

Indicator 1.5: Administrative capacity and independence

About this indicator

Parliamentary business needs to be supported by a capable and independent parliamentary administration. The parliamentary administration should be independent of the executive, be free from political influence in its day-to-day operation, and provide support to all MPs impartially.

This indicator concerns the general support available to parliament from the parliamentary administration. While the nature and level of this support varies across parliaments, it typically includes adequately trained staff, suitable facilities, digital technologies, and management of documents, policies, systems and practices.

Specific support related to the core parliamentary functions is covered in separate indicators (see, for example, *Indicator 1.6: Law-making*, *Indicator 1.7: Oversight* and *Indicator 1.8: Budget*).

This indicator comprises the following dimensions:

- Dimension 1.5.1: Mandates of the parliamentary administration
- Dimension 1.5.2: Human resource management
- Dimension 1.5.3: Expert support
- Dimension 1.5.4: Facilities
- Dimension 1.5.5: Digital technologies
- Dimension 1.5.6: Document management

The Indicators for Democratic Parliaments are a multi-partner initiative coordinated by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), in partnership with the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), Directorio Legislativo Foundation, Inter Pares / International IDEA, the National Democratic Institute (NDI), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UN Women and the Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD).

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Dimension 1.5.1: Mandates of the parliamentary administration

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.5: Administrative capacity and independence
- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the existence of a parliamentary administration, as well as its mandates, powers, governance and responsibilities.

For reasons of effectiveness and capacity, it is important that the parliamentary administration be separate from, and operate independently of, the executive. Likewise, the parliamentary administration should be able to recruit and manage its staff, and organize its day-to-day work, without political influence.

The parliamentary administration should report publicly on its work, monitor and evaluate its performance and seek to continually improve its services.

See also Dimension 1.1.4: Administrative autonomy and Indicator 2.2: Institutional integrity.

Aspiring goal

Based on a global comparative analysis, an aspiring goal for parliaments in the area of "mandates of the parliamentary administration" is as follows:

The parliamentary administration is established through a clear legal framework, which codifies its mandates, powers, governance and responsibilities.

The parliamentary administration operates independently of the executive, and is able to organize its day-to-day work without political influence.

The parliamentary administration supports the organizational, administrative and technical functions of parliament. Its mandated duties include:

- facilitating the efficient and effective functioning of parliament
- providing impartial professional support, research, library and information services
- giving neutral advice
- developing rules for the staff of the parliamentary administration
- managing personnel and technical matters
- providing and maintaining parliamentary facilities.

The parliamentary administration ensures the continuity of parliament and underpins its institutional memory, regardless of electoral cycles.

The parliamentary administration constantly and proactively seeks to improve its support and services and regularly reports publicly on its work and performance.

Assessment

This dimension is assessed against several criteria, each of which should be evaluated separately. For each criterion, select one of the six descriptive grades (Non-existent, Rudimentary, Basic, Good, Very good and Excellent) that corresponds best to your parliament, and provide details of the evidence on which the assessment is based.

The evidence for assessment of this dimension could include the following:

- Provisions of the legal framework, parliament's rules of procedure and/or other legal documents establishing an independent parliamentary administration and codifying its mandates, powers, governance and responsibilities
- Evidence of an established body mandated to approve and oversee the work of the parliamentary administration, and details of the members of such a body
- Reports on the work and performance of the parliamentary administration

Where relevant, provide additional comments or examples that support the assessment.

Assessment criterion 1: Legal framework

The parliamentary administration is established through a clear legal framework, which codifies its mandates, powers, governance and responsibilities.

Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good □	Excellent
Evidence for this	s assessment crit	erion:			

Assessment criterion 2: Governance

A parliamentary body oversees the running of the parliamentary administration. The day-to-day management of the parliamentary administration is ensured by the Secretary General.

Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good	Excellent				
Evidence for this assessment criterion:									

Assessment criterion 3: Responsibilities

The parliamentary administration supports the day-to-day organizational, administrative and technical functions of parliament. It provides high-quality support and services in line with the principles of impartiality, equity, neutrality and non-partisanship.

Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good	Excellent						
Evidence for this	Evidence for this assessment criterion:										

Assessment criterion 4: Reporting

The parliamentary administration reports regularly to parliament on its work and performance, either in a stand-alone report or as part of regular parliamentary performance reporting.

Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good □	Excellent
Evidence for this	s assessment crite	erion:			

Assessment criterion 5: Performance

The parliamentary administration constantly and proactively seeks to improve its support and services, taking into account feedback from MPs and the public. The performance of the parliamentary administration should be audited regularly, by either internal or external auditors.

Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good	Excellent
Evidence for this	s assessment crit	erion:			

Recommendations for change

Use this space to note down recommendations and ideas for strengthening rules and practice in this area.

- Charles Lusthaus and others, <u>Organisational Assessment: A Framework for Improving</u> <u>Performance</u> (2002)
- Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), <u>Comparative research paper on parliamentary administration</u> (2020)
- IPU, <u>Putting parliamentary self-development into practice: A Guide to the Common Principles for</u> <u>Support to Parliaments</u> (2020)
- United States Agency for International Development (USAID), <u>Organizational Capacity</u> <u>Assessment</u> (2016)

Dimension 1.5.2: Human resource management

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.5: Administrative capacity and independence
- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the human resources needed to support an effective parliament. It only includes non-partisan staff under the management of the parliamentary administration, not political staff supporting individual MPs and political groups.

Human resource management includes building institutional capacity for sustained and enhanced performance. The comprehensive development and training of staff is therefore important for the parliamentary administration to be able to meet the needs of parliament in the longer term.

In some countries, staff are permitted to move between the civil service and the parliamentary administration. The legal framework may establish that parliamentary staff are whole-of-government employees for the purpose of retirement and other related benefits.

See also Dimension 1.1.4: Administrative autonomy, Indicator 2.2: Institutional integrity and Indicator 5.2: Inclusive institutional practices.

Aspiring goal

Based on a global comparative analysis, an aspiring goal for parliaments in the area of "human resource management" is as follows:

The parliamentary administration has sufficient human resources to be able to fulfil its mandate.

There are processes and procedures in place for the planning, allocation and assessment of the staff needed to support parliamentary business.

The following principles are applied to the recruitment and advancement of parliamentary staff:

- Parliamentary staff should be recruited and promoted through fair and open competition, based on merit.
- Appointments should not be based on personal or partisan political considerations.
- MPs and/or political staff should only be involved in the recruitment and career advancement
 of parliamentary staff in exceptional circumstances, usually in relation to the most senior
 positions.
- Recruitment should be conducted with the aim of ensuring so far as possible that
 parliamentary staff as a body represent the range of people who are citizens of the country.

Clear policies govern disciplinary procedures, ethical conduct, working hours and leave allocations for parliamentary staff. The implementation of these policies is reviewed regularly.

The parliamentary administration has a professional development framework for parliamentary staff.

Assessment

This dimension is assessed against several criteria, each of which should be evaluated separately. For each criterion, select one of the six descriptive grades (Non-existent, Rudimentary, Basic, Good, Very

good and Excellent) that best reflects the situation in your parliament, and provide details of the evidence on which this assessment is based.

The evidence for assessment of this dimension could include the following:

- Provisions of the legal framework on the relationship between the civil service and the parliamentary administration
- Provisions of the constitution and/or other aspects of the legal framework on the independent recruitment and advancement of parliamentary staff
- Rules, procedures and guidelines on the recruitment and advancement of parliamentary staff
- Statistics on the recruitment and advancement of parliamentary staff
- Reviews or reports relating to recruitment and advancement processes
- Policies pertaining to human resource management within the parliamentary administration
- Performance contracts, reports on work done and performance assessments
- Monitoring and evaluation framework and work (if any)

Where relevant, provide additional comments or examples that support the assessment.

Assessment criterion 1: Policies

Clear human resource policies are established, implemented and regularly reviewed to support the effective management of parliamentary staff. These policies govern the recruitment and retention of parliamentary staff, as well as disciplinary procedures, ethical conduct, working hours and leave allocations.

Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good	Excellent						
Evidence for this	Evidence for this assessment criterion:										

Assessment criterion 2: Processes

Processes are in place for planning, performance management and reporting. Clear job descriptions are also in place, along with details of salaries, benefits and other performance incentives. Human resources are sufficient to support all aspects of parliamentary business.

Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good	Excellent			
Evidence for this assessment criterion:								

Assessment criterion 3: Recruitment and advancement

Rules and procedures determined by parliament are in place for the recruitment and advancement of parliamentary staff. Parliamentary staff are recruited and promoted through fair and open competition, based on merit, without political involvement.

Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good	Excellent				
Evidence for this	s assessment crite	erion:							

Assessment criterion 4: Training and specialization

The parliamentary administration has a professional development framework for parliamentary staff, which includes training and specialization in specific areas, and which recognizes the unique skills and capabilities required.

Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good □	Excellent
Evidence for this	s assessment crite	erion:			

Recommendations for change

Use this space to note down recommendations and ideas for strengthening rules and practice in this area.

- Association of Secretaries General of Parliaments (ASGP), <u>Principles for recruitment and</u> <u>career management of staff of the parliamentary administration</u> (2014)
- Charles Lusthaus and others, <u>Organisational Assessment: A Framework for Improving</u>
 <u>Performance</u> (2002)
- Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), <u>Comparative research paper on parliamentary administration</u> (2020)
- United States Agency for International Development (USAID), <u>Organizational Capacity</u> <u>Assessment</u> (2016)

Dimension 1.5.3: Expert support

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.5: Administrative capacity and independence
- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the expert support available to parliamentary bodies and MPs to facilitate evidence-informed decision-making. Access to relevant, impartial and timely information from the parliamentary administration enhances the ability of the MPs to verify, clarify or even dispute executive sources, helps maintain the separation of powers, and improves the effectiveness of parliaments.

Expert support is provided in different ways across parliaments, including through procedural and committee staff, research units, the parliamentary library, and parliamentary institutes.

The parliamentary administration should be able to provide expert support in various policy and practice areas, including budgeting, gender mainstreaming, parliamentary diplomacy and public participation.

Aspiring goal

Based on a global comparative analysis, an aspiring goal for parliaments in the area of "expert support" is as follows:

The parliamentary administration provides MPs with expert support in all areas of their work, including by:

- assisting on matters of business and procedure
- organizing plenary sessions and committee meetings
- producing policy analysis and research papers
- providing services such as library and information support, communications and public relations, and financial administration.

The parliamentary administration provides this support in a non-partisan manner to all MPs, regardless of political affiliation.

Standards of service delivery are specified, quality control processes are in place and support services are tailored to MPs' needs.

Assessment

This dimension is assessed against several criteria, each of which should be evaluated separately. For each criterion, select one of the six descriptive grades (Non-existent, Rudimentary, Basic, Good, Very good and Excellent) that best reflects the situation in your parliament, and provide details of the evidence on which this assessment is based.

The evidence for assessment of this dimension could include the following:

- Rules, service charters or guides outlining the scope and organization of the expert support available to MPs
- A documented quality control process

- Evidence that researcher, policy analyst and library roles are filled as per the service charter, as well as the associated organization chart
- Satisfaction surveys of MPs regarding the expert support they receive
- Evidence that MPs have universal access to information products
- Website usage statistics
- Staffing and oversight arrangements for library, research and analysis services

Where relevant, provide additional comments or examples that support the assessment.

Assessment criterion 1: Scope and organization

Rules, service charters or guides outline the scope and organization of the expert support available to MPs. Standards of service delivery are specified and monitored through agreed quality-control procedures.

Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good	Excellent						
Evidence for this	Evidence for this assessment criterion:										

Assessment criterion 2: Staff

The parliamentary administration has an adequate number of professional staff providing high-quality expert support to parliament.

Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good	Excellent				
Evidence for this	s assessment crit	erion:							

Assessment criterion 3: Non-partisan service delivery

The parliamentary administration provides expert support in a non-partisan manner to all MPs, regardless of political affiliation.

Non-existent □	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good □	Excellent
Evidence for this	s assessment crit	erion:			

Assessment criterion 4: Expected levels of service

Standards of service delivery are specified and monitored through agreed quality-control procedures. Feedback from MPs is regularly sought and used to improve levels of service.

Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good	Excellent		
Evidence for this assessment criterion:							

Recommendations for change

Use this space to note down recommendations and ideas for strengthening rules and practice in this area.

- Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), *Guidelines for parliamentary research services* (2015)
- IPU and IFLA, Guidelines for Parliamentary Libraries (2022)

Dimension 1.5.4: Facilities

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.5: Administrative capacity and independence
- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the facilities available to MPs and staff. These facilities can include office space, furniture, ICT infrastructure and other equipment available on the parliamentary premises and/or in constituencies. In some cases, they can also include housing, transportation and parking facilities, as well as catering, cleaning services and other household services. Protection services may also be provided. Increasingly, parliaments provide childcare facilities for MPs and staff with family responsibilities.

