

Questionnaire for the 42nd Bi-annual Report of COSAC

CHAPTER I:

The state of the European Union in the year of institutional transition and the 15-year application of the Treaty of Lisbon

On 16 July 2024 a newly elected European Parliament has started its five-year term following the EP elections of 6-9 June 2024. The mandate of the European Commission will be renewed according to the Treaty provisions.

This Chapter will deal with the relations of national Parliaments with certain European institutions, and it will also provide a stock-taking about the application of the Treaty of Lisbon, with special attention to the role of national Parliaments in EU affairs.

Part One

1. The relations of national Parliaments with certain European institutions

1.1. Does your Parliament/Chamber participate in the nomination process of the Commissioner-designate proposed by your Government?

- a) Yes
- b) No**
- c) N/A

If yes, at what level? *(multiple choice)*

- ☐ Committee on EU affairs
- ☐ Other committee/committees
- ☐ Plenary
- ☐ Other, please specify: _____

If yes, in what way? *(multiple choice)*

- ☐ Debate at plenary level
- ☐ Debate at committee level
- ☐ By adopting a resolution
- ☐ By adopting a mandate for the Government
- ☐ Other, please specify: _____

1.2. Does your Parliament/Chamber participate in the nomination process of the candidates of the General Court and the Court of Justice proposed by your Government?

- a) Yes
- b) No**
- c) N/A

If yes, at what level? *(multiple choice)*

- ☐ Committee on EU affairs

- ☐ Other committee/committees
- ☐ Plenary
- ☐ Other, please specify: _____

If yes, in what way? *(multiple choice)*

- ☐ Debate at plenary level
- ☐ Debate at committee level
- ☐ By adopting a resolution
- ☐ By adopting a mandate for the Government
- ☐ Other, please specify: _____

1.3. Does your Parliament/Chamber participate in the nomination process of the candidate of the Court of Auditors proposed by your Government?

- a) Yes
- b) No**
- c) N/A

If yes, at what level? *(multiple choice)*

- ☐ Committee on EU affairs
- ☐ Other committee/committees
- ☐ Plenary
- ☐ Other, please specify: _____

If yes, in what way? *(multiple choice)*

- ☐ Debate at plenary level
- ☐ Debate at committee level
- ☐ By adopting a resolution
- ☐ By adopting a mandate for the Government
- ☐ Other, please specify: _____

1.4. Do the Members of the European Parliament elected in your country take part at meetings of your Parliament/Chamber?

- a) Yes
- b) No**
- c) N/A

If yes, at what level? *(multiple choice)*

- ☐ Committee on EU affairs
- ☐ Other committee/committees
- ☐ Plenary
- ☒ Other, please specify: *MEPs do not have the right to participate in plenary or committee meetings of the Senate. Only Members of the Senate have that right. MEPs can however be invited by committees of the Senate to discuss*

certain topics in an expert meeting. This only implies giving information as external guest, not participating in any procedure.

1.5. Does your Parliament/Chamber discuss the Government position on the agenda points of the European Council meetings in advance?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) N/A

If yes, at what level? *(multiple choice)*

- ☒ Committee on EU affairs
- ☒ Other committee/committees
- ☐ Plenary
- ☒ Other, please specify: *Generally, the annotated agendas of the European Council meetings are tabled or put on the agenda in the committee on EU affairs. However, if there are any subjects that arise interest in other committees, the agenda of the European Council can be put on the agenda of these other committees.*

If yes, in what way? *(multiple choice)*

- ☐ Debate at plenary level
- ☐ Debate at committee level
- ☐ By adopting a resolution
- ☐ By adopting a mandate for the Government
- ☒ Other, please specify: *The Dutch Senate receives annotated agendas and reports of the meetings of the European Council that will be put on the agenda for the European Affairs committee meetings. The Government outlines its position in these agendas and reports. The committee will have the possibility to follow up on the annotated agendas and report. If it is decided to give a follow up, this is generally done through written consultation with the Government.*

1.6. Does your Parliament/Chamber discuss the Government briefing on the outcome of the European Council meetings?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) N/A

If yes, at what level? *(multiple choice)*

- ☒ Committee on EU affairs
- ☒ Other committee/committees
- ☐ Plenary
- ☒ Other, please specify: *The written report of the outcome of the European Council meetings will be put on the agenda in the committee on EU affairs. However, if there are any subjects that arise interest in other committees, the*

report of the European Council can be put on the agenda of these other committees.

