accordance with the individual performance of countries and based on shared values and principles.

6. The European elections, a key moment in European democracy

The European Parliament elections from 23 to 26 May 2019, are of particular importance, not only for the composition and political direction of the new European Parliament and the election of the new Commission President, but also for future political developments in Europe.

Both the EUSC and COSAC have underlined the importance of the active engagement of citizens in political life, in particular through elections at regional, national and European level. National Parliaments and the European Parliament have encouraged all EU citizens to exercise their democratic rights at all levels, including their right to vote in the upcoming European elections.

With a view to the upcoming European elections, COSAC has appreciated the EU institutions' efforts to reinforce democratic resilience in Europe. Securing transparency in online political advertising, fighting disinformation campaigns, improving the rules on European political party funding and boosting cybersecurity are important measures to effectively counter new types of threats to free and fair elections.

The European Parliament runs an institutional information campaign to raise citizens' awareness about their rights and to encourage them to exercise their democratic rights, including the right to vote. The 2019 campaign, entitled 'This time I'm voting', builds on the support and engagement of volunteers who work to encourage citizens to get involved in the European elections. This campaign was presented to representatives of national Parliaments based in Brussels in July 2018.

³ Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council on the Action Plan on Military Mobility (JOIN(2018)0005).

7. Better protection of personal data in the EU

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)⁴, is but one example, among many others, of very important EU legislation discussed intensively with Members of national Parliaments in 2018.

On 15 May 2018, the eve of the entry into force of the data protection package, the EP invited Members of EU national Parliaments to an ICM to discuss the new regulation in terms of security for citizens and the role EU national Parliaments play in the transposition of this new EU regulation. During very lively debates Members of Parliament shared their concerns about the implementation of the GDPR in their Member States (e.g. big companies versus small and medium-sized enterprises, lack of harmonised guidelines) and exchanged best practices that had already been established in some countries (e.g. one-stop shop, personnel training, specialised websites). Parliamentarians discussed recommendations for the future, such as developing further safe European algorithms, monitoring implementation by the EU institutions, close cooperation with the European Data Protection Supervisor and completing the adoption of the ePrivacy Directive.

At the ICM, EP President Antonio Tajani delivered a speech on the importance of this package in protecting the fundamental rights of EU citizens in the digital era. He supported the initiative wholeheartedly as the entry into force of the regulation on 25 May 2018 was crucial for the security of EU citizens, as demonstrated by the recent Facebook-Cambridge Analytica incident.

This report will examine: the activities of interparliamentary institutions (chapter 1), interparliamentary conferences (chapter 2), interparliamentary scrutiny and evaluation (chapter 3), interparliamentary meetings (chapter 4), the legislative dialogue (chapter 5), administrative networks (chapter 6), and tools for interparliamentary cooperation (chapter 7).

⁴ The GDPR (Regulation (EU) 2016/679) is a regulation on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data. It is an essential step to strengthen individuals' fundamental rights in the digital age and facilitate business by clarifying rules for companies and public bodies in the digital single market.

1. INSTITUTIONAL INTERPARLIAMENTARY BODIES

1.1 The Conference of Parliamentary Committees for Union Affairs (COSAC)



COSAC, or the Conference of Parliamentary Committees for Union Affairs, was established in November 1989 in Paris. It is unique in that it is the only interparliamentary forum enshrined in the Treaties (Protocol No 1 on the role of national Parliaments in the European Union). The national Parliament of the Member State holding the rotating Council Presidency plays a leading role in defining the direction and work of COSAC. A Presidential Troika, of which the European Parliament is a permanent member, supports it. The Presidency relies on the organisational backing of a small secretariat, hosted by the EP and led by an official seconded from a national Parliament ('Permanent Member'). See www.ipex.eu

The year 2018 offered COSAC a more traditional setting in terms of both debates and atmosphere after Brexit and the future of the EU had dominated the two previous years' conferences. Both the Bulgarian (first semester of 2018) and the Austrian (second semester of 2018) Presidencies, while maintaining the issue of Brexit on the agenda, chose a variety of topics that were in line with the priorities of their Presidency of the EU Council.



The Chair of the Committee for Constitutional Affairs, Ms Danuta Hübner, with the First Vice-President of the European Commission, Mr Frans Timmermans (on the left), and the Chair of the Committee on European Affairs and Oversight of the European Funds of the Bulgarian National Assembly, Mr Kristian Vigenin (on the right), at the LIX COSAC plenary meeting in Sofia (© Bulgarian National Assembly).

The Bulgarian Presidency focused its agenda on enlargement and the Western Balkans, the European Pillar of Social Rights and cohesion policy beyond 2020. Brexit, climate policy and energy union featured on the agenda of the Austrian Presidency. However, while discussing its achievements, much attention was devoted to migration and security-related issues. The debates were very open and reflected divergent points of view.



In 2018, the issue of subsidiarity was also a recurrent topic in the work of COSAC. The Task Force on Subsidiarity, Proportionality and Doing Less More Efficiently, otherwise known as the Timmermans Task Force, established in late 2017, conducted its work during the first half of 2018. The European Parliament did not participate in the proceedings (see chapter 5.2). The work of the Task Force was discussed in COSAC meetings, in addition to a COSAC Working Group meeting in Brussels in March 2018, facilitated by the European Parliament.

The European Parliament expressed its view on subsidiarity with the adoption of two resolutions on the basis of EP reports by Mr Paulo Rangel⁵ and Ms Mady Delvaux⁶ (see chapter 5.1.3).

The report of the Task Force of July 2018 and the subsequent Commission communication⁷ of October 2018 met with a mixed reception. However, many Parliaments expect practical improvements to the Early Warning System (see chapter 5.1).

The issue of transparency within the EU was the subject of debate during the COSAC plenary meeting organised by the Austrian Parliament in Vienna from 18 to 20 November 2018. In particular, the debate centred on the transparency of the Council of the European Union when acting as EU legislator.



The EP delegation to COSAC has established and consolidated an open and fruitful partnership with the EU presidencies' Parliaments. This relationship is not formal, but is regular, and aims to find common positions which are also acceptable for other EU national Parliaments.

Main developments in 2018:

- Consolidation of the relations of the EP delegation to COSAC with the Parliaments holding the Council Presidency;
- Enhanced Franco-German cooperation in the form of joint positions and amendments to the COSAC contribution.

⁵ European Parliament resolution of 19 April 2018 on the implementation of the Treaty provisions concerning national parliaments (Texts adopted, P8_TA(2018)0186).

⁶ [European Parliament resolution of 18 April 2018 on the Annual Reports 2015-2016 on subsidiarity and proportionality](#) (Texts adopted, P8_TA(2018)0120).

⁷ Commission communication to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions of 23 October 2018 entitled 'The principles of subsidiarity and proportionality: Strengthening their role in the EU's policymaking' (COM(2018)0703).

1.2 Conference of Speakers of EU Parliaments (EUSC)

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

The EUSC agenda is prepared by the Meeting of the Secretaries General of the European Union Parliaments. See www.ipex.eu

The annual EUSC meeting, held in Tallinn on 23 and 24 April 2018 and chaired by Mr Eiki Nestor, Speaker of the Riigikogu, was well attended by the Speakers of the EU national Parliaments. The recently elected President of the Bundestag, Mr Wolfgang Schäuble, made his first appearance at the EUSC. The European Parliament was represented by President Antonio Tajani and Vice-President Bogusław Liberadzki.



Conference of Speakers of the EU Parliaments in Estonia. Antonio Tajani, President of the EP, meets with Eiki Nestor, Speaker of the Riigikogu, the Parliament of Estonia © EU-EP

President Tajani was the keynote speaker at the opening session. In his address, he spoke about a series of EP plenary debates on the future of the EU, with heads of state and government as high-level speakers. He expressed his wish to involve as many European political actors as possible in the debate on the future of the EU, and called for closer interparliamentary cooperation. With regard to the MFF, he questioned whether discussions should centre only on the distribution of resources, or also on the political strategy of the Union. He mentioned migration as one of the most urgent challenges for the EU and put forward the idea of a 'Marshall Plan' for Africa. In terms of European defence, Mr Tajani highlighted the need to develop a defence industry and European market, which would take advantage of economies of scale and allow for greater interoperability

for defence. Mr Tajani called on his colleagues to encourage citizens to cast their votes in the upcoming European elections.

The Estonian Presidency, responsible for the preparation of the EUSC conclusions in close cooperation with the Troika Parliaments (Slovakia, Austria and the EP), presented a text which was approved by acclamation.

With regard to the future of the EU, the Speakers reiterated their commitment to the values on which the EU was founded, such as respect for human rights, freedom, democracy, the rule of law and equality. Through unity and solidarity, the EU would be made stronger and more resilient. Brexit and the upcoming MFF talks also came into the debate, in addition to a migration policy that should be based on the strong protection of external borders. Speakers said that the focus must be on 'tackling the root causes of migration on the spot, in particular in Africa, supported by a European plan for this continent'.

On the subject of the importance of stability and prosperity in the Eastern and Southern Neighbourhoods of the EU, in particular the Western Balkans, the Speakers underlined that enlargement should remain a key policy of the EU. They noted the growing external influence in the Western Balkans and that it was of the utmost importance that the EU kept protecting its values and interests in the region.

The security and defence debate was the first of its kind at the EUSC. In their conclusions, Speakers said that 'the strengthening of the common security and defence policy should lead the EU to develop a common and credible defence capacity complementary to NATO'. They underlined that the steps taken to enhance defence cooperation, such as the establishment of PESCO, would increase the EU's capacity as an international security partner and they encouraged close cooperation between the EU and NATO. The establishment of the European Defence Fund (EDF) was also welcomed and Member States were called upon to increase their defence efforts and to pool costs and resources.

Vulnerability to cyber threats and the need for a collective response were also mentioned and the Speakers welcomed the Commission's adoption of the cybersecurity package in this respect.

Main developments in 2018:

- EUSC discussions focused on the future of the EU, security and defence, and the MFF;
- Consolidation of the EP's constructive role in finding compromises in divisive debates.

2. INTERPARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCES (IPCs)

2.1 European Parliamentary Week, the Interparliamentary Conference on Stability, Economic Coordination and Governance in the European Union (IPC SECG) and the European Semester Conference

The Interparliamentary Conference on Stability, Economic Coordination and Governance in the European Union (established in accordance with Article 13 of the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union [Fiscal Compact]) provides a framework for debate and the exchange of information and best practices in implementing the provisions of the Treaty and aims to strengthen cooperation between EU national Parliaments and the European Parliament. The Conference also contributes to ensuring democratic accountability in the area of economic governance and budgetary policy in the EU, particularly in the Economic and Monetary Union, taking into account the social dimension and without prejudice to the competences of EU national Parliaments and the EP.

The European Semester Conference provides an opportunity to exchange information on best practices in implementing the European Semester cycles and to strengthen cooperation in order to scrutinise the actions of the executives at national and European level within the framework of the European Semester.

Together they make up European Parliamentary Week (EPW), bringing together parliamentarians from all over the European Union to discuss economic, budgetary and social matters. The two conferences have earned a regular place in the calendar of interparliamentary cooperation and have emerged as true fora for interparliamentary debates in these increasingly important policy areas.

The 2018 edition of EPW took place on 19 and 20 February 2018 in Brussels and was attended by 132 Members of national Parliaments. All but one EU national Parliament were represented, together with observers from EU candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey, in addition to special guests from Norway and Switzerland. This very high number of participants is one of the elements that made EPW a success in 2018.

