Indicators for Democratic Parliaments

Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy. For everyone.

CPA COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION

DIRECTORIO LEGISLATIVO

WYDE Parliaments
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INTER PARES
Parliaments in Partnership
EU Global Project to Strengthen the Capacity of Parliaments
Implemented by International IDEA

NDI
NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE

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Foreword

Parliament is the central institution of a democracy. It has a unique mandate to represent the people, to pass laws and to hold the government to account. The decisions taken by parliament shape the future of society and of our planet.

The way in which parliaments carry out their functions is therefore of the utmost importance. As public expectations evolve, parliaments are challenged to be ever more effective, accountable and transparent. People want and need decision-making processes to be inclusive, responsive, participatory and representative.

These are the conditions for governance in the interests of the many, not the few. Parliaments that embody these democratic principles – as set out in the internationally agreed Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – will be better equipped to take decisive action to fight poverty, to reduce inequalities, to ensure gender equality, to preserve the health of the planet and, indeed, to effect positive change in all areas of human endeavour.

The Indicators for Democratic Parliaments represent a significant milestone for the parliamentary community. The Indicators are a multi-partner initiative convened by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) to create a framework for assessing parliamentary capacity and practice against SDG Targets 16.6 and 16.7, which seek to develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions, and to ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.

Collectively, the IPU and the project partners – the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, Directorio Legislativo Foundation, Inter Pares, the National Democratic Institute, the United Nations Development Programme, UN Women and the Westminster Foundation for Democracy – have decades of experience in working with parliaments in all parts of the world. In addition, more than 50 parliaments were involved in testing the draft and preliminary versions of the Indicators.

The core purpose of the Indicators is to support parliamentary learning and development. Notwithstanding the variety of contexts that make each parliament unique, all parliaments share common functions and a common aspiration to be the best possible institution in the service of the people. The Indicators therefore cover all aspects of parliamentary activity. They are relevant to all parliaments, regardless of size, geography or political system.

The Indicators provide a method for assessing parliament's strengths and weaknesses. They are intended primarily as a self-assessment tool for parliaments themselves, but they are equally useful for those who monitor parliamentary activity and support parliamentary development. Because by measuring current capacity and practice, parliament is able to formulate plans for future institutional development and track progress towards its goals.

The IPU and the project partners believe fervently in parliaments and democracy. We believe that the Indicators can bring a new impetus to parliamentary development. And we stand ready to support parliaments in using the Indicators in order to help strengthen parliamentary institutions worldwide.

Martin Chungong

Secretary General

Inter-Parliamentary Union

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Acknowledgements

The Indicators for Democratic Parliaments have been developed by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) in partnership with a group of organizations with decades of experience in supporting parliaments around the world. More than 50 parliaments have also been involved in testing and providing feedback on drafts of the Indicators.

Project partners

The project has been convened and coordinated by the IPU in partnership with (in alphabetical order):

- Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA)
- Directorio Legislativo Foundation
- Inter Pares / International IDEA
- National Democratic Institute (NDI)
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- UN Women
- Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD)

The partners have worked together closely as a Project team to plan, draft, and revise the Indicators. The European Commission contributed actively to the work of the Project team.

In addition to these collective inputs, specific contributions from project partners are listed below:

- Directorio Legislativo Foundation: Spanish translation of part of the Indicators
- Inter Pares, in cooperation with the European Commission: significant financial support to drafting and translation of the Indicators
- National Democratic Institute: creation of the preliminary version of the Indicators website
- UNDP: financial support for drafting of certain indicators

Individual contributions

Project team members: Andy Richardson and Irena Mijanović (IPU); Anthony Smith and Victoria Hasson (WFD); Jonathan Murphy and Andrea Wolfe, Inter Pares; Gonzalo Jorro Martinez, European Commission; Frieda Arenos (NDI); María Baron and Juan Francisco Krahl, Directorio Legislativo Foundation; Ionica Berevoescu and Lana Ackar, UN Women; Charles Chauvel, Agata Walczak and Aleida Ferreyra (UNDP); Matthew Salik and James Pinnell (CPA).

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Drafting of the preliminary version: David Elder, Tamar Chugoshvili, Irena Mijanović, Frieda Arenos and Alex Read with support from Tumi Zantsi and Adriana Carretero.

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Contributions from parliaments

We gratefully acknowledge the more than 50 parliaments that contributed to the testing of the Indicators at different stages, as well as the almost 100 people who participated in the assessment events.

Stage 1: Testing of the Indicators framework (2021)

The parliaments of Ghana, Greece, Jordan, Kenya, Portugal, Rwanda, South Africa, Uganda and Zambia, as well as the Pan-African Parliament and the WFD/EU-JDID Office in Jordan, were involved in testing the Indicators framework. Special thanks go to Mr Christos Belias and Mr Vasilios Svolopoulos from the Parliament of Greece, to Mr José Manuel Araújo from the Parliament of Portugal and to Ms Josephine Watera from the Parliament of Uganda for their high-quality feedback on the framework and for their contributions to its improvement.

Stage 2: Initial testing (2021)

The parliaments of Albania, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Liberia, North Macedonia and Paraguay, as well as the Kurdish Parliament (Iraq), provided feedback at this stage. Special thanks go to Mr Jochen Guckes from the German Bundestag for his very detailed feedback and many useful suggestions. We are also grateful for the support of the NDI offices in Albania, Georgia, Iraq, Liberia and North Macedonia.

Stage 3: Testing of the preliminary Indicators (2022)

MPs, Secretaries General, staff and others from the following parliaments provided feedback on the preliminary version of Indicators: Austria, Argentina, Bahrain, Botswana, Canada, Chad, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Kenya, Lithuania, Madagascar, Montenegro, Nepal, North Macedonia, Pakistan, Paraguay, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Rwanda, Senegal, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Tanzania (United Republic of), Timor-Leste, Thailand, Türkiye, Ukraine, United Kingdom, Uruguay. Similar contributions came from the Parliament of Kosovo, the European Parliament, the Pan-African Parliament and the East African Legislative Assembly.

We are particularly grateful for the comprehensive feedback received from the Senate of Pakistan, which ran a self-assessment exercise covering all 25 indicators, as well as from the parliaments of Argentina, Paraguay, Thailand and Uruguay.

A substantial body of comments and suggestions on improving the Indicators resulted from a joint IPU-ASGP session during the 145th IPU Assembly in Kigali in October 2022.

In addition, 50 participants from 30 countries – including MPs, Secretaries General, staff and parliamentary experts – provided their comments and suggestions through eight focus groups organized by the IPU and partners.