If yes, in what way? (multiple choice)

- ☐ Debate at plenary level
- ☐ Debate at committee level
- ☐ By adopting a resolution
- ☒ Other, please specify: *The Dutch Senate receives written reports of the meetings of the European Council that will be put on the agenda for the European Affairs committee meetings. The committee will have the possibility to follow up on the written report. If it is decided to give a follow up, this is generally done through written consultation with the Government.*

Part two

2. The role of national Parliaments in EU affairs

2.1.1. Does your Parliament/Chamber discuss the annual Commission Work Programme (CWP)?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) N/A

If yes, at what level? (multiple choice)

- ☒ Committee on EU affairs
- ☒ Other committee/committees
- ☐ Plenary
- ☐ Other, please specify:

If yes, in what way? (multiple choice)

- ☒ Debate at plenary level
- ☒ Debate at committee level
- ☐ By adopting a resolution
- ☒ Other, please specify: *The committee on EU affairs has the coordinating role in the prioritization process of the annual Commission Work Program. All the committees of the Senate select which proposals from the Work Program they wish to put on the agenda after publication. After all the committees have selected their proposals, all the selected proposals will be put together into one list which is then adopted by the Senate as its European Working Programme.*

2.1.2. Has your Parliament/Chamber adopted any position regarding the adopted EU strategic agenda 2024–2029?

- a) Yes
- b) No

c) N/A

If yes, at what level? *(multiple choice)*

- ☐ Committee on EU affairs
- ☐ Other committee/committees
- ☐ Plenary
- ☐ Other, please specify: _____

If yes, in what way? *(multiple choice)*

- ☐ Debate at plenary level
- ☐ Debate at committee level
- ☐ By adopting a resolution

2.2. Has your Parliament/Chamber applied the subsidiarity checks as stipulated by Protocol No. 2 since 2019?

- a) Yes**
- b) No
- c) N/A

2.2.1. If yes, typically what are the main reasons for the subsidiarity concerns? *(multiple choice)*

- ☐ General concerns
- ☒ Lack of cross-border character of the draft legislative act
- ☒ Lack of necessity of the draft legislative act
- ☒ Problems with the legal basis of the draft legislative act
- ☒ More effective measure on national or regional level
- ☐ Questions of concurring competences
- ☐ Other, please specify: _____

2.2.2. If yes, how many reasoned opinions have been adopted by your Parliament/Chamber since 2019?

- ☒ 1-5 reasoned opinions
- ☐ 5-10 reasoned opinions
- ☐ 10-20 reasoned opinions
- ☐ More than 20 reasoned opinions

2.3. Has your Parliament/Chamber discussed the issue of so-called green card since 2019?

- a) Yes**
- b) No
- c) N/A

If yes, at what level? *(multiple choice)*

- ☒ Committee on EU affairs
- ☐ Other committee/committees

- ☐ Plenary
☐ Other, please specify: _____

If yes, in what way? (multiple choice)

- ☐ Debate at plenary level
☒ Debate at committee level
☐ By adopting a resolution
☐ Other, please specify: _____

2.4. Has your Parliament/Chamber discussed the issue of so-called red card since 2019?

- a) Yes
b) No
c) N/A

If yes, at what level? (multiple choice)

- ☐ Committee on EU affairs
☐ Other committee/committees
☐ Plenary
☐ Other, please specify: _____

If yes, in what way? (multiple choice)

- ☐ Debate at plenary level
☐ Debate at committee level
☐ By adopting a resolution
☐ Other, please specify: _____

2.5. If you wish to provide any additional information on this chapter, please do so below (500 characters maximum):

Regarding 2.1.2.: The Senate has not adopted a position on the strategic agenda 2024-2029. However, the committee on European Affairs has asked the government questions about the Strategic Agenda and a motion was tabled during the Foreign Affairs budget debate on 18 June 2024 asking the government to agree to the EU Strategic Agenda within the European Council only 'ad referendum'. This motion was rejected by the Senate.