The facilities available to the media and members of the public, including people living with disabilities, are covered in a separate indicator (see *Indicator 3.3: Access to parliament*).

Aspiring goal

Based on a global comparative analysis, an aspiring goal for parliaments in the area of "facilities" is as follows:

Parliamentary facilities are under the control of parliament. They are fit for purpose in terms of the needs of parliament, and are appropriately maintained and improved.

Office space and other facilities are allocated to MPs, political groups and staff in accordance with transparent rules and in an equitable manner, regardless of political affiliation.

Parliament ensures equal access to parliamentary facilities for MPs and staff living with disabilities.

Assessment

This dimension is assessed against several criteria, each of which should be evaluated separately. For each criterion, select one of the six descriptive grades (Non-existent, Rudimentary, Basic, Good, Very good and Excellent) that best reflects the situation in your parliament, and provide details of the evidence on which this assessment is based.

The evidence for assessment of this dimension could include the following:

- Feedback on the suitability of facilities, including any assessments of their fitness for purpose
- Resources available to the parliamentary administration to support and develop its facilities
- Guidelines outlining a clear formula for access to facilities
- Reports on actual access to, and allocation of, facilities

Where relevant, provide additional comments or examples that support the assessment.

Assessment criterion 1: Fitness for purpose

Parliamentary facilities are fit for purpose in terms of the needs of parliament, and are appropriately maintained and improved as required.

Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good	Excellent			
Evidence for this	Evidence for this assessment criterion:							

Assessment criterion 2: Equitable access

Office space and other facilities are allocated to MPs, political groups and staff in accordance with transparent rules and in an equitable manner, regardless of political affiliation.

Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good □	Excellent
Evidence for this	s assessment crit	erion:			

Assessment criterion 3: Access for all members of the community

Parliamentary facilities are accessible to all MPs and staff, including people living with disabilities.

Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good	Excellent			
Evidence for this	Evidence for this assessment criterion:							

Recommendations for change

Use this space to note down recommendations and ideas for strengthening rules and practice in this area.

Dimension 1.5.5: Digital technologies

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.5: Administrative capacity and independence
- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the digital technologies available to MPs and staff to support the conduct of their business, and to ensure public participation and access to information. For the purposes of this dimension, "digital technologies" refers to hardware, software, infrastructure and applications hosted both on the parliamentary premises and in the cloud.

For parliaments, digital transformation requires a clear strategic direction, including policies and plans, as well as strong ICT governance, leadership and oversight structures. Parliaments should not necessarily aim to acquire the most sophisticated technology, but instead focus on the technology that best enables MPs to conduct their business, and to communicate effectively with their constituencies.

In view of the threats to parliamentary information systems, parliaments should also prioritize cybersecurity. Measures, including user training, should be in place to protect the integrity of parliament's digital assets, and to ensure that MPs and staff are able to conduct their work safely and without undue interference.

Aspiring goal

Based on a global comparative analysis, an aspiring goal for parliaments in the area of "digital technologies" is as follows:

Parliament has a clear strategic direction, including policies and plans, for the use of digital technologies.

Parliament has strong governance, leadership and oversight processes in place to support its digital transformation.

Digital technologies are introduced in line with parliament's needs and strategies, and are constantly developed and consolidated.

The deployment of digital technologies is supported by dedicated and adequate financial and human resources.

Cybersecurity is prioritized in order to protect the integrity of parliament's digital assets, and to ensure that MPs and staff are able to conduct their work safely and without undue interference.

Assessment

This dimension is assessed against several criteria, each of which should be evaluated separately. For each criterion, select one of the six descriptive grades (Non-existent, Rudimentary, Basic, Good, Very good and Excellent) that best reflects the situation in your parliament, and provide details of the evidence on which this assessment is based.

The evidence for assessment of this dimension could include the following:

- Policies or plans on digital transformation and innovation
- Details of ICT governance, leadership and oversight structures, ideally involving MPs
- Details of a dedicated budget and staff for ICT and its management

- Evidence of alignment between ICT plans and the parliamentary mandate and/or strategies
- Details of cybersecurity infrastructure, and related reports

Where relevant, provide additional comments or examples that support the assessment.