As in previous years, the event took place at the European Parliament in Brussels and was co-organised by the Parliament of the Member State holding the Council Presidency, which in 2018 was the Bulgarian Parliament. Representatives were invited to discuss and exchange views on economic, budgetary and social priorities. Among the topics discussed at the European Semester Conference were the European Semester political priorities for 2018, the future of EU fiscal policy, the banking union, digitalisation of work, reform of the EU system of own resources and the future multiannual financial framework.

The Conference on Stability, Economic Coordination and Governance in the EU tackled the issue of the strengthening and resilience of the Economic and Monetary Union and the role of Parliaments in the future European Monetary Fund. Speakers included the President of the European Parliament, Antonio Tajani, the Chair of the European Parliament Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs, Roberto Gualtieri, the Chair of the European Parliament Committee on Budgets, Jean Arthuis, the European Commission Vice-President for the Euro and Social Dialogue, Valdis Dombrovskis, and the President of the Eurogroup, Mário Centeno.



European Parliamentary Week took place on 19 and 20 February 2018 in Brussels © EU-EP

As a bi-annual IPC within the framework of the Austrian EU Presidency, the second Interparliamentary Conference on Stability, Economic Coordination and Governance in the European Union of 2018 was hosted by the Austrian Parliament on 17 and 18 September 2018 in Vienna. The IPC centred on an exchange of views on the following four topics:

1. Implementation of the EU fiscal governance framework;
2. Investment, innovation and education as drivers for a more competitive Europe;
3. Combating tax evasion;
4. Digitalisation and its impact on employment.

Mr Wolfgang Sobotka, President of the Austrian National Council, Ms Inge Posch-Gruska, President of the Austrian Federal Council, and Mr Karlheinz Kopf, Chair of the Finance Committee of the Austrian National Council, hosted 172 Members of Parliaments, representing 26 Member States, the European Parliament, Norway and Turkey, during the two-day conference.

Main development in 2018:

- Following feedback on the 2017 edition, from both EU national Parliaments and the various EP administrative services responsible for organising the event, it was decided that the European Semester Conference and the IPC SECG would no longer be formally separated. As a result, both conferences were co-hosted by the EP and the Bulgarian Parliament, and the overall programme was concentrated into one-and-a-half days.

2.2 Interparliamentary Conference for the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Common Security and Defence Policy (IPC CFSP/CSDP)

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

In 2018, the 12th and 13th editions of the IPC CFSP/CSDP took place in Sofia (15-17 February) and Vienna (11-12 October). The EP delegations to both meetings were composed by Members of the Committee of Foreign Affairs and of the Sub-Committee on Security and Defence and were chaired by Mr David McAllister, Chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs.



Interparliamentary Conference for the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Common Security and Defence Policy (IPC CFSP/CSDP) in Vienna, 11-12 October 2018 © Austrian Presidency

During the IPC CFSP/CSDP organised within the framework of the Bulgarian Council Presidency discussions focused on:

1. Priorities and strategies of the EU in the areas of CFSP and CSDP;
2. Accelerating reforms with a view to a European perspective for the Western Balkans;
3. CSDP – Implementation of the EU Global Strategy;
4. State of play of the Black Sea region.

Separate workshops were dedicated to strategic energy and transport connectivity in the Western Balkans, to the Danube Strategy and to EU-China relations. In their extensive joint statement, the Co-Chairs reaffirmed the importance of promoting, through the EU Global Strategy, the common interests of EU citizens and the values and principles of the EU, and stressed that an effective implementation of this strategy would require strong commitment and support from the Member States and the EU institutions.

During the second half of 2018, at the initiative of the Austrian Parliament, the Conference chose to discuss and exchange information on issues such as security, migration and control of external borders; the European contribution to the improvement of the political and humanitarian situation in Syria, and the Western Balkans and their European perspective. During the conference, specific workshops were dedicated to the following topics:

1. The future of the nuclear deal with Iran following the withdrawal of the US;
2. Facilitating military mobility in the EU within the framework of PESCO;
3. The OSCE⁸, a key partner in the East-West dialogue.

The EU High Representative, Federica Mogherini, addressed the delegates via videoconference as part of the opening session. An interactive debate with Members of the European Parliament and of national Parliaments followed her introduction on current and ongoing EU activities in the area of the CFSP and the CSDP.

In their final joint statement, the Co-Chairs recalled the need for a holistic EU approach to migration which ensured coherence between the EU's external and internal policies, encompassed all migration routes and was based on solidarity, full respect for human rights, compliance with international law and respect for the values on which the EU was built.

Main developments in 2018:

- The IPC CFSP/CSDP succeeded in remaining a central and vital event for the coming together of European parliamentarians who were important decision-makers in foreign policy, and where topical issues on the foreign and security policy agenda could be discussed.
- The IPC sessions were webstreamed and videos made available on the internet.

8 Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

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

3.1 Joint parliamentary scrutiny of Europol: an innovative institutional set-up for parliamentary scrutiny

EUROPOL

Article 88 of the TFEU permits national Parliaments for the first time to scrutinise jointly with the European Parliament an EU agency operating in the area of freedom, security, and justice. On the basis of the Europol Regulation, which came into force on 1 May 2017, the Joint Parliamentary Scrutiny Group (JPSG) on Europol was established to ensure that Europol is fully accountable and transparent. The JPSG will play an essential role in 'politically [monitoring] Europol's activities in fulfilling its mission, including as regards the impact of those activities on the fundamental rights and freedoms of natural persons.'

The JPSG holds two meetings per year: in the first half of the year, at the Parliament of the country holding the rotating presidency of the Council of the EU, and in the second half of the year, at the European Parliament.



Third meeting of the JPSG on Europol – Presentation of JPSG priorities by Presidential Troika 2018-2019 © EU-EP

The Conference of Speakers of EU Parliaments (EUSC) played an instrumental role in the establishment of the JPSG. It entrusted the JPSG itself with deciding on its organisation and Rules of Procedure. The constituent meeting of the JPSG was held in Brussels on 9 and 10 October 2017.

The Rules of Procedure were adopted by consensus at the second JPSG meeting held on 18 on 19 March 2018 in Sofia under the Bulgarian Presidency.

The Rules of Procedure ensure that the EP and the EU national Parliaments stand on an equal footing and safeguard the confidentiality of operational information. Its main provisions deal with: the composition of the JPSG, the frequency of meetings, the coordinating function of the Presidential Troika, the JPSG's right to information through the transmission of documents, the right to submit both oral and written questions to Europol; the adoption of the JPSG's summary conclusions and the possibility of setting up subgroups. An agreement was reached on setting up a JPSG working group on the representation of Denmark in JPSG meetings.

In 2018, there was a clear shift in focus from procedural to substantial matters in JPSG meetings. However, discussions on a number of remaining procedural issues continued, namely on the status of Denmark and the procedure for the appointment of JPSG observers to Europol management board meetings.

The Rules of Procedure reflect a strong role for EU national Parliaments, through the Presidential Troika, notably in the secretariat, setting the agenda, preparing discussion documents and drafting JPSG meeting conclusions. The text also enables delegations to effectively contribute to the agenda and to scrutiny findings. It provides for the right to ask questions, while ensuring a workable scenario for Europol and its services. A review clause was inserted and the text provides for the possibility of setting up subgroups, where the participation of all chambers and Parliaments in scrutiny activities is ensured.

Reporting on Europol activities is a standard feature on the agenda of the JPSG, with the participation of the Executive Director of Europol, the Chair of the Europol Management Board and the JPSG observer to the Management Board meetings.

So far, only one meeting has been held under the new Rules of Procedure, namely the third JPSG meeting of 24 and 25 September 2018 which took place in Brussels. At the meeting, the JPSG set its scrutiny priorities for 2018-2019. The Parliament of Finland, an incoming Troika member, was included in the Troika discussions on this point for the smooth preparation of its mandate.

The Commissioner for the Security Union is regularly invited as keynote speaker. In 2018 Commissioner Julian King addressed the JPSG on both occasions.

Main developments in 2018:

- The Presidential Troika fully asserted its role in setting the agenda and in-depth exchanges were held on relevant topics, such as cyber security, the fight against terrorism and organised crime, the fight against financial crime, asset recovery and money laundering;
- A formal consultation of the JPSG on Europol's Multiannual Programming Document 2019-2021, in line with the obligation set out under Article 51(2)(c) of the Europol Regulation, was held within the framework of the second and third JPSG meetings; JPSG members sent a limited number of written comments ahead of the discussion;
- Two parliamentary Chambers so far have exercised their right to submit written questions to Europol. Extensive summary conclusions detailing the activities of the JPSG were adopted. A JPSG working group on the representation of Denmark in JPSG meetings, composed of the Presidential Troika and the Danish Parliament, was set up.

3.2 The European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation (Eurojust)

The European Parliament and the EU national Parliaments will establish their joint parliamentary evaluation of Eurojust's activities, provided for in Article 85 of the TFEU, over the next two years. Since its creation in 2002, Eurojust, as an EU body, has become a central player in judicial cooperation in criminal matters. The TFEU established a new legal basis for the future development of Eurojust. In November 2018, the EP and the Council adopted a new Regulation on Eurojust⁹ with a view to providing a single and renovated legal framework for a new fully-fledged Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation (Eurojust), the legal successor of Eurojust.

The Eurojust Regulation establishes a new governance system, clarifies the relationship between Eurojust and the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO), prescribes a new data protection regime, adopts new rules for Eurojust's external relations and strengthens the role of the European and EU national Parliaments in the democratic oversight of Eurojust's activities.

In order to increase the transparency and democratic oversight of Eurojust, the revised regulation provides for a mechanism for the joint evaluation of Eurojust's activities by the EP and EU national Parliaments. The evaluation should take place within the framework of an ICM on European Parliament premises in Brussels, with the participation of members of the competent committees of the EP and of EU national Parliaments. The ICM should fully respect Eurojust's independence as regards actions to be taken in specific operational cases and the obligation of discretion and confidentiality.

The Eurojust Regulation entered into force in December 2018, but will only be applicable in December 2019, enabling Eurojust and Member States to prepare for the application of the new rules. The first ICM to discuss Eurojust's activities will be held in 2020¹⁰.

Main development in 2018:

- Steps towards enhancing transparency in the area of justice and home affairs: the interparliamentary evaluation provided for by the Eurojust Regulation; reporting obligations and hearings before EU national Parliaments at their request, as set out in the Regulation on the European Public Prosecutor's Office; and the JPSG on Europol.

⁹ Regulation (EU) 2018/1727 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 November 2018 on the European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation (Eurojust), and replacing and repealing Council Decision 2002/187/JHA (OJ L 295, 21.11.2018, p. 138).

¹⁰ The 2019 EUSC in Vienna asked the incoming Finnish Presidency to prepare a common understanding document for the ICM on the evaluation of Eurojust, with regard to aspects not covered by Regulation (EU) 2018/1727, so that the Conference of Speakers in 2020 in Helsinki would be able to reach conclusions on these matters.

4. INTERPARLIAMENTARY MEETINGS

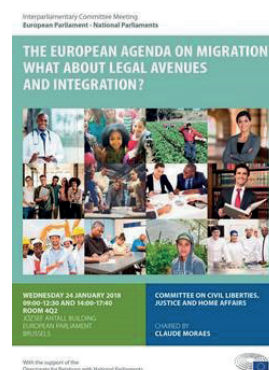
4.1 Interparliamentary Committee Meetings (ICMs)

The committees of the European Parliament organise up to 20 ICMs per year, inviting the corresponding committees of the EU national Parliaments to engage in focused debates. Other interparliamentary meetings are organised by the Parliament of the Member State holding the Council Presidency.