CHAPTER II.

European demographic trends and national and Union responses

The European Commission presented its toolbox entitled Demographic change in Europe [COM (2023) 577] (hereinafter: the toolbox) in October 2023 following the decision of the June 2023 European Council to address demographic challenges and notably their impact on Europe's competitive edge.

This Chapter will present whether and how national Parliaments have so far dealt with the toolbox. It will also address the relevant measures on the level of Member States or regions that focus on the economic and social aspects of demographic issues.

Part one

3. The European Commission toolbox on Demographic change

3.1. Has your Parliament/Chamber discussed the toolbox?

- a) Yes
- b) No**
- c) N/A

If yes, at what level? *(multiple choice)*

- ☐ Committee on EU affairs
- ☐ Other committee/committees
- ☐ Plenary
- ☐ Other, please specify: _____

If yes, in what way? *(multiple choice)*

- ☐ Debate at plenary level
- ☐ Debate at committee level
- ☐ By adopting a resolution
- ☐ Other, please specify: _____

3.2 Has your Parliament/Chamber adopted any opinion or position on the toolbox?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) N/A**

If yes, at what level? *(multiple choice)*

- ☐ Committee on EU affairs
- ☐ Other committee/committees
- ☐ Plenary
- ☐ Other, please specify: _____

If yes, in what way? *(multiple choice)*

- ☐ Debate at plenary level
- ☐ Debate at committee level
- ☐ By adopting a resolution
- ☐ Other, please specify: _____

Part two

3.3. National responses for demographic challenges

3.3.1. Has your Parliament/Chamber adopted any measures addressing the following aspects of demographic issues?

a) Targeted government support-schemes for newborn babies

a) Yes

b) No, not recently. As part of standing social policy the Netherlands has a range of schemes to support young families, eg a non-income and non-means tested standard rate child benefit (“kinderbijslag”), an income tested childcare benefit (“kinderopvangtoeslag”) and a means and income tested child budget (“kindgebonden budget”) for lower income families. The eligibility conditions for these schemes are regularly updated

c) N/A

b) Special tax-reduction system for large families (i.e. families with more than 2 children)

a) Yes

b) No

c) N/A

c) Family Housing Allowance Program for leasehold or home ownership of young couples, including government support scheme and low-cost state-subsidised loan scheme

a) Yes

b) No

c) N/A

d) Personal income tax exemptions for mothers or fathers of more than 3 children

a) Yes

b) No

c) N/A

If any of the above is yes, please specify: (500 characters maximum)

C. Yes, The Dutch Senate has scrutinized and passed legislation with which young (18-35 year old) home buyers have an exemption of the 2% house transfer tax (“overdrachtsbelasting”) for houses up to Euro 510.000.

3.4. Parliamentary Committee responsible for demographic issues

3.4.1. Does your Parliament/Chamber have a committee responsible for demographic issues?

No, demographic issues are generally under the responsibility of the standing committee on the Interior, sometimes in combination with the standing committee on Social Affairs and Employment.

3.4.2. Is it a standing or special committee or subcommittee?

3.4.3. How often are demographic issues discussed by the relevant committee mentioned above?

- a) monthly
- b) bimonthly
- c) quarterly
- d) at every committee meeting
- e) N/A
- f) **Other, please specify:** Demographic issues are almost exclusively discussed in combination with pending legislation.

If you wish to provide any additional information on this chapter, please do so below (500 characters maximum):

In the Netherlands, on request of the Dutch government and the House of Representatives a special “State Committee Demographic Developments 2050” was established in September 2022. The independent State Commission has investigated the social consequences of population changes over the next three decades. In doing so, it has looked at the size of the population and the effects of, among other things, ageing and migration. In its report issued on 15 January 2024, the State Commission advises on possible policy responses and on what effects these could have. The report by the State Commission is only available in Dutch. The Dutch Senate has discussed this report in the committee on Social Affairs and Employment.

3.5.
CHAPTER III.

4. The enlargement of the European Union

Article 49 TEU stipulates the conditions and the procedure of the enlargement process. 20 years passed since the historic EU enlargement of 2004/2007, thereby enlarging the EU by 12 new Member States. Since then, only the Republic of Croatia acceded to the European Union in 2013. The European perspective has been offered for the Western Balkans since the EU summit held in Thessaloniki in June 2003.