Special thanks go to the Francophone Network for Parliamentary Ethics and Deontology, based in Canada, and to Ms Maria Mousmuti and Mr Franklin de Vrieze, for their comments on specific indicators.

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Assessment guidance

Introduction

The Indicators at a glance

The Indicators for Democratic Parliaments (the "Indicators") are a tool to support learning and development in parliament. They provide a framework for parliament to self-assess its capacity and practice across all aspects of parliamentary work and to generate new ideas for strengthening the institution.

No two parliaments are identical: they vary in structure, function and operation, influenced by the history and culture of each nation. Yet they share a common mandate: enacting effective laws, overseeing the actions of the executive and representing the people. To meet these expectations, parliaments increasingly engage in strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation. Globally, parliaments are embracing reform, modernization and inclusivity, and becoming more transparent and responsive to public voices. In essence, parliaments are seeking to enhance their capacity and practice.

The Indicators are founded on commonly accepted traits of strong institutions. They were developed through a multi-partner project with eight leading organizations from the parliamentary community, and with input from more than 100 people in 50 countries.

The 25 indicators are grouped into seven targets that correspond to the adjectives used in Targets 16.6 and 16.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): **effective, accountable, transparent, responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative**. Each indicator is broken down into several dimensions, each of which sets out an aspiring goal for parliament to work towards and contains assessment criteria for parliament to evaluate its current capacity and practice. The assessment is informed by evidence and generates recommendations for improvement.

The Indicators are accompanied by detailed assessment guidance explaining how to use them. Parliaments that may have additional questions or require further assistance are encouraged to reach out to the IPU at standards@ipu.org or to any of the partner organizations.

A self-assessment tool

The Indicators are a comprehensive self-assessment tool designed to help parliament evaluate its practice against established democratic standards. Designed with expert input and careful planning, this tool is suitable for all parliaments, regardless of their political system or stage of development.

Self-assessment is a voluntary process and is most effective when initiated or supported by the highest authorities within parliament. This ensures that parliament takes ownership of the outcomes and recommendations.

Importantly, the purpose of self-assessment is not to rank or compare different parliaments. Instead, it empowers each parliament to evaluate itself. Both the process and the outcomes of this endeavour rest entirely in the hands of parliament. The decision whether or not to publicize the results of the assessment hinges on the exercise's purpose. However, it should be acknowledged that transparency is a core democratic value, and that publicizing parliament's self-assessment against international standards could positively influence public perceptions of the institution.

Parliament enjoys flexibility in utilizing this self-assessment tool: it can appraise its capacity and practice against all of the indicators, or instead select a specific subset. Each indicator is designed as a standalone package.

How the Indicators support parliament

The Indicators are designed for parliaments seeking to achieve self-advancement by identifying their strengths and weaknesses, learning and, ultimately, enhancing their capacity to serve the public.

In particular, the Indicators can support parliament in the following areas:

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- **Learning and improvement**: The Indicators aim at helping parliament to learn and improve, with the ultimate goal of strengthening democracy. They serve as a tool for assessing strengths and weaknesses, leading to enhanced performance and progress tracking.

- **Parliamentary reform**: The Indicators are valuable for those involved in parliamentary reform and improvement – both those inside parliament and collaborating organizations.

- **Prioritizing and strategizing**: The Indicators can prove especially useful prior to strategic planning exercises, allowing for targeted improvements in focused areas such as transparency.

- **Readiness for external support**: The Indicators can help parliament to identify essential needs and priorities, effectively positioning the institution for the timely and strategic reception of external support.

- **Actionable ideas and solutions**: The Indicators aim primarily to promote the sharing of ideas, rather than just the assigning of grades. At the end of each dimension, there is a space for noting down recommendations for change – actionable ideas that can range from significant shifts to procedural adjustments.

Contributing to the achievement of the SDGs

The SDGs, adopted by the United Nations in 2015, are the world's best policy prescription to combat poverty, achieve social justice, create conditions for peace, preserve nature and promote human well-being.

SDG 16 on promoting peace, justice and strong institutions is a key enabler of the entire SDG framework. This Goal recognizes that underlying the multiple crises of our time is a fundamental governance challenge linked to public trust in institutions of government and their capacity to meet the needs of all people equitably and sustainably.

Indeed, around the world, the social contract that binds people to each other and to their institutions of government is at risk. With specific targets on the rule of law, representative, effective and accountable institutions, fundamental freedoms, corruption, access to information, displacement, violence and criminality among others, SDG 16 shines a light on the "grey matter" that keeps societies together and governments running.

More than any other SDG, Goal 16 underscores the need for an effective public administration and for institutions of government – ministries, parliaments, courts, local councils, public utilities and others – that work for all people, leaving no one behind. Effective, accountable and representative institutions are needed to incentivize people's civic engagement at all levels, including through the ballot box, to support public services such as health care, education and environmental protection, to curb tax evasion and corruption, and to reduce those tensions in society that are often the root cause of violence, particularly against women.

The Indicators take as their starting point an assumption that countries have agreed that the concepts in SDG Targets 16.6 and 16.7 are desirable characteristics of institutions everywhere. The Indicators examine and interpret these SDG Targets through a parliamentary lens. They provide a framework for asking and answering the following questions:

- How effective is parliament?

- How accountable is parliament?

- How transparent is parliament?

- How responsive is parliament?

- How inclusive is parliament?

- How participatory is parliament?

- How representative is parliament?

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- How can parliament improve its capacity and practice in all of these areas?

By using the Indicators to measure and enhance their capacity and practice, parliaments can contribute directly to the achievement of SDG Targets 16.6 and 16.7. And by making progress on these SDG Targets, parliaments will be better equipped to play a full role in the achievement of all 17 Goals and, therefore, to enhance human well-being.

About the development of the Indicators

The project was convened by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and carried out in partnership with leading organizations in the parliamentary community:

- Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA)

- Directorio Legislativo Foundation

- INTER PARES

- National Democratic Institute (NDI)

- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

- UN Women

- Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD)

The project team began working on the Indicators in 2019. Contributions from the project partners have included the following:

- Experience acquired through decades of working with parliaments and in creating frameworks and tools to assist parliaments in evaluating their capacity and practice

- Access to their networks of parliamentary programmes for testing and feedback

- Specific in-kind and financial contributions (see the "Acknowledgements" section for details)

The main stages in the development of the Indicators are summarized below:

September 2019	Kick-off meeting and establishment of the project team
2020–2021	Development and pilot-testing of the Indicators
May 2022	Publication of a preliminary version of the Indicators
2022–2023	Testing, feedback and revision of the preliminary version of the Indicators
October 2023	Publication of the Indicators

Following the publication of the Indicators in October 2023, it is expected that revisions will be made to both the assessment guidance and the Indicators themselves. The project partners will continue to support parliaments in using the tool to assess their capacity and practice.