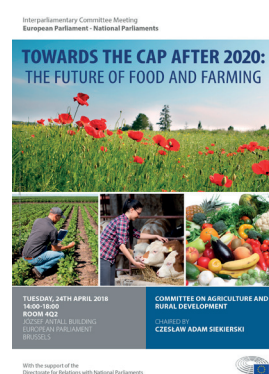
ICMs have proven to be an essential element in interparliamentary cooperation. They offer Members of the European Parliament and Members of EU national Parliaments a platform for an exchange of views on legislative and political issues of common interest. They contribute to better law-making and to increased mutual understanding. ICMs are co-organised on the initiative of one or more committees of the European Parliament with the support of the Directorate.

Seventeen ICMs were organised by thirteen different parliamentary committees in 2018, providing for debates between 555 Members of national Parliaments with 369 Members of the European Parliament.

The Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) organised five ICMs in 2018. An ICM on the EU's response to the current migration challenge focused on proposals for fighting irregular migration, reinforcing border management, strengthening the common asylum policy and launching a new policy on legal migration. The ICM on the UN Global Compacts on refugees and migration contributed to developing an EP perspective on negotiations on the two compacts. The EP later adopted a resolution on the compacts in April 2018¹¹.



LIBE invited EU national Parliaments to an ICM on the implementation of the data protection package on the eve of its application. The aim of this package is to protect EU citizens from privacy and data breaches in an increasingly data-driven world. LIBE also held an ICM on the fundamental rights aspects of Roma inclusion and on fighting anti-Gypsyism.



The Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM) organised its yearly ICM marking International Women's Day on 8 March. In 2018, this ICM stressed the importance of the role women play in media and Information and Communication Technology (ICT).

The Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development (AGRI) held an ICM entitled 'Towards the CAP after 2020: the Future of Food and Farming', for an exchange of views ahead of the Commission communication on the topic.

To mark European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018, the Committee on Culture and Education (CULT) organised an ICM on European cultural heritage, as a follow-up to the high-level conference on the same topic, which was to function as a platform for discussions on the initiative's long-term legacy.



The Committee on Transport and Tourism (TRAN) held an ICM entitled 'EU Investing in its Transport Networks beyond 2020' to debate best practices on the implementation of TEN-T projects. Particular attention was paid

¹¹ [European Parliament resolution of 18 April 2018 on progress on the UN Global Compacts for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and on Refugees \(Texts adopted, P8_TA\(2018\)0118\).](#)

to cross-border links, providing European added value and post-2020 transport infrastructure investments.

The Constitutional Affairs Committee (AFCO) organised an ICM to reflect on the state of the debate on the future of Europe. Its main aim was to assess the institutional and political evolutions that followed the adoption of three resolutions¹², taking stock of recent proposals presented by other institutions and Member States, and presenting the EP's priorities in the current debate.



As a preparatory step in drafting its report on discharge in respect of the implementation of the general EU budget for 2017¹³, the Committee on Budgetary Control (CONT) brought together Members of the Bulgarian, Greek, Croatian and Turkish national Parliaments with MEPs to discuss cooperation with a view to better protection of the EU budget.

As part of Human Rights Week at the European Parliament, the Subcommittee on Human Rights (DROI) held an ICM dedicated to 'Human Rights and the external actions of the EU and Member States'¹⁴. Participants of EU national Parliaments later attended the high-level conference marking the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

At an ICM entitled 'Empowering Parliaments and enforcing citizen's rights in the implementation and application of Union law', the Legal Affairs Committee (JURI) and the Committee on Petitions (PETI) held joint debates on the transposition and implementation of EU law at national level, and the important role of Ombudsmen and petitions in detecting breaches of Union law.



The Economic And Monetary Affairs Committee (ECON) held an exchange of views with corresponding committees from national Parliaments on the country-specific recommendations, on the draft report on the implementation of the 2018 European Semester priorities, and on the priorities for the 2019 Annual Growth Survey¹⁵.

A list of all interparliamentary meetings organised by European Parliament committees in 2018 and more detailed statistics can be found in Annex II.

Main development in 2018:

- An increase in the number of EP committees organising ICMs from 9 in 2017 to 13 in 2018, which is 44 % higher than in 2017.

¹² [European Parliament resolution of 16 February 2017 on improving the functioning of the European Union building on the potential of the Lisbon Treaty \(OJ C 252, 18.7.2018, p. 215\).](#)

[European Parliament resolution of 16 February 2017 on possible evolutions of and adjustments to the current institutional set-up of the European Union \(OJ C 252, 18.7.2018, p. 201\).](#)

[European Parliament resolution of 16 February 2017 on budgetary capacity for the euro area \(OJ C 252, 18.7.2018, p. 235\).](#)

¹³ [Draft Report on discharge in respect of the implementation of the general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2017, Section III - Commission and executive agencies.](#)

¹⁴ Further information on interparliamentary meetings in the field of EU external action can be found in the next chapter (4.2).

¹⁵ European Parliament resolution of 13 March 2019 entitled 'European Semester for economic policy coordination: Annual Growth Survey 2019' (Texts adopted, P8_TA(2019)0201).

4.2 Interparliamentary cooperation in the field of EU external action

Building on the extensive expertise developed through committee-based cooperation, in 2018 the Directorate for Relations with National Parliaments provided support and facilitated relations with EU national Parliaments at two major events in the field of EU external action. Unlike ICMs, these events were not initiated by the EP committees but were organised by delegations and the Democracy Support and Election Coordination Group (DEG).

4.2.1 The 10th Asia-Europe Parliamentary Partnership Meeting (ASEP 10)

The Asia-Europe Parliamentary Partnership (ASEP) is the parliamentary dimension of the Asian-European political dialogue, seeking to enhance relations between Europe and Asia. The most visible element of this dialogue has traditionally been the biennial Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), an intergovernmental summit first held in 1996. ASEP provides parliamentary input and networks ahead of this summit to facilitate proceedings. As one of ASEP's objectives is to influence the agenda of the ASEM, ASEP is usually held in the same place as the summit, but slightly earlier. In 2018, the 10th ASEP meeting (ASEP 10) took place on 27 and 28 September in Brussels. For the first time, it was hosted by the European Parliament.



10th Asia-Europe Parliamentary Partnership Meeting (ASEP 10) of 27 September 2018 ©EU-EP

Organised by the EP delegations for Asia and for Australia and New Zealand, ASEP 10 involved national Parliaments of EU Member States and numerous other countries, such as the Russian Federation, China, India, Australia, the Philippines and Kazakhstan. Roughly 280 participants attended the meeting, including around 150 Members of 38 national Parliaments. Of the participants from national Parliaments, 36 were Members of EU national Parliaments or of the Norwegian Parliament.

The ASEP 10 meeting focused on climate change and environmental challenges as a priority for the planet. During the meeting, three panels were dedicated to the impact of climate change and

environmental challenges on security, migration and the economy. The final declaration agreed by ASEP 10 participants was submitted to the 12th ASEM Summit, which was held in Brussels on 18 and 19 October 2018.

4.2.2 The High-Level Conference on the Future of International Election Observation

The High-Level Conference on the Future of International Election Observation took place on 10 and 11 October 2018 and was organised jointly by the EP's Democracy Support and Election Coordination Group (DEG) and the European External Action Service (EEAS). Around 380 participants attended the conference, including 22 Members of EU national Parliaments and of the Swiss Parliament.



High-level Conference on the Future of International Election Observation: (from left to right) Ms Cessouma Minata Samate, Commissioner for Political Affairs of the African Union, Ms Federica Mogherini, High Representative of the EU, Speaker of the Pan-African Parliament, Mr Roger Nkodo Dang, and EP Vice-President for relations with national Parliaments, Ms Mairead McGuinness © EU-EP

The aim of this event was to take stock of all the developments, challenges and key issues currently facing international election observation, with a special focus on Africa, conflict prevention and parliamentary election observation. National parliamentarians were encouraged to support all efforts towards the adoption of a clear code of conduct for parliamentary election observation, either within the different parliamentary assemblies or at national Parliament level across the EU.

ASEP 10 and the High-Level Conference confirmed a growing interest in interparliamentary cooperation in the field of the EU's external action, on the part of both the EP and EU national Parliaments. With this trend set to continue in the years to come the Directorate stands ready to facilitate relations between the respective bodies and services of the EP and EU national Parliaments with a view to developing further synergies between all relevant interlocutors.

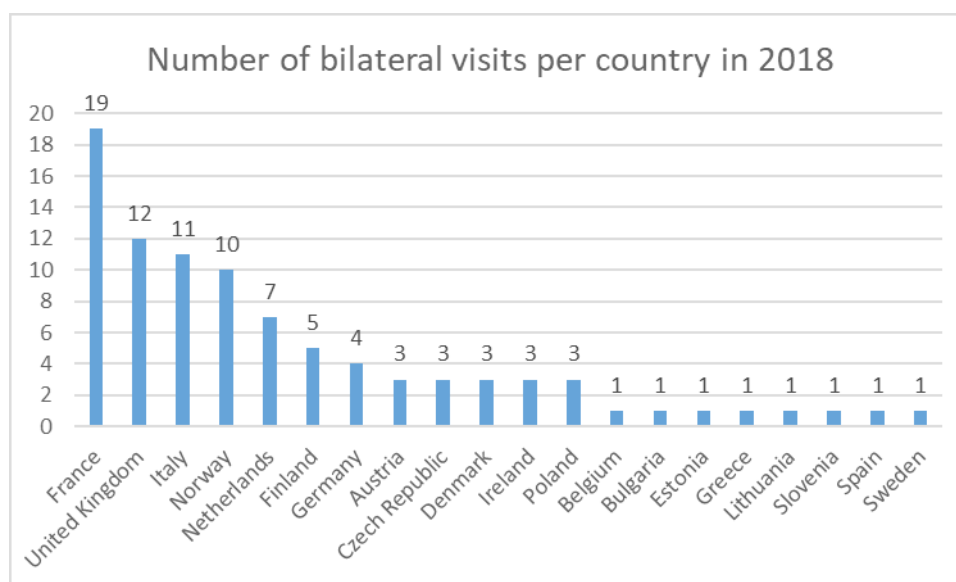
Main developments in 2018:

- The emergence of interparliamentary cooperation in the field of EU external action and capacity building;
- A growing sense of the need to coordinate EU Parliaments' activities, at both European and national level, in multilateral fora for increased impact.

4.3 Bilateral visits from EU national Parliaments to the European Parliament

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

The number of bilateral visits is on the rise, a recent trend that is set to continue; a record number of visits were organised in 2018: 90¹⁶ in total.



The highest number of requests for visits were received from the French National Assembly (19) and the UK Parliament (12). Visits from the UK Parliament focused largely on Brexit.

Visits from French delegations took place in the context of supporting a major process of French parliamentary reform.

Brexit negotiations clearly impacted the topics and frequency of bilateral visits in 2018.

The Norwegian Parliament confirmed its interest in the EU and the EP by sending ten delegations to visit different EP bodies and representatives in 2018. The Norwegian Parliament's interest can also be seen in the context of Brexit, since the Norwegian model, or the possibility of the UK joining the European Economic Area (EEA), i.e. the international agreement which enables the extension of the European Union's single market to non-EU countries, figured in 2018 as a possible option for future EU-UK relations.