Assessment criterion 1: Strategic direction

Parliament has a clear strategic direction, including policies and plans, on the use of digital technologies.

Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good	Excellent		
Evidence for this assessment criterion:							

Assessment criterion 2: Governance, leadership and oversight

Parliament has strong governance, leadership and oversight processes in place to support its digital transformation, ideally involving MPs. Digital technologies are introduced in line with parliament's needs and strategies, and are constantly developed and consolidated.

Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good	Excellent		
Evidence for this assessment criterion:							

Assessment criterion 3: Resources

The deployment of digital technologies is supported by dedicated and adequate financial and human resources. Parliament has a dedicated ICT budget, and the required hardware and software are accessible to all MPs and staff.

Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good	Excellent		
Evidence for this assessment criterion:							

Assessment criterion 4: Cybersecurity

Cybersecurity is prioritized in order to protect the integrity of parliament's digital assets, and to ensure that MPs and staff are able to conduct their work safely and without undue interference. Cybersecurity systems and processes are robust, and use recognized standards and guidelines to proactively monitor and prevent attempts at unauthorized access to any part of the parliamentary digital estate.

Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good	Excellent			
Evidence for this assessment criterion:								

Recommendations for change

Use this space to note down recommendations and ideas for strengthening rules and practice in this area.

- Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), <u>World e-Parliament Report 2020</u> (2020)
- IPU, World e-Parliament Report 2022 (2022)
- IPU, "IPU Innovation Tracker" (quarterly electronic bulletin from the <u>Centre for Innovation in</u> Parliament)

Dimension 1.5.6: Document management

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.5: Administrative capacity and independence
- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns document management systems that support the collection, categorization, analysis and storage of data and information, and their distribution and dissemination.

Document management is essential as it maintains a record of parliament's work, provides the information MPs and staff need to conduct their business, enables parliament to keep the public informed about its work, and underpins parliament's institutional memory.

For the purpose of this dimension, "document management" covers all documents generated by parliament, MPs and parliamentary staff. This includes the formal documents and information generated in the course of parliamentary business, as well as the records of the parliamentary administration and documents generated by MPs when fulfilling their representative duties.

See also Dimension 1.3.8: Record-keeping, Indicator 2.2: Institutional integrity, Indicator 3.1: Transparency of parliamentary processes and Indicator 3.2: Parliamentary communication and outreach.

Aspiring goal

Based on a global comparative analysis, an aspiring goal for parliaments in the area of "document management" is as follows:

Parliament has document management systems, rules, procedures and processes in place covering the creation, processing, categorization, storage, archiving, retrieval, deletion and dissemination of information.

All documents are stored securely in one or more central repositories.

MPs, staff and members of the public can access parliamentary documents, in accordance with the document management rules and procedures.

Assessment

This dimension is assessed against several criteria, each of which should be evaluated separately. For each criterion, select one of the six descriptive grades (Non-existent, Rudimentary, Basic, Good, Very good and Excellent) that best reflects the situation in your parliament, and provide details of the evidence on which this assessment is based.

The evidence for assessment of this dimension could include the following:

- Document management rules, procedures and/or processes
- Evidence of one or more central repositories for parliamentary documents
- Evidence that documents are available through the parliamentary website, or by email and/or in hard copy on request
- Cybersecurity reports

Where relevant, provide additional comments or examples that support the assessment.

Assessment criterion 1: Rules and procedures

Parliament has document management rules, procedures and processes in place covering the creation, processing, categorization, storage, archiving, retrieval, deletion and dissemination of information.

Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good	Excellent			
Evidence for this	Evidence for this assessment criterion:							

Assessment criterion 2: Central repository

All parliamentary documents are stored securely in one or more central repositories.

Non-existent □	Rudimentary	Basic	Good □	Very good □	Excellent
Evidence for this	s assessment crite	erion:			

Assessment criterion 3: Access to parliamentary documents

Parliamentary documents can be accessed by MPs and staff as required and by members of the public in accordance with document management rules and procedures.

Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good	Excellent		
Evidence for this assessment criterion:							

- International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), <u>Implementing a records</u> management strategy to complement Parliament's knowledge management initiatives (2015)
- Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), <u>Technological Options for Capturing and Reporting</u> Parliamentary Proceedings (2014)
- IPU, World e-Parliament Report 2020 (2020)