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Structure of the Indicators

Overview

The Indicators follow a regular four-level structure:

- **Targets**, each corresponding to one of the adjectives used in SDG Targets 16.6 and 16.7

- One or more **indicators** within each target

- One or more **dimensions** within each indicator

- An **aspiring goal** and one or more **assessment criteria** within each dimension

Details

Targets

There are seven targets, as follows:

- Target 1: Effective parliament

- Target 2: Accountable parliament

- Target 3: Transparent parliament

- Target 4: Responsive parliament

- Target 5: Inclusive parliament

- Target 6: Participatory parliament

- Target 7: Representative parliament

Indicators

There are 25 indicators in total, each corresponding to an area of parliamentary work. Each indicator contains one or more dimensions, which are all related to the theme of indicator. These dimensions are interdependent. Parliament should normally assess the whole indicator as a package.

Dimensions

There are 108 dimensions in total, each containing an aspiring goal and a number of assessment criteria.

Aspiring goals

Each dimension contains an aspiring goal, which describes an ideal situation that parliament can work towards.

Assessment criteria

There are 500 assessment criteria in total. Parliament assesses its capacity and practice against these criteria, each of which is structured as follows:

- Title: the subject of the assessment criterion

- Description: a short statement of what is to be assessed

- Grades: a space for parliament to record its self-assessed grade

- Evidence: a space for parliament to document the evidence supporting the assessment

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Example of the structure of an indicator:

Target 1: Effective parliament

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Indicator 1.1: Parliamentary autonomy

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Dimension 1.1.1: Institutional autonomy

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Assessment criterion 1: Constitutional authority

Assessment criterion 2: Legal framework

Assessment criterion 3: Practice

Key concepts

For all parliaments

The Indicators are designed to be relevant for all parliaments. They are grounded in the universally agreed concepts that make up Targets 16.6 and 16.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals, which have been endorsed by all States as part of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development.

All parliaments are unique in some ways. There are enormous differences between parliaments in some fundamental characteristics, such as the political system, the electoral framework, the number of MPs, and so on. And yet, all parliaments share fundamental roles, such as law-making, holding the executive to account and representing the people. By focusing on these commonalities, the Indicators are specifically designed to be usable by, and useful to, all parliaments.

Self-assessment

The principle of self-assessment lies at the heart of the Indicators. Self-assessment means that parliament is in the driving seat for the assessment exercise. Parliament owns the results and ultimately decides what to do with them.

Self-assessment means that parliament has to take many decisions itself. The design of the assessment exercise is in the hands of parliament. The project partners are available to support parliament, to provide expert advice and to facilitate the exercise. But parliament remains in control of the process at all times and is responsible for its outcomes.

The amount of time required for an assessment will depend on the choices made by parliament during the preparation phase (see Phase 1: Preparation).

Learning and development

The Indicators are intended to support parliament's own learning and development. The assessment exercise is an opportunity for parliament to step back, to examine its own practice, to see where it stands today and to discuss where it wants to grow.

Capacity and practice

The Indicators take a holistic approach to the assessment of capacity and practice. They invite parliament to consider both the rules in place – in the constitution, in the legal framework and/or in its own rules of procedure – and how these rules are applied in practice. Many parliaments observe that their rules of procedure allow for something to happen but that, in reality, this thing does not happen

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systematically. The assessment exercise should help parliament to understand the reasons for this gap in capacity and practice and to generate ideas for how to reduce that gap.

Selecting indicators

Parliament can freely select any of the indicators it wishes to include in an assessment exercise. It may decide to assess itself against all 25 indicators, or to focus on a selection of one or more indicators. This decision depends on the objective of the exercise, and naturally has an impact on the time and effort required to carry out the assessment.

Normally, all of the dimensions within the selected indicator(s) should be assessed. The dimensions are interdependent and should not be divided up.

Thematic groups of indicators can be selected. For example, an assessment exercise that focuses on women's political participation would likely include indicators from *Target 1: Effective parliament* and *Target 7: Representative parliament*.

The project partners can help parliament to identify its objectives, and can advise on the selection of indicators.

Bicameral parliaments

In some countries with bicameral parliaments, there are clear distinctions between the powers of each chamber. The indicators are designed to be relevant for all parliaments, including bicameral ones. An assessment exercise can be undertaken jointly by both chambers, or by one chamber alone. In the few cases where an indicator is not relevant to a particular chamber – such as if the upper chamber plays no role in the budget cycle – it can simply be excluded from the assessment exercise.

Grades

Selecting grades is an important part of the assessment exercise. Grades are useful for representing a consensus on the current capacity and practice of parliament and for highlighting areas for improvement. Grades may also be a useful reference to look for signs of progress if parliament repeats the assessment exercise after a certain period of time.

There is always a temptation to focus on the grade itself. However, the evidence that informs the grade and the recommendations that emerge from the discussion on the grade are, in many ways, just as important as the grade itself.

The Indicators offer six descriptive grades. These are summarized below:

● **Non-existent**: This is the lowest grade, corresponding to 0 on a scale from 0 to 5. The object of the assessment criterion simply does not exist in parliament.
  Note: "Non-existent" is not the same as "Not applicable". In some rare cases, the object of an assessment criterion might be "Not applicable" because the legal framework says that this object cannot exist. In most cases, however, there will be no legal obstacle to the object described in the assessment criterion. It could exist, but does not, for instance because parliament has not decided to do it or does not have the resources to do it. In this case, parliament should select "Non-existent".

● **Rudimentary**: This corresponds to 1 on a scale from 0 to 5. The object of the assessment criterion exists but in a rudimentary form. It is not an established part of parliament's capacity and practice.

● **Basic**: This corresponds to 2 on a scale from 0 to 5. The object of the assessment criterion exists in a basic form. It is part of parliament's capacity and practice but is not well-developed.

● **Good**: This corresponds to 3 on a scale from 0 to 5. The object of the assessment criterion is an established part of parliament's capacity and practice and is somewhat developed.

● **Very good**: This corresponds to 4 on a scale from 0 to 5. The object of the assessment criterion is a well-established part of parliament's capacity and practice.

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- **Excellent**: This corresponds to 5 on a scale from 0 to 5. The object of the assessment criterion is a highly developed part of parliament's capacity and practice, with little obvious room for improvement.

Grades are awarded separately for each assessment criterion. It is possible to calculate grades at the dimension, indicator and target levels as follows:

- To calculate a grade at the **dimension** level, add together the numerical grades for the **assessment criteria** within that dimension and divide by the number of assessment criteria.