Visits for parliamentarians and staff are organised for the Parliaments of the incoming EU Council Presidency, under the Presidency Parliament Support Programme (see chapter 7.3). In 2018, the Directorate organised a tailor-made study visit for the Romanian Senate and for the Romanian Chamber of Deputies to prepare for the Romanian Council Presidency in the first half of 2019.

Occasionally, upon request, the Directorate also organises capacity building study visits for parliamentary staff of Parliaments/Chambers that are in the process of adapting or modernising their organisation and express interest in the EP's functioning.

A detailed list of all visits, including videoconferences, from EU national Parliaments to the European Parliament organised by the Directorate in 2018 is available in Annex III.

¹⁶ One visit was multilateral, including Germany and France.

4.4 Use of videoconferencing for bilateral exchanges

Videoconferencing opens up new opportunities and can facilitate interparliamentary cooperation. The European Parliament can provide a technical solution that enables videoconferencing with excellent image and sound quality and interpretation into several languages. The use of videoconferences can contribute to more regular contact between parliamentarians and brings with it advantages such as a reduction in travelling time and mission costs, and eco-friendliness. All in all, it constitutes a cost-effective tool for organising meetings.

Videoconferencing between EU national Parliaments and the EP allows parliamentarians to stay in regular contact on a particular issue over time or to arrange discussions on current issues such as draft legislation. The EP has also offered national Parliaments the possibility of participating in one of its regular interparliamentary meetings via videoconference and will aim to do so in the future whenever possible.



Videoconferencing in the European Parliament © EU-EP

A prerequisite to establish a videoconference with a national Parliament is the existence of the equipment used by that national Parliament with the same technical standards as the EP system. Probably because of the technical constraints, in 2018 videoconferencing has not been frequently used in the interparliamentary cooperation between the national Parliaments and the EP. Six videoconferences were organised, all with the Italian Parliament.

Videoconferencing could complement the traditional method of interparliamentary meetings. It has a big potential and will be taken to the next level during the next parliamentary term of the EP. EU national Parliaments not having compatible videoconferencing tools could use the services of the EP Liaison Offices (EPLOs) in the national capitals for videoconference with the EP in Brussels and/or Strasbourg.

5. LEGISLATIVE COOPERATION WITH EU NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS

5.1 The Early Warning System and Protocol No 2 to the Treaty of Lisbon

Under the principle of subsidiarity (enshrined in Article 5 TEU), in areas which do not fall within its exclusive competence the Union shall act only if and in so far as the objectives of the proposed action cannot be sufficiently achieved by the Member States, but can be better achieved at Union level. National Parliaments ensure compliance with the principle of subsidiarity in accordance with the procedure set out in this Protocol. Under the principle of proportionality, the content and form of Union action shall not exceed what is necessary to achieve the objectives of the Treaties.

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

5.1.1 Early Warning System

With regard to the Early Warning System, submissions of EU national Parliaments are considered under the following categories¹⁷:

1. Reasoned opinion: if submitted under that heading and received within the eight-week deadline referred to in Article 6 of Protocol No 2 to the Treaty of Lisbon¹⁸, and raising the issue of non-compliance with the principle of subsidiarity;
2. Contribution: where the submission does not fulfil the above criteria.

Within the European Parliament, the Committee on Legal Affairs (JURI) is responsible for monitoring compliance with the principle of subsidiarity of reasoned opinions¹⁹.

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

If, in the context of the ordinary legislative procedure, national Parliaments with at least a simple majority of the votes challenge the compliance of a legislative proposal with the principle of subsidiarity and the Commission decides to maintain its proposal, the matter is referred to the legislator (European Parliament and Council). If the legislator considers that the legislative proposal is not compatible with the principle of subsidiarity, it may reject it subject to a majority of 55 % of the members of the Council or a majority of the votes cast in the European Parliament (orange

¹⁷ See Conference of Committee Chairs document of 15 December 2010: 'Common approach for the treatment at committee level of national Parliaments' reasoned opinions and all other contributions of national Parliaments'.

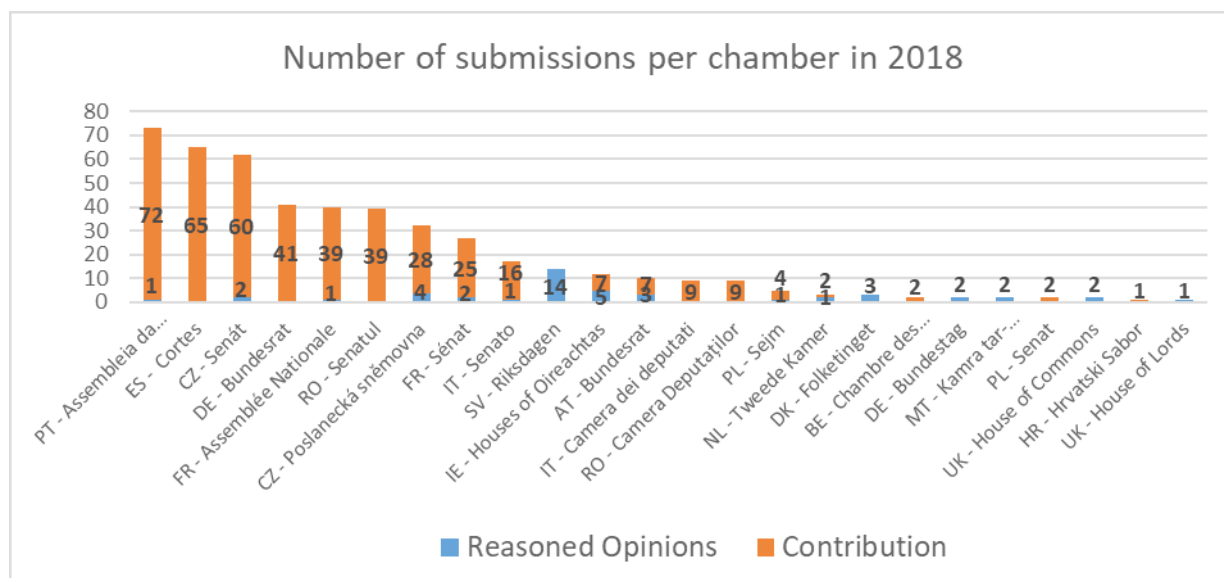
¹⁸ Protocol No 2 on the application of the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality, Article 6: 'Any national Parliament or any chamber of a national Parliament may, within eight weeks from the date of transmission of a draft legislative act, in the official languages of the Union, send to the Presidents of the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission a reasoned opinion stating why it considers that the draft in question does not comply with the principle of subsidiarity. It will be for each national Parliament or each chamber of a national Parliament to consult, where appropriate, regional parliaments with legislative powers.'

¹⁹ Rules of Procedure of the European Parliament, Annex V, paragraph XVI, 1: 'The Committee on Legal Affairs is responsible for the interpretation, application and monitoring of Union law and compliance of Union acts with primary law, notably the choice of legal bases and respect for the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality.'

card). To date, the yellow card procedure has been triggered three times²⁰, while the orange card procedure has never been used.

5.1.2 EU national Parliaments' submissions

In 2018, the EP received **473** submissions from EU national Parliaments under Protocol No 2 on the application of the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality. **46** of those were reasoned opinions whilst the other **427** were contributions. In 2017, EP received 421 submissions, of which 49 were reasoned opinions and out of which 372 were contributions. In 2018, the percentage of received submissions rose by 12 %.



Number of submissions per chamber in 2018 received under Protocol 2 to the TEU

In 2018, 16 out of 41 chambers issued reasoned opinions. The most active were the Swedish Parliament (14), the Irish Parliament (5), and the Czech Chamber of Deputies (4). The highest number of contributions were received from the Portuguese Assembleia da República (72), followed by the Spanish Cortes Generales (65) and the Czech Senate (60).

Since the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon (1 December 2009), 3272 submissions were sent by EU national Parliaments. Of those, 474 (15 %) were reasoned opinions alleging a breach of the subsidiarity principle, while the vast majority (2798, or 85 %) were contributions that dealt with the substance of proposals.

Detailed statistics about the reasoned opinions and contributions received in 2018 are available in Annex V.

EU national Parliaments have used Protocol No 2 as a means to express their views on the substance of the proposals more often than on subsidiarity. This could reflect their wish to be involved more closely in the substantive legislative process. The Directorate provides Members (in particular rapporteurs), political bodies and EP services with specific expertise and briefings on EU national Parliaments' submissions throughout the legislative cycle.

²⁰ It was used in 2012 with regard to a Commission proposal for a regulation concerning the exercise of the right to take collective action within the context of the freedom of establishment and the freedom to provide services ('Monti II'). The Commission ultimately withdrew its proposal, though it took the view that the subsidiarity principle had not been infringed. It was used again in 2013 following the submission of the proposal for a regulation on the establishment of the European Public Prosecutor's Office. The Commission decided to [maintain the proposal](#), arguing that it was in line with the subsidiarity principle. It was further used in 2016 against the [proposal for a revision of the directive on the posting of workers](#). The Commission gave extensive [reasons](#) for maintaining its proposal, given that it did not infringe the principle of subsidiarity, the posting of workers being, by definition, a transnational issue.

In this context, the Directorate manages the online [CONNECT](#) database, which includes all documents received from EU national Parliaments since the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty (see chapter 7.1).

5.1.3 State of Play Note

The Directorate provides a monthly *State of Play Note* on reasoned opinions and contributions. This note gives an overview of all submissions received since the previous note and refers to all legislative files which are on the agenda of the following EP plenary session. The note is also included in the meeting file for the EP's Conference of Committee Chairs, which meets on the Tuesday of each Strasbourg plenary session. The *State of Play Note* is also available on the Directorate's website ahead of each EP plenary session.

5.1.4 European Parliament resolutions

In April 2018, the European Parliament adopted two resolutions related to subsidiarity.

In its [resolution of 19 April 2018 on the implementation of the Treaty provisions concerning national parliaments \(rapporteur: Paulo Rangel\)](#), Parliament concludes that the implementation of the right for EU national Parliaments to scrutinise compliance with the principle of subsidiarity has partially improved relations between the EU institutions and the national Parliaments. It further underlines that the limited use of the yellow card procedure 'could indicate that the principle of subsidiarity is, on balance, respected within the EU'. It also recalls that 'national Parliaments may intervene and examine the question of compliance with the principle of subsidiarity prior to the presentation of a legislative proposal by the Commission in the form of Green and White Papers or the annual presentation of the Commission's Work Programme'.

The [EP resolution on the Annual Reports 2015-2016 on subsidiarity and proportionality](#), (rapporteur: Mady Delvaux), adopted in plenary on 18 April 2018, comments on the growing interest of EU national Parliaments in the Union's decision-making process. In this resolution, the EP encourages EU national Parliaments to continue and further reinforce interparliamentary contacts, also on a bilateral basis, as a means of enhancing cooperation between Member States, and to do so with a democratic European vision. Strengthening dialogue at political level with EU national Parliaments could be one way to rationalise subsidiarity and proportionality controls. The EP also encourages the full use of all existing tools, avoiding as far as possible the creation of even more complex administrative structures and lengthy procedures.