This Chapter will look at EU enlargement, its implications to the spread of stability, peace, security, and economic prosperity across the continent. It will analyse the modalities whereby Member States and national Parliaments currently address the matter of ongoing EU accession processes.

4.1. Has your Parliament/Chamber discussed the European Commission annual enlargement package of 2023, COM (2023) 690?

- a) Yes**

- b) No
c) N/A

If yes, at what level? (multiple choice)

- ☒ Committee on EU affairs
☐ Other committee/committees
☐ Plenary
☐ Other, please specify: _____

If yes, in what way? (multiple choice)

- ☐ Debate at plenary level
☐ Debate at committee level
☐ By adopting a resolution
☒ Other, please specify: Enlargement is an ongoing topic on the agenda of the committee on European Affairs.

4.2. Has your Parliament/Chamber discussed the Commission Communication on new growth plan for the Western Balkans, COM (2023) 691?

- a) Yes
b) No
c) N/A

If yes, at what level? (multiple choice)

- ☐ Committee on EU affairs
☐ Other committee/committees
☐ Plenary
☐ Other, please specify: _____

If yes, in what way? (multiple choice)

- ☐ Debate at plenary level
☐ Debate at committee level
☐ By adopting a resolution
☐ Other, please specify: _____

4.3. Has your Parliament/Chamber discussed the Commission Communication on pre-enlargement reforms and policy reviews, COM (2024) 146?

- a) Yes**
b) No
c) N/A

If yes, at what level? (multiple choice)

- ☒ Committee on EU affairs
☐ Other committee/committees

- ☐ Plenary
- ☐ Other, please specify: _____

If yes, in what way? (*multiple choice*)

- ☐ Debate at plenary level
- ☐ Debate at committee level
- ☐ By adopting a resolution
- ☒ Other, please specify: The committee on EU affairs prioritized the topic and held a meeting with one of the 3 rapporteurs of the Dutch House of Representatives to discuss the Communication on pre-enlargement reforms and policy reviews.

4.4. Is there cooperation between the parliaments of candidate and potential candidate countries and your Parliament/Chamber?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) N/A

If yes, please specify: (500 characters maximum)

The Dutch parliament meets with parliaments of (potential) candidate countries at interparliamentary conferences such as COSAC, OSCE and the Council of Europe. Additionally, the Dutch House of Representatives has a twinning project with Georgia. In light of this collaboration, the committee on Finance of the Dutch Senate has had meetings with parliamentarians of Georgia to explain the workings of the committee.

4.5. Has your Parliament/Chamber organised any missions to the parliaments of candidate and potential candidate countries since 1 January 2023?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) N/A

If yes, please specify: (500 characters maximum)

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4.6. Has your Parliament/Chamber hosted delegations from the parliaments of candidate and potential candidate countries since 1 January 2023?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) N/A

If yes, please specify: (500 characters maximum)

On 31 January 2024, the Vice Presidents of the States General hosted the Vice President of the Ukrainian Parliament, Mr Oleksandr Korniyenko. On 24 October 2024, the committee of Finance hosted the committee on Budget and Finance of Georgia, led by Mr. Paata Kvijinadze of the Georgian Dream Party.

4.7. Has your Parliament/Chamber adopted any position on the future enlargement of the EU?

- a) Yes
- b) No**
- c) N/A

If yes, at what level? *(multiple choice)*

- ☐ Committee on EU affairs
- ☐ Other committee/committees
- ☐ Plenary
- ☐ Other, please specify: _____

If yes, in what way? *(multiple choice)*

- ☐ Debate at plenary level
- ☐ Debate at committee level
- ☐ By adopting a resolution
- ☐ Other, please specify: _____

4.8. Does your Parliament/Chamber participate in EU funded parliamentary capacity building programmes for the parliaments of candidate and potential candidate countries?

- a) Yes
- b) No**
- c) N/A

If yes, please specify: (500 characters maximum)

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4.9. If you wish to provide any additional information on this chapter, please do so below (500 characters maximum):