- To calculate a grade at the **indicator** level, add together the numerical grades for the **dimensions** within that indicator and divide by the number of dimensions.

- To calculate a grade at the **target** level, add together the numerical grades for the **indicators** within that target and divide by the number of indicators.

Evidence

Evidence is key to the assessment exercise. The Indicators rely on evidence-informed assessment, which is the best protection against subjective and arbitrary judgements.

Each assessment criterion contains suggestions on the type of evidence that parliament could gather for the assessment. Typically, evidence is drawn from the parliamentary record. These records may be publicly available on the parliamentary website, or may only be available internally.

In most cases, the parliamentary administration will be responsible for gathering evidence. It should be documented using the worksheets and presented to participants in the assessment exercise in user-friendly formats.

Recommendations

The assessment exercise is intended to generate recommendations for change. By examining the current state of capacity and practice, participants in the assessment exercise will identify strengths, weaknesses and areas for improvement. These ideas should be captured in the "Recommendations for change" sections of the worksheets.

It is likely that parliament will need to review and prioritize the list of recommendations. The most significant recommendations will normally be captured in the assessment exercise report and brought to the attention of the appropriate authorities in parliament.

Decisions on recommendations and follow-up action on these decisions are among the key outcomes of an assessment exercise. The "case studies" section of the Indicators website will highlight the results that parliaments have obtained from their assessment.

Advice and support

The assessment guidance below sets out the main steps in an assessment exercise. It contains questions for parliament to consider, as well as checklists. However, this guidance is only a starting point, since each exercise needs to be tailored to parliament's objectives.

The IPU and project partners therefore stand ready to advise parliaments about using the Indicators and designing their own assessments, drawing on experience from previous exercises.

To get in touch, please use the contact form on the Indicators website or write to standards@ipu.org.

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Phases of the assessment exercise

The assessment exercise comprises three essential phases: preparation, execution and follow-up. This section provides guidance on the 12 key steps in this process and sets out both essential and recommended actions at each step. The phases and steps are summarized below:

> Phase 1: Preparation
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>> Step 1: Clarify the objectives
>>
>> Step 2: Choose the right timing
>>
>> Step 3: Initiate the process
>>
>> Step 4: Identify the participants
>>
>> Step 5: Set up the working group
>
> Phase 2: Execution
>
>> Step 6: Collect the evidence
>>
>> Step 7: Hold meetings and discussions
>>
>> Step 8: Select the grades
>>
>> Step 9: Formulate the recommendations for change
>
> Phase 3: Follow-up
>
>> Step 10. Decide on priorities for change
>>
>> Step 11. Create an action plan
>>
>> Step 12. Monitor and evaluate progress

Phase 1: Preparation

> Step 1: Clarify the objectives

It is important for parliament to have a clear understanding of the objectives of its assessment exercise and the envisaged outcomes. Is this exercise part of broader parliamentary reforms, warranting a comprehensive assessment? Is it aligned with the development of the parliamentary strategy, necessitating focused prioritization? Are funds on the horizon, demanding a thorough needs assessment?

A non-exhaustive list of possible objectives of an assessment exercise is given below:

- Identifying gaps

- Enhancing accountability

- Improving representation

- Optimizing efficiency

- Promoting transparency

- Strengthening engagement

- Adapting to evolving needs

- Boosting institutional capacity

Ideally, all participants in the assessment exercise should share a common understanding of the purpose of the exercise. Communicating these objectives across parliament fosters awareness, cultivates a sense of ownership and paves the way for the embracing of changes that may arise from the assessment.

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The objectives will determine which indicator(s) parliament includes in the exercise. The scope and number of indicators for assessment might also be influenced by how much time is available, the structure of the exercise itself, and whether one or more groups of participants will be involved.

Essential**:**

- Clarify the objectives of the assessment.

- Determine the scope of the assessment, specifically identifying the indicators against which parliament wishes to evaluate its capacity and practice.

- Ensure that the objectives are commonly understood and clear to everyone involved.

Recommended**:**

- Consult internal and external stakeholders before clarifying the objectives.

- Consider communicating with a wider public and/or interested groups before starting the process.

- Identify the resources needed for the exercise.

  Step 2: Choose the right timing

While it is for each parliament to determine its assessment approach and timing, certain moments in a parliament's life lend themselves especially well to self-assessment. Some examples are given below:

- At the beginning of a reform process

- At the start of a new term

- When preparing or reviewing a strategic plan

- Ahead of an external technical support project

- When monitoring progress over time

The Indicators can, however, be utilized at any time and for any other purpose, no matter how broad or focused.

Essential**:**

- Align the timing of the assessment with the timing of other processes to which the assessment will contribute (such as strategic planning or an external support project).

- Ensure that the timing aligns with the parliamentary agenda and allows participants to commit time despite busy schedules.

Recommended**:**

- Consult internal and external stakeholders about the timing of the exercise.

- Inform all potentially interested parties, including civil society organizations and donor organizations, about the timing of the assessment.

- Make a public announcement about the timing of the assessment.

  Step 3: Initiate the process

The assessment process can be initiated by one or more individuals or bodies within parliament, including the parliamentary leadership, committees, individual MPs, political groups, groups of MPs and/or the parliamentary administration. It can also be initiated by individuals or bodies from outside parliament, such as civil society organizations.

Past experience shows that assessments tend to yield the best results when they are initiated by, or receive strong support from, parliament's political and/or administrative leadership. This action sends a

clear message to MPs, the parliamentary administration and the general public that parliament is committed to the assessment and to acting upon its outcomes.

Essential**:**

- Demonstrate political will to conduct the assessment by having the process publicly or internally endorsed by senior figures including the Speaker, party leaders and committee chairs.

- Demonstrate that parliament is invested in the success of the assessment by allocating resources for the process.

Recommended:

- Hold a meeting between the parliamentary leadership and the assessment working group.

- Organize a public meeting with civil society organizations, development organizations and any other bodies interested in parliamentary development in order to discuss parliament's commitment to the self-assessment and follow-up plans.

- Make a public statement committing to act upon the findings of the self-assessment exercise.

    Step 4: Identify the participants

Before starting the assessment, parliament needs to decide who will be involved. MPs and parliamentary staff are typically the main participants. Inclusiveness is vital to the legitimacy and effectiveness of the exercise: the participants should represent the whole of parliament in terms of political party membership, gender and age, with due consideration given to underrepresented groups or other relevant characteristics.

A parliamentary committee might opt to conduct an assessment internally on a subject falling within its scope. Once it has assessed its capacity and practice, the committee could identify ways to enhance its procedures or introduce novel practices and activities. A productive assessment conducted at the committee level has the potential to create a positive impact throughout parliament.