Main developments:

- Adoption by the European Parliament of two resolutions within the scope of interparliamentary relations and subsidiarity and proportionality
- Increase in the number of submissions by EU national Parliaments

5.2 Task Force on subsidiarity, proportionality and doing less more efficiently

The Task Force on subsidiarity, proportionality and doing less more efficiently initiated by EC President Jean-Claude Juncker started its work with the aim of making recommendations on how to better apply the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality, identifying policy areas where competences could be re-delegated or definitely returned to Member States, as well as ways to better involve regional and local authorities in EU policymaking and delivery. The Task Force reported in July 2018. Its work was followed by a Commission communication.

The *Task Force on subsidiarity, proportionality and doing less more efficiently* started its work on 14 November 2017. Following a decision of the Conference of Presidents, the EP did not participate in the Task Force led by Commission First Vice-President Frans Timmermans, for the reason that the EP as co-legislator does not take part in advisory fora or working groups set up by the European Commission on legislation²¹. The Task Force reported to the Commission President in July 2018.

The work of the Task Force was followed by a Commission communication²² which does not suggest major changes to the Early Warning System mechanism. However, the recommendations made include a proposal for standard criteria for assessing subsidiarity and proportionality (a subsidiarity grid) to be used by the institutions, as well as a proposal for a technical extension (without Treaty changes) of the eight-week deadline for the submission of reasoned opinions.

The communication also proposes a closer involvement of local and regional authorities. It encourages national Parliaments to consult regional Parliaments in the process of drawing up reasoned opinions. The Commission further intends to provide better substantiated replies to submissions (including those by regional Parliaments) and to make the feedback it receives on its proposals from local and regional authorities more visible to the EP and the Council during the legislative procedure. The European Parliament has taken a position so far neither on the report of the Task Force, nor on the Commission communication. However, the two EP resolutions adopted in April 2018 addressed many of the issues raised by the Task Force, including, for example, the possibility of a technical extension of the eight-week deadline without Treaty changes, and included, inter alia, proposals for upgrading the use of the Interparliamentary EU Information Exchange (IPEX, see chapter 6.1) by EU national Parliaments to facilitate their coordination and exchange of information.

5.3 Informal Political Dialogue and Protocol No 1 to the TFEU

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

In 2018, EU national Parliaments continued to make active use of this tool by sending 259 contributions. In this context, the four most active Parliaments/Chambers in 2018 were the Romanian Chamber of Deputies (41), the Portuguese Assembly of the Republic (40), the Czech Chamber (37) and the Czech Senate (27).

The three committees receiving the most IPD contributions were the Committee on Culture and Education (CULT) with 32, the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs (ECON) with 31 and the Committee on Budgets (BUDG) with 25.

Since 2009, the EP has received around 2150 contributions under Protocol 1 from EU national Parliaments, which have also been published in the CONNECT database as mentioned above. Detailed statistics on the contributions received under the IPD in 2018 are available in Annex V.

²¹ The Conference of Presidents unanimously decided to decline the invitation, on the ground of the established principle 'whereby no Member of Parliament should take part, in any capacity, in working groups or advisory fora set up by the Commission, where these bodies dealt with subject matters in which Parliament was co-legislator'.

²² Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on 'The principle of subsidiarity and proportionality: Strengthening their role in the EU's policymaking'; COM(2018)0703.

Main developments in 2018:

- The number of contributions submitted under the Informal Political Dialogue has increased by 30 %, from 199 in 2017 to 259 in 2018. This increase is probably related to the higher volume of draft legislation submitted by the Commission.
- National Parliaments are now more frequently providing a summary in English with their submissions under both Protocol No 2 and Protocol No 1. This facilitates the work of the legislators.

6. NETWORKS AND EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION

6.1 Interparliamentary EU Information Exchange (IPEX)



The objective of the Interparliamentary EU Information Exchange (IPEX) is to support interparliamentary cooperation by providing a platform for the electronic exchange of EU-related information between Parliaments in the EU. IPEX was launched as an initiative of EU national Parliaments and was developed with the technical assistance of the European Parliament. Today, 41 Chambers of 28 national Parliaments and the European Parliament are using IPEX in their daily activities. IPEX is subject to continual improvement to meet the changing needs of its users. See: www.ipex.eu

After the adoption in 2017 of the IPEX Digital Strategy defining the strategic approaches and the adoption of the Work Programme 2017-2020, the IPEX Board approved the creation of three Working Groups, namely:

- ‘Strengthening the promotion of IPEX’ (chaired by the German Bundestag);
- ‘Enhancing the IPEX network’ (chaired by the Danish Folketing); and
- ‘Improving the IPEX database digital system’ (chaired by the EP).

According to the schedule defined by the Board, the first two working groups have finalised a list of concrete proposals for developing IPEX both as a platform and as a network. Additionally, the Annual IPEX Correspondents’ Meetings (last meeting in Tallinn on 22 and 23 November 2018) and the biannual Users’ Conference (last meeting organised by the Swedish Riksdag in Stockholm on 2 March 2018) provided useful inputs and insights on expectations and ideas that could merit implementation.

The goal is to make IPEX the main platform for parliamentary exchange, and for it to become a one-stop shop for the exchange of documents and information. In 2018, IPEX became the web platform for all interparliamentary fora. In addition to the established interparliamentary conferences (IPCs), such as the CFSP/CSDP IPC, the EU Speakers Conference, and the IPC on SECG (Stability, Economic Coordination and Governance), IPEX now also hosts the public information of COSAC and of the Europol Joint Parliamentary Scrutiny Group (JPSG).

Another objective is to create a new section within IPEX, to be dedicated to horizontal issues of EU dimension outside the Early Warning System on subsidiarity. This section would be dedicated to horizontal areas such as the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), the European Semester, and Commission documents.

The Directorate, representing the EP in the IPEX Board, has encouraged and advanced this process, actively participating in the efforts of the three working groups. It did so following the mandate contained in two resolutions adopted in April 2018 that directly refer to the need to

boost promotion of IPEX (which was described in the Rangel report as a pillar of a *common parliamentary Agora*).

2018 was for IPEX a year of intense reflection and development. It continued to perform its role as a platform related to subsidiarity and scrutiny of EU draft legislation by EU national Parliaments. It currently makes available almost 98 000 pages produced by the EU national Parliaments and the EU institutions, holding scrutiny-related information in almost 73 000 documents produced by EU national Parliaments and linked to more than 11 000 dossiers. In 2018, the total number of legislative and non-legislative documents recorded in IPEX was 1 119, compared to 1 053 in 2017²³.

In 2018, the IPEX website was visited by almost 300 000 individual visitors, compared to 307 737 in 2017. The number of pages viewed – almost 16 million – is the highest registered so far, with an increase of over 10 million pages compared to 2017. This 60 % increase in page views can be explained by the increase in the information available on the website.

Main developments in 2018:

- IPEX has become the host website for all interparliamentary conferences.
- IPEX has continued to develop from a tool into a network.

6.2 European Centre for Parliamentary Research and Documentation (ECPRD)

Managed jointly by the EP and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, ECPRD counts 66 parliamentary Chambers (including 41 from the European Union), from 54 countries and European institutions, as members. Almost 120 correspondents and deputy correspondents represent their respective Parliament in the network and contribute to the main ECPRD activities, which consist of an intensive exchange of information and best practice.

The number of comparative requests was almost as high in 2018 as in the all-time record year of 2017. ECPRD member Parliaments submitted 333 requests to the network, compared to 337 in 2017. These requests triggered 7174 replies, representing a slight increase on the 2017 figure of 7160.

As a facilitator, the Directorate provides support to the respective EP services. In 2018, the EP transmitted five requests to the ECPRD network. Furthermore, the Directorate coordinated 26 EP replies to requests from other ECPRD parliaments, on behalf of other services.

The Directorate-General for Parliamentary Research Service and the Directorate organised, on 27 and 28 September on Parliament's premises in Brussels, an ECPRD seminar on the future of parliamentary research services and libraries and how best to support elected members.

The event attracted 60 participants from 28 parliamentary chambers. The seminar focused on service provision for MPs in their multiple roles: in their individual capacity, as members of specialised committees and in their expanding outreach activities.

²³ Figures vary in the different EU institutional platforms (Commission, Council, EP) dedicated to the scrutiny of subsidiarity and to the related procedures. The differences in the figures can be explained by several factors. Each way of counting is based on clearly defined criteria, which are respected. In the case of IPEX, which is a multilateral parliamentary organ in which document counting has no legal impact, documents are classified on the basis of the definition and category given by the Parliament/ Chamber which released the document in question.



Vice-President Bogusław Liberadzki speaking at the ECPRD Seminar in September

Main development in 2018:

- Implementation of the updated search engine for the ECPRD website.

6.3 Network of EU national Parliaments' representatives in Brussels

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

Over time EU national Parliaments have sent national officials to Brussels to facilitate relations with the EU. Currently 55 staff from 40 Chambers are occupying 37 offices on EP premises. The representatives work in the same EP building which houses the Directorate. This creates numerous synergies and promotes easy exchanges.

These representatives are national officials who in addition to administrative assignment are tasked with mutual information sharing (as a two-way flow between the EP and the EU national Parliaments) as a key factor in EU affairs.

A new development in 2018 was the introduction of a new format of cooperation with national Parliaments' representatives in the form of workshops organised by the Directorate. National Parliaments' representatives had the opportunity to engage in an informal exchange of views with different services of the EP. In 2018, workshops were organised on communication, comparative law and Brexit.

A list of the national Parliaments' representatives is available at:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/relnatparl/en/networks/representatives-of-national-parliaments.html>

Main development in 2018:

- Introduction of informal workshops as a new form of cooperation with the representatives.

6.4 Staff seminars

'Whereas better interaction and improved exchange of information between MEPs and MPs and also between national parliaments' civil servants could help to improve scrutiny of the European debate at national level and thus foster a genuinely European parliamentary and political culture', suggests the EP resolution on the Implementation of the Treaty provisions concerning national Parliaments²⁴. The Directorate organised in 2018 a series of seminars for staff from EU national Parliaments/Chambers. Their aim is to bring together staff from national Parliaments and the EP in order to present and discuss relevant European topics, learn from each other and exchange best practices.

In addition to interparliamentary cooperation at political level, an important development in 2018 was the organisation of staff seminars in order to facilitate technical exchanges at staff level.

Staff seminars provide an important platform for Parliament's administrations to hold more specific and focused exchanges on areas of common interest. Staff seminars constitute a dynamic element of the work of both the EP and the EU national Parliaments. 2018 saw a significant increase in interest in these exchanges.

Two staff seminars were organised in 2018 by the Directorate and the Directorate-General for Internal Policies, bringing together around 80 members of staff from national Parliaments/Chambers. A first seminar in July²⁵ focused on the European Semester, and in particular on strengthening cooperation and capacity building at administrative level among EU national Parliaments in the area of economic governance. A follow-up seminar in November²⁶ made it possible to share deeper insights.

In addition, the parliamentary research staff of the EU national Parliaments and the EP continue to cooperate through the ECPRD network (see chapter 6.2).

²⁴ EP resolution of 19 April 2018 on the implementation of the Treaty provisions concerning national Parliaments (Texts adopted, P8_TA(2018)0186)

²⁵ The European Semester for economic policy coordination from a parliamentary perspective

²⁶ The launch of the 2019 European Semester Cycle

7. TOOLS AND SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

7.1 CONNECT

CONNECT

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

Since 2017, the CONNECT database can be consulted on the website of the [Directorate](#).

All information in CONNECT, including reasoned opinions and contributions received from national Parliaments, is directly available in eCommittee, the common working space of DGs IPOL and EXPO, under the procedure they relate to. This applies not only to reasoned opinions but also to all contributions received from EU national Parliaments. This is an important step forward as it enables rapporteurs, Members, assistants and staff of the committee secretariats, as well as all external stakeholders, to have an up-to date and complete overview of all submissions received from national Parliaments at any moment of a given legislative procedure. On 31 December 2018, 5 507 submissions (reasoned opinions and contributions) from EU national Parliaments could be found in the CONNECT database.

Main development in 2018:

- Further implementation of improvements, both in terms of content and visually and technically, in the CONNECT database

7.2 Directory of Corresponding Committees (CorCom)

CORCOM

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

Following the adoption of a resolution in May 2009²⁷ on the development of the relations between the EU national Parliaments and the European Parliament (rapporteur Elmar Brok), the

²⁷ European Parliament resolution of 7 May 2009 on the development of the relations between the European Parliament and national parliaments under the Treaty of Lisbon (OJ C 212E , 5.8.2010, p. 9).

Rules of Procedure of the European Parliament have been revised accordingly, and now state that 'a committee may directly engage in a dialogue with national parliaments at committee level within the limits of budgetary appropriations set aside for this purpose. This may include appropriate forms of pre-legislative and post-legislative cooperation (Rule 142.3).

The CorCom application improves continually with a view of the changing needs of its users. It has become a web-based application²⁸, being much more user-friendly and equipped with a whole range of new features. The number of pages viewed monthly is 13 550 in average.

Main development in 2018:

- Update of the data included in the Corcom database

7.3 Presidency Parliament Support Programme

The EP has constantly promoted extensive cooperation between its administration and those of EU national Parliaments, in particular in the preparatory phase of the parliamentary dimension of each EU Council Presidency. Where the incoming Presidency Parliament requests the assistance of the EP to prepare the parliamentary dimension of the Presidency, the EP may offer the Presidency Parliament a tailor-made support programme, based on specific needs and priorities. This initiative provides a possibility to build personal contacts with Presidency Parliaments and allows for an effective transfer of expertise, thus facilitating further work and ensuring consistency. The EP may contribute to the cost of the programme on a shared basis with the corresponding Parliament.

In 2018, the Directorate offered a comprehensive support programme to both Chambers of the Romanian Parliament. This involved meetings with a number of the EP committee secretariats and other competent services, as well as with representatives of several national Parliaments from Member States having occupied the Council Presidency in recent years.

These meetings provided the Romanian officials with an opportunity to share experience about the organisation of the major interparliamentary meetings and conferences. These meetings form an integral part of the parliamentary dimension of each EU Council Presidency. They include COSAC meetings, the Interparliamentary Conference on Stability, Economic Coordination and Governance in the EU, the Interparliamentary Conference for CFSP/CSDP, and the JPSG on Europol.

A similar programme is to be implemented for the Croatian Parliament in 2019, in order to prepare the parliamentary dimension of the first Croatian EU Council Presidency in the first half of 2020.

Capacity building study visits

The EP can also organise short-term capacity building study visits of Parliaments which are in the process of adapting or modernising their internal organisation and express interest in the EP's functioning and expertise.

Following an exchange of letters between the respective Secretaries-General, a first capacity building visit was organised for a group of officials from the Cyprus House of Representatives, in January 2018. In September and November 2018 the EP accommodated two requests for study visits from the Parliament of Estonia.

²⁸ CorCom is for internal use only. It is available on the intranet of the European Parliament.

Main developments in 2018:

- Organisation of a support programme for both Chambers of the Romanian Parliament
- Organisation of the first capacity building study visit for officials from the Parliament of Cyprus in January

7.4 Publications of the Directorate for Relations with National Parliaments

The Directorate offers a number of publications, one of them being 'The Spotlight on Parliaments in Europe'. This bi-monthly publication summarizes information on selected topical matters which have been exchanged among Parliaments in the ECPRD network.

In addition, the 'Weekly Agenda' provides information about activities involving national Parliaments with a view to increasing the transparency and visibility of the numerous interparliamentary activities undertaken, and the 'State of Play Note' provides information on the submissions received from national Parliaments.

In 2018, the Directorate prepared five new issues of the *Spotlight* (Nos. 19 to 23), covering a wide variety of topics, such as:

19 - Harassment in the workplace

20 - Journalists and shareholders of media enterprises

21 - Naturalisation by exception for foreign entrepreneurs and investors

22 - The citizenship of children born to surrogates

23 - The role of national Parliaments in the European Council

The publications are available on the website of the Directorate at this link:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/relnatparl/en/home/publications.html>

The *Weekly Agenda* is sent on Fridays by email to all Members of the European Parliament and to the services of the European Parliament. In 2018, 46 *Weekly Agendas* were sent out. The publication covers the interparliamentary events of the upcoming two weeks, such as bilateral visits, interparliamentary conferences, ICMs, etc. Information is given concerning date, place and EP services involved. Also supplied are the contact details of the administrator responsible in the Directorate.

The Directorate also produces a monthly *State of Play Note* on reasoned opinions and contributions submitted by national Parliaments (see chapter 5.1.2).

It also operates a website providing information on upcoming activities and publications of the Directorate.

8. The Directorate for relations with National Parliaments

2018 was yet another year of growth and cooperation for the Directorate for Relations with National Parliaments. Numerous activities, new colleagues and partners, participation in high-level interparliamentary events, stronger ties with other services of the European Parliament, and important milestones have marked this year.

In line with DG Presidency's motto *Impact through cooperation*, the Directorate has continued to provide Members and the Secretariat of the EP with the services and advice required for the further development of institutional cooperation and legislative dialogue with EU national Parliaments.

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

The Directorate is grateful for the continuous support of the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General as well as of all services in the EP Directorate-Generals it cooperates with.

Director: Katrin Ruhrmann

The Directorate consists of two units.

Institutional Cooperation Unit

The areas of responsibility of the Institutional Cooperation Unit include multilateral regulated cooperation, i.e. the Conference of Speakers of EU Parliaments, the meetings of Secretaries-General of EU parliaments, and COSAC. The Unit also deals with established networks, in particular IPEX and ECPRD, as well as handling cooperation with the Directorate-General for External Policies (DG EXPO) and coordination of the Presidency Parliament support programmes and capacity building visits.

Head of Unit: Pekka Nurminen

Legislative Dialogue Unit

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

Head of Unit: Jesús Gómez

The following report, as well as further information related to the European Parliament's relations with EU national Parliaments, can be found on the EP website:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/relnatpar/en/home/news.html>.

9. ANNEXES

ANNEX I - COSAC meetings - Topics and keynote speakers 2018

COSAC event	Place, Date	Topics	European Parliament's keynote Speakers / panellists
Meeting of the Chairpersons	Sofia, 21-22 January, 2018	<p>I Priorities of the Bulgarian Presidency of the Council of the EU</p> <p>II The future of the European Union – Strength in Unity</p> <p>III The role of EU macro-regional strategies for sustainable development, stability and security</p>	Ms Iskra Mihaylova, Chair of the Committee on Regional Development of the European Parliament (REGI)
Plenary Meeting of the LIX COSAC	Sofia, 17-19 June, 2018	<p>I Achievements of the Bulgarian Presidency of the Council of the EU</p> <p>II Integration and connectivity of the Western Balkans – a new impetus to EU Enlargement Policy</p> <p>III European Pillar of Social Rights - building a more inclusive and fairer Europe</p> <p>IV A strong and effective Cohesion Policy post 2020</p> <p>V EU interparliamentary cooperation in the context of the debate on subsidiarity and proportionality</p>	<p>Ms Mairead McGuinness, First Vice-President of the European Parliament</p> <p>Ms Danuta Hübner, Chair of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs of the European Parliament (AFCO)</p> <p>Ms Iskra Mihaylova, Chair of the Committee on Regional Development of the European Parliament (REGI)</p>
Meeting of the Chairpersons	Vienna, 8-9 July 2018	<p>I Priorities of the Austrian Presidency of the Council of the European Union</p> <p>II Future and perspectives of the European Union</p>	Ms Mairead McGuinness, First Vice-President of the European Parliament
Plenary Meeting of the LX COSAC	Vienna, 18-20 November 2018	<p>I State of play of the Austrian Presidency of the Council of the EU</p> <p>II Brexit – current state</p> <p>III Climate policy and Energy Union</p> <p>IV A transparent European Union closer to its citizens in light of the upcoming elections to the European Parliament</p>	<p>Ms Mairead McGuinness, First Vice-President of the European Parliament</p> <p>Ms Danuta Hübner, Chair of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs of the European Parliament (AFCO)</p>

For a more detailed information concerning the agenda of COSAC meetings as published by the presidencies, please consult the IPEX website: www.ipex.eu

1 EU Member States, candidate countries and neighbouring countries

ANNEX II

Interparliamentary meetings organised by the European Parliament committees in Brussels in 2018

Nr.	EP committee	Event			Participation of			
					National Parliaments ¹			EP
		Date	Type of meeting	Title of meeting	Members	Parliaments	Chambers	Members
1	LIBE	24 January	Interparliamentary committee meeting	"Legal avenues to migration"	36	15	19	40
2	ECON/ EMPL/ BUDG	19 – 20 February	European Parliamentary Week: European Semester Conference	"Interparliamentary Conference on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union"	121	27	36	ECON ICM - 14 EMPL ICM - 10 BUDG ICM - 18 ----- Plenary 19/2 - 19 Plenary 20/2 - 31
3	LIBE	27 February	Interparliamentary committee meeting	"The UN Global Compacts on refugees and migrants and the role of Parliaments"	30	17	21	43
4	FEMM	8 March	Interparliamentary committee meeting	"International Women's Day - Empowering women and girls in media and ICT: key for the future"	22	17	17	20
5	AGRI	24 April	Interparliamentary committee meeting	"Towards the CAP after 2020: the Future of Food and Farming"	58	22	29	49
6	LIBE	15 May	Interparliamentary committee meeting	"The implementation of the Data Protection package. At the eve of its application."	32	16	19	24
7	TRAN	20 June	Interparliamentary committee meeting	"EU investing in its Transport Networks beyond 2020"	29	18	16	23
8	CONT	11 July	Interparliamentary committee meeting	"Sound management of EU funds: the EP budgetary control powers; Performance and visibility of EU funded projects in the Western Balkans with a special focus on the cross-border cooperation"	24	11	12	26
9	LIBE	24-25 September	3 rd Meeting of the JPSG on Europol		65	27	37	10
10	ECON	9 October	Exchange of Views	"Country Specific Recommendations"	17	13	13	36
11	AFCO	10 October	Interparliamentary committee meeting	"The State of the Debate on the future of Europe"	26	16	18	12
12	LIBE	18 October	Interparliamentary committee meeting	"Fundamental rights aspects of Roma inclusion and fighting anti-Gypsyism"	16	10	11	10

13	CULT	19-20 November	Interparliamentary committee meeting	"European Cultural Heritage"	42	28	28	14
14	DROI	20 November	Interparliamentary committee meeting	"Human Rights and the external actions of the EU and Member States"	23	15	17	11
15	JURI/PETI	27 November	Interparliamentary committee meeting	"Empowering Parliaments and enforcing citizen's rights in the implementation and application of Union Law"	14	19	26	9
	TOTAL				555	271	319	369

ANNEX III - EU national Parliaments²⁴ visits to the European Parliament (including videoconferences) 2018