A political group might also decide to carry out an assessment exercise specifically for its own members, using indicators that are of particular relevance to them.

Lastly, an assessment could focus on the independence, capacity and practice of the parliamentary administration.

Essential**:**

- Have the assessment conducted by a group of participants, not a sole individual.

- Ensure that this group reflects a diverse range of voices and perspectives.

- Involve MPs from various political parties.

- Involve staff who can support the process by collecting evidence, drafting reports, assigning grades and/or formulating recommendations.

Recommended:

- Extend the scope of the assessment by incorporating additional contributors.

- Involve civil society organizations with expertise in parliamentary operations or in specific fields in the assessment process itself, or gather their views in advance.

- Involve development organizations in the assessment process, as they could provide essential funds to support various facets of parliamentary reform.

- Consider involving the media in the process in order to raise public awareness and keep citizens informed.

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Step 5: Set up the working group

Since the assessment is a collective effort, it is important for parliament to set up a working group with a clear structure and arrangements. When deciding on the format of working group meetings, parliament should consider the following aspects:

- **Objectives:** Clarify the specific objectives of the working group meetings. Are they meant for brainstorming, decision-making or progress updates? This will influence the structure and tone of the meetings.

- **Frequency:** Decide how often the meetings will take place. Consider the urgency of the tasks at hand and the availability of participants.

- **Duration:** Set a reasonable time limit for meetings to ensure they remain focused and productive.

- **Agenda:** Prepare a clear and detailed agenda for each meeting, outlining the topics to be discussed and the order in which they will be addressed.

- **Communication:** Establish a reliable communication channel for sharing information, updates, and materials related to the meetings.

- **Facilitation:** Designate a facilitator to guide the discussions, manage time and ensure everyone's voice is heard.

- **Decision-making process:** Determine how decisions will be made within the working group. Will it be through consensus, voting or another method?

- **Documentation:** Designate someone to take notes and document key discussions, decisions and action items during the meetings.

- **Flexibility:** Allow room for adjustments based on feedback and changing circumstances, ensuring the format remains effective and relevant.

Essential**:**

- Ensure that all participants understand what the assessment involves and how the process works.

- Hold working group meetings at opportune moments in the parliamentary agenda, during less hectic periods, in order to ensure that sufficient time is available.

- Clearly identify roles and responsibilities within the working group.

Recommended**:**

- Consider holding an initial information session in order to foster mutual understanding of the objectives and scope of the exercise, and of how to use the Indicators.

- Set ground rules covering issues such as speaking time, the welcoming of all ideas, and flexibility.

Phase 2: Execution

Step 6: Collect the evidence

Collecting evidence is a key part of the assessment process, providing both a foundation for discussions during assessment sessions and a rationale for the chosen grade for each assessment criterion. The parliamentary administration – committee staff, research services and libraries – should gather data and information for each dimension and assessment criterion within the chosen indicators. This, along with the compiled written evidence, should be shared with all participants before the assessment, ideally a week or two in advance, in order to streamline the process, improve accuracy and enhance the overall effectiveness of the exercise.

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Essential**:**

- Draw up the list of required evidence at the start of the assessment, aligning this with the assessment objectives and using the suggestions provided for each dimension in the indicator framework.

- Ask the parliamentary administration to gather the required evidence.

- Ensure that all participants have equitable access to the evidence well in advance of the assessment.

Recommended**:**

- Task the parliamentary administration or research services with preparing a research paper that highlights comparative practices and mechanisms in other parliaments, showcasing examples of good practices within the scope of the Indicators.

- Compile pertinent data from external sources .

    Step 7: Hold meetings and discussions

Meetings and discussions are of particular importance, since the assessment process involves multiple participants. While the parliamentary context is inherently political, a more institutional approach that transcends partisan lines is crucial for the assessment exercise. The facilitator plays an especially important role in this respect, by keeping discussions on topic, managing time efficiently, ensuring equitable access to information and evidence ahead of time, and overseeing the documentation of all discussions.

Essential**:**

- Select a skilled facilitator to guide discussions, maintain focus, encourage participation and manage time efficiently. If necessary, the IPU or other partner organizations could offer organizational and expert assistance to support the facilitation process.

- Provide participants with relevant background information and materials prior to the meeting, so they can make informed and meaningful contributions.

- Designate someone to take comprehensive notes during the discussion, serving as a future reference for action and discussion.

Recommended**:**

- Consider sourcing multiple facilitators from a broader spectrum of experts both inside and outside parliament. This can help to bring varying insights and experiences to the discussions, contributing to a comprehensive and well-rounded assessment.

- Use visual aids such as presentations, charts and graphs to illustrate key points and concepts during the discussions.

- Invite external people with subject-matter expertise in the topics covered by given indicators and/or dimensions to participate in the meetings and discussions.

    Step 8: Select the grades

Selecting grades is an important part of the assessment exercise. Grades are useful for representing a consensus on the current capacity and practice of parliament and for highlighting areas for improvement. Grades may also be a useful reference to look for signs of progress if parliament repeats the assessment exercise after a certain period of time.

The Indicators offer six descriptive grades. These are summarized below:

- **Non-existent**: This is the lowest grade, corresponding to 0 on a scale from 0 to 5. The object of the assessment criterion simply does not exist in parliament.

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Note: "Non-existent" is not the same as "Not applicable". In some rare cases, the object of an assessment criterion might be "Not applicable" because the legal framework says that this object cannot exist. In most cases, however, there will be no legal obstacle to the object described in the assessment criterion. It could exist, but does not, for instance because parliament has not decided to do it or does not have the resources to do it. In this case, parliament should select "Non-existent".

- **Rudimentary**: This corresponds to 1 on a scale from 0 to 5. The object of the assessment criterion exists but in a rudimentary form. It is not an established part of parliament's capacity and practice.

- **Basic**: This corresponds to 2 on a scale from 0 to 5. The object of the assessment criterion exists in a basic form. It is part of parliament's capacity and practice but is not well-developed.

- **Good**: This corresponds to 3 on a scale from 0 to 5. The object of the assessment criterion is an established part of parliament's capacity and practice and is somewhat developed.

- **Very good**: This corresponds to 4 on a scale from 0 to 5. The object of the assessment criterion is a well-established part of parliament's capacity and practice.

- **Excellent**: This corresponds to 5 on a scale from 0 to 5. The object of the assessment criterion is a highly developed part of parliament's capacity and practice, with little obvious room for improvement.