Date	Length of visit (in days)	Parliamentary Chamber	Country - Chamber	Committee / Other	Type of visit (Speaker/MPs/ Staff)	Number of participating MPs	Number of participating staff
22/01/2018	1	DA1	DA - Folketinget	Education and Research Committee	MPs and staff	6	2
22/01/2018	1	NL2	NL - House of Representatives	Mr Wim van de Camp, MEP, Mr Matthijs van Miltenburg, MEP	MPs and staff	5	1
25/01/2018	1	FR1	FR - Assemblée Nationale	Committee on the Evaluation and Control of Public Policies	MPs and staff	2	1
25/01/2018	1	FI1	FI - Eduskunta	Visit of officials	Staff	0	19
30-31/01/2018	2	CZ1	CZ - Chamber of Deputies	Ms Mairead McGuinness, Vice-President; Mr Guy Verhofstadt, ALDE	Speaker and staff	0	8
31/01/- 01/02/2018	2	NO1	NO - Stortinget	Working visit of members and staff	MPs and staff	12	2
06/02/2018	1	LT1	LT - Seimas	Ms Vilija BLINKEVIČIŪTĖ, Chair of the FEMM Committee	MPs and staff	3	3
19/02/2018	1	UK1	UK - House of Commons	Select Committee on Exiting the European Union	MPs and staff	21	5
20/02/2018	1	UK2	UK - House of Lords	EU Select Committee	MPs and staff	7	4
20/02/2018	1	CZ1 and CZ2	CZ - Parliament	Mr Paolo De Castro, Vice-Chair of the AGRI Committee	MPs and staff	5	3
22/02/2018	1	NO1	NO - Stortinget	Standing Committee on Local Government and Public Administration	MPs and staff	12	2
23/02/2018	1	UK1	UK - House of Commons	Visit of officials	Staff	0	2
27/02/2018	1	UK1	UK - House of Commons	Ms Sarah Jones, MP	MP	1	0
27-28/02/2018	2	FR1	FR - Assemblée Nationale	1 Member, 1 official	MP and staff	1	1
01/03/2018	1	BG1	BG - Narodno sabranie	Mr Veselin Mareszki, Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly, and 2 Members	Speaker (Deputy), MPs and staff	3	1
05-06/03/2018	2	IE1 and IE2	IE - Houses of the Oireachtas	LIBE and AGRI Committee	Staff	0	11

Date	Length of visit (in days)	Parliamentary Chamber	Country - Chamber	Committee / Other	Type of visit (Speaker/MPs/ Staff)	Number of participating MPs	Number of participating staff
07/03/2018	1	NO1	NO - Stortinget	Standing Committee on Finance	MPs and staff	19	10
19-20/03/2018	2	UK2	UK - House of Lords	Officials from the EU Financial Affairs SubCommittee	Staff	0	3
20/03/2018	1	NO1	NO - Stortinget	State Secretaries and Political Advisors of the Norwegian Government	Staff	0	29
20/03/2018	1	FR1	FR - Assemblée Nationale	Members and officials	MPs and staff	3	6
21/03/2018	1	FR1	FR - Assemblée Nationale	Visit of officials	Staff	0	2
22/03/2018	1	FR1	FR - Assemblée Nationale	1 Member, 1 official	MP and staff	1	1
09/04/2018	1	DA1	DA - Folketinget	Committee on Transportation	MPs and staff	7	6
09/04/2018	1	FR1	FR - Assemblée Nationale	Mr François de Rugy, Speaker: meeting with Mr Guy Verhofstadt and EP President Antonio Tajani on Brexit	Speaker, MPs and staff	11	6
09/04/2018	1	NL2	NL - House of Representatives	Mr Guy Verhofstadt, ALDE	MPs and staff	6	1
10/04/2018	1	FR1	FR - Assemblée Nationale	Ms Sabine Thillaye, Chair of the European Affairs Committee	MP and staff	1	1
11/04/2018	1	NO1	NO - Stortinget	Standing Committee on Energy and Environment	MPs and staff	16	1
12/04/2018	1	FR1	FR - Assemblée Nationale	Members	MPs and staff	4	1
18-19/04/2018	2	PL1	PL - Sejm	Visit of officials	Staff	0	4
25/04/2018	1	NO1	NO - Stortinget	Standing Committee of Business and Industry	MPs and staff	11	2
14/05/2018	1	UK1	UK - House of Commons	Rt. Hon Sir Lindsay Hoyle, Deputy Speaker	Speaker (Deputy) and staff	1	2
17/05/2018	1	FR1	FR - Assemblée Nationale	Mr Damien Pichereau, MP	MP and staff	1	1
22/05/2018	1	AT1	AT - Nationalrat	Ms Mairead McGuinness, Vice-President; Mr Daniel Caspary, MEP; Ms Sylvia-Yvonne Kaufmann, MEP, and DG COMM	MPs and staff	18	4

Date	Length of visit (in days)	Parliamentary Chamber	Country - Chamber	Committee / Other	Type of visit (Speaker/MPs/ Staff)	Number of participating MPs	Number of participating staff
24/05/2018	1	UK1	UK - House of Commons	Visit of officials	Staff	0	9
24/05/2018	1	FR1	FR - Assemblée Nationale	Mr Bruno Studer, MP; meeting with Ms Julia Reda, MEP and Ms Sylvie Guillaume on fake news	MP and staff	1	1
04/06/2018	1	NL2	NL - House of Representatives	Ms Yana Toom, MEP and DG PRES	MPs and staff	6	6
18/06/2018	1	UK1	UK - House of Commons	Scottish Affairs Committee: meeting with Mr Lange, Chair of the INTA Committee, and Scottish MEPs on Scotland and Brexit, trade and foreign investment	MPs and staff	8	3
19/06/2018	1	DE1	DE - Deutscher Bundestag	ECON Committee	MPs and staff	15	7
25/06/218	1	FR1	FR - Assemblée Nationale	Members and officials	MPs and staff	4	3
26/06/2018	1	AT1 and AT2	AT - Parliament	Mr Claude Moraes, Chair of the LIBE Committee	MPs and staff	1	2
28/06/2018	1	AT1 and AT2	AT - Parliament	Visit of officials	Staff	0	15
02/07/2018	1	BE2	BE - Senate	DG COMM	Staff	NA	NA
09/07/2018	1	NL2	NL - House of Representatives	Mr Gerben Jan Gerbrandy, MEP, Mr Bas Eickhout, MEP	MP and staff	1	1
10/07/2018	1	SV1	SV - Riksdag	Mr Urban Ahlin, Speaker: meeting with EP President Antonio Tajani	Speaker	1	0
10-11/07/2018	2	NL2	NL - House of Representatives	Visit of officials and DG PRES	Staff	0	9
11/07/2018	1	FR1	FR - Assemblée Nationale	Members: meeting with Ms Verónica LopeFontagné, MEP, on the European pillar on social rights	MPs and staff	2	1
12/07/2018	1	FR1 and DE1	FR - Assemblée Nationale and DE - Deutscher Bundestag	Joint meeting of Members of the EU Affairs Committees	MPs and staff	13	6
28/08/2018	1	DE1	DE - Deutscher Bundestag	TRAN Committee	MP and staff	8	7

Date	Length of visit (in days)	Parliamentary Chamber	Country - Chamber	Committee / Other	Type of visit (Speaker/MPs/ Staff)	Number of participating MPs	Number of participating staff
06/09/2018	1	NO1	NO - Stortinget	Visit of officials	Staff	0	22
06/09/2018	1	IT1	IT - Camera dei Deputati	EU Policies Committee	MPs and staff	3	2
06/09/2018	1	ES1 and ES2	ES - Parliament	Mr Guy Verhofstadt, ALDE and Mr Jaume Duch	MPs and staff	31	11
12/09/2018	1	FR1	FR - Assemblée Nationale	Bureau of the European Affairs Committee	MPs and staff	9	2
12/09/2018 (Strasbourg)	1	F11	FI - Eduskunta	Finance Committee	MPs and staff	10	1
13/09/2018 (Brussels)	1	F11	FI - Eduskunta	Finance Committee	MPs and staff	10	1
13/09/2018	1	NO1	NO - Stortinget	Norwegian Ministry of Labour and Social affairs	Staff	0	5
19/09/2018	1	NL2	NL - House of Representatives	Visit of officials and DG PRES	MPs and staff	3	4
24/09/2018	1	FR1	FR - Assemblée Nationale	Mr Damien Pichereau, MP (European Affairs Committee)	MP and staff	1	1
24-28/9/2018	5	EE1	EE - Riigikogu	Mr Aaro Mõttus, Deputy Secretary-General	Deputy Secretary-General	0	1
25/09/2018	1	FR1	FR - Assemblée Nationale	Members and one official	MPs and staff	2	1
25/09/2018	1	UK2	UK - House of Lords	Visit of officials	Staff	0	5
26/09/2018	1	IT1	IT - Camera dei Deputati	Agriculture Committee (Videoconference)	MPs	NA	NA
27/09/2018	1	FR1	FR - Assemblée Nationale	Members and officials	MPs and staff	3	2
27/09/2018	1	NO1	NO - Stortinget	Employees of the Mission of Norway to the EU	Staff	0	10
03/10/2018	1	PL1	PL - Sejm	MEPs	Speaker (Marshal)	0	4
09-10/10/2018	2	IT2	IT - Senato	Visit of officials on security	Staff	0	2
09/10/2018	1	DE1	DE - Deutscher Bundestag	PETI Committee	MPs and staff	13	7

Date	Length of visit (in days)	Parliamentary Chamber	Country - Chamber	Committee / Other	Type of visit (Speaker/MPs/ Staff)	Number of participating MPs	Number of participating staff
08-09/10/2018	2	IT1	IT - Camera dei Deputati	Mr Roberto Fico, Speaker	Speaker	1	NA
10/10/2018	1	UK2	UK - House of Lords	EU Home Affairs Sub-Committee	MPs and staff	4	3
10/10/2018	1	EL1	EL - Vouli ton Ellinon	Information visit of Members to the European Institutions	MPs and staff	22	2
11/10/2018	1	PL1	PL - Sejm	ITRE and AFCO Committees	MPs	25	4
16/10/2018	1	IT1	IT - Camera dei Deputati	Budget and European Policies Committees (Videoconference)	MPs	NA	NA
17/10/2018	1	IT1	IT - Camera dei Deputati	Foreign Affairs and European Policies Committees (Videoconference)	MPs	NA	NA
18/10/2018	1	NO1	NO - Stortinget	Staff of the Follo district court	Staff	0	19
06/11/2018	1	UK2	UK - House of Lords	EU Home Affairs Sub-Committee	MPs and staff	8	2
06/11/2018	1	FR1	FR - Assemblée Nationale	Members and one official	MPs and staff	2	1
08/11/2018	1	IE1 and IE2	IE - Houses of the Oireachtas	Ms Mairead McGuinness, Vice-President and DG PRES	Staff	0	8
08-09/11/2018	2	UK1	UK - House of Commons	Visit of officials	Staff	0	9
19/11/2018	1	IT2	IT - Senato	Mr Mauro Fiorini, Director of the Senate's IT Service	Staff	0	1
20/11/2018	1	FR1	FR - Assemblée Nationale	Members and officials	MPs and staff	2	2
21/11/2018	1	IT1	IT - Camera dei Deputati	European Policies Committees (Videoconference)	MPs	NA	NA
22/11/2018	1	FI1	FI - Eduskunta	Visit of officials	Staff	0	6
22/11/2018	1	DA1	DA - Folketinget	Public Accounts Committee	MPs and staff	5	7
22/11/2018	1	IT2	IT - Senato	EUNews event in the Senate: MEP Roberto Gualtieri (Videoconference)	NA	NA	NA
25-26/11/2018	2	NL2	NL - House of Representatives	Mr Klaus Welle, Secretary-General	MP and staff	1	8