Grades are awarded separately for each assessment criterion. It is possible to calculate grades at the dimension, indicator and target levels as follows:

- To calculate a grade at the **dimension** level, add together the numerical grades for the **assessment criteria** within that dimension and divide by the number of assessment criteria.

- To calculate a grade at the **indicator** level, add together the numerical grades for the **dimensions** within that indicator and divide by the number of dimensions.

- To calculate a grade at the **target** level, add together the numerical grades for the **indicators** within that target and divide by the number of indicators.

An open and constructive discussion on each assessment criterion among participants should lead to common agreement on which grade best reflects the situation in a given parliament. If it is not possible to reach such an agreement, other options can be used, such as calculating an average grade or accepting a grade selected by the majority of participants (if a political balance is achieved).

In any case, the grades themselves should not be the sole focus. An assessment exercise using the Indicators also includes a qualitative analysis that helps parliament to prioritize its reform efforts. The Indicators are not intended to generate a comparative ranking of parliaments. The grades are valid primarily in the context of the parliament that is being assessed.

While the Indicators should be relevant and applicable in parliaments of all sizes, it is possible that some adjustments in assessment of a part of a criterion might be necessary for parliaments in smaller countries. It is understandable that parliaments with a small number of MPs cannot, for example, have separate committees for every single area, or entire specialized units for every segment of work. In such cases, small parliaments should adapt the criteria to their circumstances. They are also encouraged to contact the IPU and/or the project partners for assistance.

Step 9: Formulate the recommendations for change

As emphasized previously, the ultimate goal of the assessment exercise is not merely to assign grades, but rather to foster a rich exchange of ideas. This is why it is important to formulate recommendations for change.

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During the assessment meetings and discussions, participants should focus on identifying gaps and opportunities for enhancements in parliamentary capacity and practice, ultimately leading to actionable ideas.

Essential**:**

- Capture the key findings and conclusions in the "Recommendations for change" section of the worksheet.

- Highlight priority areas for improvement, suggest possible actions and/or address potential hurdles to overcome. The proposed changes might imply significant shifts, such as constitutional or legal amendments, or may involve more modest procedural adjustments, resource allocation or the fine-tuning of existing practices.

Recommended:

- Consider drawing up a written summary for each assessment session capturing additional ideas and suggestions stimulated by the discussion, and circulate it among participants.

- Document discussions through audio or video recordings to provide an extra layer of detail and preservation.

Phase 3: Follow-up

Step 10: Decide on priorities for change

The assessment exercise is not an end in itself but a first step towards improvement. It is important to identify changes that parliament needs to make in the short and long terms, depending on its current capacity.

Essential:

- Discuss the findings of the assessment and recommendations with the parliamentary leadership.

- Take political decisions on which areas prioritize for future improvement.

Recommended:

- Discuss the findings of the exercise with a wider audience, including civil society and academia, and involve them in identifying the priority areas for change.

- Bring in external expert support from parliamentary strengthening organizations, or learn from the experience and good practice of other parliaments.

- Consult the sources and further reading provided at the end of many of the dimensions in order to gain a clearer understanding of the issues, and to gain insights into global trends, experiences and practices across parliaments.

Step 11: Create an action plan

Ideally, parliament should create and adopt an action plan or similar planning document to help translate the assessment outcomes and identified improvements into regular procedures and practice. Such a document should define clear tasks, responsibilities and timelines. Making this plan publicly available could be beneficial as a way of confirming parliament's commitment to development and improvement, while also maintaining parliament's accountability for its implementation.

Implementing the action plan may have financial implications. These will need to be taken into account in preparing the document, including identifying possible sources of funding. Expected costs should be estimated in advance, if possible at the parliamentary budget planning stage. If funds are not available from the current parliamentary budget, parliament can solicit external financial support.

Essential:

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- Develop an action plan or similar planning document outlining what changes will take place in parliament based on the assessment exercise, and define related tasks, responsibilities and timelines.

- Involve interested parliamentary groups and staff in developing the action plan.

- Inform all relevant actors and responsible units/staff of the tasks assigned to them.

Recommended:

- Consider organizing a workshop or an open meeting for external actors interested in parliamentary work, such as parliamentary strengthening organizations and civil society organizations, and inform them about the action plan.

- Involve parliamentary strengthening organizations in supporting the implementation of the action plan.

    Step 12: Monitor and evaluate progress

Regular monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of an action plan or other outcome document(s) is an important part of the process. It allows parliament to identify and address possible challenges or impediments to change.

Essential:

- Continue monitoring and evaluation even after changes have been made, in order to ensure that they are sustained and implemented well.

- Assess parliament's capacity and practice against the same indicator(s) at a future point in order to evaluate its progress over time.

Recommended:

- Report regularly to the public on the implementation of the action plan and on progress achieved.

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Assessment checklist

Objectives	What are the objectives of the exercise? Does everyone involved share the same understanding? What is the scope of the assessment? Which indicator(s) will be assessed? What are the expected results? How is the assessment expected to contribute to parliamentary reform and development?
Timing	When will the assessment take place? How long will it last (number of days and sessions)? Will an introductory seminar be held for participants?
Political engagement	Is there political support for the assessment from the parliamentary leadership and from MPs? Is there a cross-party leadership group to lead the process?
Participation	Who will participate in the assessment? Are the participants sufficiently diverse? Is there strong engagement, at the administrative level, in organizing the assessment?
Organization	Is responsibility for organizing the assessment clearly assigned? Is there a need for external expert support? Is this support available?
Facilitation	How will the exercise be facilitated? Which partner organization can provide expert support in facilitating the exercise?
Evidence	Who will collect and prepare information and data for evidence? When will this be done? What additional background information can be provided to participants? Who will be responsible for distributing the indicators with evidence and additional information to participants?
Documentation	How will the process be documented and by whom?
Outcome	What outcome documents will be produced (e.g. report, plan of action)? Who will be responsible for producing these documents?
Follow-up	What will be done with the outcome documents? Who will be responsible for follow-up? How will follow-up be monitored?

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The indicators

List of targets, indicators and dimensions

Target 1: Effective parliament

- **Indicator 1.1: Parliamentary autonomy**

  Dimension 1.1.1: Institutional autonomy

  Dimension 1.1.2: Procedural autonomy

  Dimension 1.1.3: Budgetary autonomy

  Dimension 1.1.4: Administrative autonomy

- **Indicator 1.2: Members of parliament**

  Dimension 1.2.1: Status of members of parliament

  Dimension 1.2.2: Non-accountability and inviolability

  Dimension 1.2.3: Incompatibility of office

  Dimension 1.2.4: Access to resources

  Dimension 1.2.5: Professional development

- **Indicator 1.3: Parliamentary procedures**

  Dimension 1.3.1: Rules of procedure

  Dimension 1.3.2: Emergency or crisis procedures

  Dimension 1.3.3: Parliamentary calendar

  Dimension 1.3.4: Convening sessions and setting the agenda

  Dimension 1.3.5: Quorum

  Dimension 1.3.6: Debate

  Dimension 1.3.7: Voting

  Dimension 1.3.8: Record-keeping

  Dimension 1.3.9: Dissolution

- **Indicator 1.4: Parliamentary organization**

  Dimension 1.4.1: Plenary

  Dimension 1.4.2: Speaker

  Dimension 1.4.3: Presidium

  Dimension 1.4.4: Parliamentary committees

  Dimension 1.4.5: Political groups

  Dimension 1.4.6: Cross-party groups

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- **Indicator 1.5: Administrative capacity and independence**

  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

- **Indicator 1.6: Law-making**

  Dimension 1.6.1: Powers in law-making

  Dimension 1.6.2: Constitution-making and amendment

  Dimension 1.6.3: Legislative procedure

  Dimension 1.6.4: Legislative drafting

  Dimension 1.6.5: Enactment

  Dimension 1.6.6: Official publication

  Dimension 1.6.7: Post-legislative scrutiny

- **Indicator 1.7: Oversight**

  Dimension 1.7.1: Election and dismissal of the executive

  Dimension 1.7.2: Access to information from the executive

  Dimension 1.7.3: Summoning the executive in committee

  Dimension 1.7.4: Summoning the executive in plenary

  Dimension 1.7.5: Questions

  Dimension 1.7.6: Hearings

  Dimension 1.7.7: Parliamentary committees of inquiry

- **Indicator 1.8: Budget**

  Dimension 1.8.1: Formulation, examination, amendment and approval

  Dimension 1.8.2: In-year and ex-post oversight

  Dimension 1.8.3: Public Accounts Committee

  Dimension 1.8.4: Expert support

  Dimension 1.8.5: Supreme audit institution

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- **Indicator 1.9: Representative role of members of parliament**

  Dimension 1.9.1: Interaction with the electorate

  Dimension 1.9.2: Opposition

- **Indicator 1.10: Relations with other branches of government**

  Dimension 1.10.1: Relations with the executive

  Dimension 1.10.2: Relations with the judiciary

  Dimension 1.10.3: Relations with subnational levels of government

- **Indicator 1.11: Key parliamentary powers**

  Dimension 1.11.1: Security

  Dimension 1.11.2: Defence

  Dimension 1.11.3: Foreign affairs and international agreements

  Dimension 1.11.4: Parliamentary diplomacy

Target 2: Accountable parliament

- **Indicator 2.1: Parliamentary ethics**

  Dimension 2.1.1: Anti-corruption

  Dimension 2.1.2: Conflicts of interest

  Dimension 2.1.3: Code of conduct

  Dimension 2.1.4: Parliamentary income and use of parliamentary resources

  Dimension 2.1.5: Lobbying

- **Indicator 2.2: Institutional integrity**

  Dimension 2.2.1: Parliamentary expenditure

  Dimension 2.2.2: Public procurement

  Dimension 2.2.3: Freedom of information

  Dimension 2.2.4: Professionalism of the parliamentary administration

  Dimension 2.2.5: Institutional development of parliament

Target 3: Transparent parliament

- **Indicator 3.1: Transparency of parliamentary processes**

  Dimension 3.1.1: Transparency of parliamentary work

  Dimension 3.1.2: Transparency of the legislative process

  Dimension 3.1.3: Transparency of the budget cycle and the parliamentary budget

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- **Indicator 3.2: Parliamentary communication and outreach**

    Dimension 3.2.1: Institutional communication

    Dimension 3.2.2: Parliamentary website

    Dimension 3.2.3: Outreach activities

- **Indicator 3.3: Access to parliament**

    Dimension 3.3.1: Physical access to parliament

    Dimension 3.3.2: Access for persons with disabilities

    Dimension 3.3.3: Media access to parliament

Target 4: Responsive parliament

- **Indicator 4.1: Valuing public concerns**

    Dimension 4.1.1: Responding to public concerns

    Dimension 4.1.2: Responding to emerging policy issues

    Dimension 4.1.3: Leaving no one behind and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Target 5: Inclusive parliament

- **Indicator 5.1: Inclusive law-making, oversight and budgeting**

    Dimension 5.1.1: Human rights

    Dimension 5.1.2: Impact assessments

    Dimension 5.1.3: Gender mainstreaming

    Dimension 5.1.4: Gender-responsive budgeting

    Dimension 5.1.5: Youth inclusion

- **Indicator 5.2: Inclusive institutional practices**

    Dimension 5.2.1: Workforce diversity

    Dimension 5.2.2: Workplace environment

    Dimension 5.2.3: Combating sexism, harassment and violence

    Dimension 5.2.4: Multilingual service delivery

Target 6: Participatory parliament

- **Indicator 6.1: Parliamentary environment for public participation**

    Dimension 6.1.1: Legal framework for public participation

    Dimension 6.1.2: Institutional capacity for public participation

    Dimension 6.1.3: Public education about the work of parliament

- **Indicator 6.2: Public participation in parliamentary processes**

    Dimension 6.2.1: Participation in law-making

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Dimension 6.2.2: Participation in oversight

Dimension 6.2.3: Participation in the budget cycle

Dimension 6.2.4: Managing public input and providing feedback

- **Indicator 6.3: Participation of diverse groups in the work of parliament**

    Dimension 6.3.1: Engaging civil society organizations

    Dimension 6.3.2: Reaching out to all communities

Target 7: Representative parliament

- **Indicator 7.1: Electoral integrity**

    Dimension 7.1.1: Voting and election rights

    Dimension 7.1.2: Candidacy, party and campaign rights and responsibilities

    Dimension 7.1.3: Role of public authorities in elections

- **Indicator 7.2: Composition of parliament**

    Dimension 7.2.1: Representation of political diversity

    Dimension 7.2.2: Representation of women

    Dimension 7.2.3: Representation of youth

    Dimension 7.2.4: Representation of other underrepresented groups

- **Indicator 7.3: Composition of parliamentary bodies**

    Dimension 7.3.1 Composition of governing bodies

    Dimension 7.3.2 Composition of committees

    Dimension 7.3.3 Gender and age balance in parliamentary bodies

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Indicator 1.1: Parliamentary autonomy

About this indicator

This indicator concerns parliament's autonomy in all aspects of its operations. In democratic systems, parliament, as the supreme representative body, exercises legislative power, sets overall policy priorities and scrutinizes the activities of the executive. It does so within the scope established by the legal framework. It has the constitutional and/or legal powers to adopt and amend its own rules of procedure, to set its own structure, to determine the terms of reference and membership of its committees, to determine its own agenda and timetable, to set and control its own budget, to make its own administrative and staffing arrangements, and to ensure it has the necessary resources to carry out its mandate.