Date	Length of visit (in days)	Parliamentary Chamber	Country - Chamber	Committee / Other	Type of visit (Speaker/MPs/ Staff)	Number of participating MPs	Number of participating staff
26-27/11/2018	2	IT2	IT - Senato	Committee of the Senate Foreign Affairs plus Chair	MPs and staff	2	2
26-27/11/2018	2	CZ1	CZ - Poslanecká sněmovna	Ms Dana Balcarova, Chair of the Committee on Environment	MP and staff	1	1
27/11/2018	1	IT1 and IT2	IT - Senato and Camera dei Deputati	Agriculture Committees of the Senate and the Chamber (Videoconference)	MPs	20	0
04/12/2018	1	FI1	FI - Eduskunta	Mr Arto Satonen, Chair of the Grand Committee	MP and staff	1	1
04/12/2018	1	SL1	SL - National Assembly	DG COMM	MPs and staff	18	7
11/12/2018	1	IE1 and IE2	IE - Houses of the Oireachtas	DG PRES	MPs and staff	3	2

ANNEX IV - Early Warning System data

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

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

Submissions received from EU national Parliaments in 2018			
		Reasoned opinions	Contributions
Member State	Parliament/Chamber	2018	2018
Austria	Nationalrat	0	0
Austria	Bundesrat	3	7
Belgium	Chambre des Représentants	0	2
Belgium	Sénat	0	0
Bulgaria	Narodno Sabranie	0	0
Croatia	Hrvatski Sabor	0	1
Cyprus	Vouli ton Antiprosópon	0	0
Czech Republic	Poslanecká sněmovna	4	28
Czech Republic	Senát	2	60
Denmark	Folketinget	3	0
Estonia	Riigikogu	0	0
Finland	Eduskunta	0	0
France	Assemblée Nationale	1	39
France	Sénat	2	25
Germany	Bundestag	2	0
Germany	Bundesrat	0	41
Greece	Vouli ton Ellinon	0	0
Hungary	Országgyűlés	0	0
Ireland	Houses of Oireachtas	5	7
Italy	Camera dei deputati	0	9
Italy	Senato	1	16
Lithuania	Seimas	0	0
Luxembourg	Chambre des Députés	0	0
Latvia	Saeima	0	0
Malta	Kamra tar-Rappreżentanti	2	0
The Netherlands	Tweede Kamer	2	1
The Netherlands	Eerste Kamer	0	0
Poland	Sejm	1	4
Poland	Senat	0	2
Portugal	Assembleia da República	1	72
Romania	Camera Deputaţilor	0	9

Romania	Senatul	0	39
Spain	Congreso de los Diputados	0	65
	Senado		
Sweden	Riksdagen	14	0
Slovenia	Državni Zbor	0	0
Slovenia	Državni Svet	0	0
Slovakia	Národná rada	0	0
United Kingdom	House of Commons	2	0
United Kingdom	House of Lords	1	0
TOTAL		46	427

This table only lists EU national Parliaments' documents sent in response to draft legislative acts falling under Protocol 2 of the Lisbon Treaty.

ANNEX V - Contributions under Protocol 1- Informal Political Dialogue

This table lists EU national Parliaments' documents sent in response to draft legislative acts falling under the exclusive competence of the EU, as well as to a large variety of non-legislative documents, such as Green/White Papers or communications from the European Commission falling under Protocol 1 to the Lisbon Treaty.

Contributions received from EU national Parliaments in 2018		
Member State	Parliament/Chamber	2018
Austria	Nationalrat	0
Austria	Bundesrat	0
Belgium	Chambre des Représentants	1
Belgium	Sénat	1
Bulgaria	Narodno Sabranie	0
Croatia	Hrvatski Sabor	0
Cyprus	Vouli ton Antiprosópon	0
Czech Republic	Poslanecká sněmovna	37
Czech Republic	Senát	27
Denmark	Folketinget	0
Estonia	Riigikogu	0
Finland	Eduskunta	0
France	Assemblée Nationale	15
France	Sénat	17
Germany	Bundestag	0
Germany	Bundesrat	19
Greece	Vouli ton Ellinon	0
Hungary	Országgyűlés	0
Ireland	Houses of Oireachtas	3
Italy	Camera dei deputati	13
Italy	Senato	8
Lithuania	Seimas	5
Luxembourg	Chambre des Députés	0
Latvia	Saeima	0
Malta	Kamra tar-Rappreżentanti	0
The Netherlands	Tweede Kamer	1
The Netherlands	Eerste Kamer	1
Poland	Sejm	2
Poland	Senat	1
Portugal	Assembleia da República	40
Romania	Camera Deputaţilor	41
Romania	Senatul	12
Spain	Senado	0
Spain	Congreso de los Diputados	0
Sweden	Riksdagen	0
Slovenia	Državni Zbor	0
Slovenia	Državni Svet	0
Slovakia	Národná rada	2
United Kingdom	House of Commons	0
United Kingdom	House of Lords	13
TOTAL		259

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

A. Issues on which political bodies and administrative services of the European Parliament consulted the ECPRD network in 2018 through comparative requests (5):

	Date	Title	Number
1.	23/03/2018	Public expenditure on external border control and asylum management	3719
2.	20/04/2018	Appointment procedures for top-level civil servants in Governments	3753
3.	23/05/2018	Parliamentary assistants working for individual Members: Rules in place to deal with conflicts and harassment	3785
4.	01/08/2018	Support to Parliaments in the Western Balkans	3861
5.	17/10/2018	Welcoming new Members of Parliament	3916

The European Parliament provided replies to the following comparative requests from other ECPRD Parliaments (26):

	Date	Title	Number
1.	01/02/2018	Parliamentary scrutiny of Government annual accounts	3663
2.	05/02/2018	Competencies, organisation and activities of the Research service/department	3666
3.	07/02/2018	Distinctions/decorations/honours granted by Parliaments	3670
4.	13/02/2018	Internal organisation of the administrative structure of Parliament	3673
5.	23/02/2018	Disqualification of a Member of Parliament from holding office when failing to attend meetings	3683
6.	27/02/2018	Consideration of matters by the parliamentary committees on their own initiative	3688
7.	02/03/2018	Plenary and committee agendas in the Parliament - documents, workflow and supporting activities	3691
8.	05/03/2018	Costing and regulatory impact assessment	3694
9.	06/03/2018	Resumption of the professional career of non-reelected members of Parliament	3696
10.	14/03/2018	Audiovisual media management systems	3703
11.	29/03/2018	Organisation of the parliamentary week and the Parliament's agenda	3729
12.	13/04/2018	Housing of research services on parliamentary premises	3741
13.	16/04/2018	Questionnaire for Research and Libraries Seminar 'Parliamentary research in a digital age'	3744
14.	16/04/2018	Parliamentary organs for women's rights	3745
15.	20/04/2018	Green Public Procurement (GPP) mechanisms or environmental technical specifications in Parliaments	3752
16.	03/05/2018	The role of Parliaments in assessing the impacts of future factors of change and technological development	3767
17.	06/06/2018	Funding of Members' visits and stays abroad	3807
18.	15/06/2018	Speech-to-text transcription for producing parliamentary records	3817
19.	25/06/2018	Access to electronic newspapers and periodicals for MPs	3826
20.	23/07/2018	Questionnaire on the existence and functioning in Parliaments of programmes especially dedicated to children and/or young people	3851
21.	03/09/2018	Procedures for parliamentary approval and recommendations to the State General Account	3874
22.	05/09/2018	Hours of operation for in-person reference services in legislative libraries	3877
23.	18/09/2018	IT disaster recovery centre of the Parliament	3888
24.	23/10/2018	How does your Parliament deal with issues regarding artificial intelligence?	3918
25.	09/11/2018	Intranet in Parliament	3931
26.	14/11/2018	Organised visits / guided tours in Parliament	3936

B. ECPRD seminars and statutory meetings in 2018

SEMINARS				
	<u>Date</u>	<u>Venue</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Area of interest</u>
1.	17-18 May	Tbilisi, Parliament of Georgia	'Costing and Regulatory Impact Assessment'	Economic and Budgetary Affairs
2.	31 May-1 June	Berlin, Bundestag	'How is the beginning of an electoral term organised?'	Parliamentary Practice and Procedure
3.	21-22 June	London, House of Lords and House of Commons	'Parliamentary Research in a digital age'	Libraries, Research Services and Archives
4.	20-21 September	Oslo, Stortinget	'Digitalisation of Society'	ICT in Parliaments
5.	27-28 September	Brussels, European Parliament	'The future of parliamentary research services and libraries in an era of rapid change: How best to support elected members in their multiple roles'	Libraries, Research Services and Archives
STATUTORY MEETINGS				
	<u>Date</u>	<u>Venue</u>	<u>Title</u>	
1.	8-9 March	Budapest, Országgyűlés	Meeting of the ECPRD Executive Committee	
2.	6-7 September	Berlin, Bundesrat	Meeting of the ECPRD Executive Committee	
3.	18-20 October	Helsinki, Eduskunta	Annual Conference of Correspondents	

NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS OF THE EU MEMBER STATES

March 2018



directly elected



indirectly elected / appointed / other

Belgique/België/ Belgien BELGIUM Kamer van volksvertegen- woordigers/ Chambre des représentants/ Abgeordneten-kammer 150 Senaat/ Sénat/ Senat 60	България BULGARIA Народно събрание (Narodno sabranie) 240 	Česká republika CZECH REPUBLIC Poslanecká sněmovna 200 Senát 81	Danmark DENMARK Folketinget 179
Deutschland GERMANY Deutscher Bundestag 709 Bundesrat 69	Eesti ESTONIA Riigikogu 101	Éire/Ireland IRELAND Dáil Éireann 158 Seanad Éireann 60	Ελλάδα GREECE Βουλή των Ελλήνων (Vouli ton Ellinon) 300
España SPAIN Congreso de los Diputados 350 Senado 208 58	France FRANCE Assemblée nationale 577 Sénat 348	Hrvatska CROATIA Hrvatski sabor 151	Italia ITALY Camera dei Deputati 630 Senato della Repubblica 315 5
Κύπρος CYPRUS Βουλή των Αντιπροσώπων (Vouli ton Antiprosopon) 56	Latvija LATVIA Saeima 100	Lietuva LITHUANIA Seimas 141	Luxembourg LUXEMBOURG Chambre des Députés 60
Magyarország HUNGARY Országgyűlés 199	Malta MALTA Il-Kamra Tad-Deputati 67	Nederland THE NETHERLANDS Tweede Kamer 150 Eerste Kamer 75	Österreich AUSTRIA Nationalrat 183 Bundesrat 61
Polska POLAND Sejm 460 Senat 100	Portugal PORTUGAL Assembleia da República 230	România ROMANIA Camera Deputatilor 329 Senat 136	Slovenija SLOVENIA Državni zbor 90 Državni svet 40
Slovensko SLOVAKIA Národná Rada 150	Suomi/ Finland FINLAND Eduskunta 200	Sverige SWEDEN Riksdagen 349	United Kingdom UNITED KINGDOM House of Commons 650 House of Lords 785

RELNATPARL@EP.EUROPA.EU

WWW.EUROPARL/EUROPA.EU/RELNATPARL