This indicator comprises the following dimensions:

● Dimension 1.1.1: Institutional autonomy

● Dimension 1.1.2: Procedural autonomy

● Dimension 1.1.3: Budgetary autonomy

● Dimension 1.1.4: Administrative autonomy

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Dimension 1.1.1: Institutional autonomy

> This dimension is part of:
>
> - Indicator 1.1: Parliamentary autonomy
>
> - Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension focuses on the legal provisions establishing parliament's institutional autonomy over its administrative and operational affairs. This institutional autonomy is the foundation that allows parliament to represent the interests of the people.

Institutional autonomy includes having authority in matters such as:

- calling regular or extraordinary sessions
- electing its own bodies, determining its committees and organizing its business
- drafting, proposing, debating and approving legislation
- overseeing the work of the executive
- deciding on its rules

Institutional autonomy is usually established in the constitution. Depending on the context of each country, it may be further developed in laws and/or parliamentary rules of procedure.

Aspiring goal

> *Based on a global comparative analysis, an aspiring goal for parliaments in the area of "institutional autonomy" is as follows:*
>
> The legal framework establishes parliament as an autonomous body whose mandate is to represent the interests of the people.
>
> Parliament has autonomy in electing its own bodies, determining its committees, organizing its business and deciding on its rules.
>
> Parliament has the authority to call regular or extraordinary sessions, to draft, propose, debate and approve legislation, and to oversee the work of the executive.
>
> Parliament's practices are aligned with the relevant provisions of the legal framework.

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 from the legal framework establishing an independent legislative branch

- Rules of procedure adopted by parliament alone

- Laws and rules under which parliament has autonomy in determining its own organization and procedures, in electing its own bodies and leadership, in setting its committees and in organizing its business

- Evidence that these laws and rules are routinely followed and respected

- Established committees/bodies within parliament through which MPs alone have the authority to amend or change procedures, rules and conduct within committees

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

Assessment criterion 1: Constitutional authority

An independent and autonomous parliament is established in the legal framework and/or by legal precedent.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Legal framework

The legal framework establishes parliament's autonomy in all areas of its functioning, including in determining its own rules, organization and procedures, in electing its own bodies, in establishing its committees, in calling plenary or debate sessions, and in setting its agenda.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Practice

In practice, the provisions of the legal framework for institutional autonomy are recognized and followed by all parties, including the executive.

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.*

_____

Dimension 1.1.2: Procedural autonomy

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.1: Parliamentary autonomy
- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the provisions giving parliament autonomy over its procedures. Having procedural autonomy allows parliament to fulfil its core functions. These procedures can cover matters including:

- the conduct and behaviour of MPs, including their right to resign
- MPs' rights, mandates and immunities
- the proposal, debating, amendment and passing of legislation
- parliament's autonomy in agenda-setting, plenary and committee affairs
- the election and actions of the Speaker(s)
- the procedures available to those in the majority and minority
- the monitoring of the effective passage, implementation and consequences of legislation
- the tools available to parliament to hold the executive to account
- the rights of the opposition and its access to parliamentary resources, including infrastructure, staff, funding for political groups and research services.

Parliament needs to have a robust framework for developing and amending these procedures.

Aspiring goal

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

Parliament has full authority to determine its rules of procedure, which are not subject to approval by the executive.

Parliament has a robust framework for creating, reviewing, modifying and endorsing its own procedures.

Parliament's rules of procedure are implemented consistently and in a non-partisan manner.

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 from the legal framework establishing parliament's authority and autonomy in determining its own procedures

- Practices by which rules of procedure are debated and adopted by parliament alone

- Information on the involvement of MPs in all aspects of parliament's proceedings

- Rulings by the Speaker(s)

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

_____

Assessment criterion 1: Legal framework

The legal framework provides parliament with the authority to exercise complete control over determining its own procedures, including the power to establish and amend procedures enabling it to carry out its core functions.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Rules of procedure

Rules of procedure support the authority granted to parliament under the legal framework to determine its own procedures. Parliament has a robust framework for creating, reviewing, modifying and endorsing its own procedures. Parliament's rules of procedure do not require approval by the executive.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Practice

In practice, parliament has autonomy over determining and implementing its procedures. Rules of procedure are developed and modified in accordance with the established framework.

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

Assessment criterion 4: Non-partisan implementation

Parliamentary procedures are implemented in a non-partisan manner. The Speaker upholds compliance with those procedures. MPs from different parliamentary parties, factions and other affiliations are treated equally and impartially.

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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.

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Dimension 1.1.3: Budgetary autonomy

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.1: Parliamentary autonomy

- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension covers parliament's autonomy over its own budget, finances and resources, including its offices, supplies, assets and staff. This budget could also include funding for a range of other services, such as a non-partisan office responsible for providing expert budget analysis of policy implementation, or security services for parliament and MPs.

Budget autonomy means that only parliament can determine and approve its own budget, and that it has independent financial expertise in order to ensure effective oversight of its funds. Specifically, this implies that the parliamentary budget is not subject to approval or allowance by the executive, and that parliament alone can execute it. It also means that the parliamentary budget is recognized by the government in the annual budget cycle, with allocated resources for parliament in the budget plan

See also *Indicator 1.8: Budget*.

Aspiring goal

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

The budget to fund parliament's activities and operations is clearly separated from the government budget. Parliament has the authority to debate and approve its budget and is solely responsible for its management.

The budget provides parliament with the resources its needs to fund its offices, equipment, staff and security measures.

Management of the parliamentary budget is subject to regular scrutiny through internal or external audits that are independent of the executive.

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 from the legal framework establishing parliament's autonomy over its budget

- Rules of procedure, debated and adopted by parliament alone, establishing parliament's autonomy to manage its budget

- A copy of the annual parliamentary budget

- National budget packages outlining the reserved budget for legislative branch operations

- The existence of an independent audit office or equivalent institution that oversees finances related to parliament alone, including its offices, resources and staff

- Credible reports on the sufficiency of the resources allocated to parliament, potentially including observations by MPs or assessments by independent audit offices or equivalent institutions

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

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Assessment criterion 1: Legal framework

The legal framework establishes parliament's autonomy over its own budget, including the authority to approve and manage this budget independently from the executive.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Resources

The parliamentary budget provides parliament with the financial resources needed to effectively carry out its mandate. This budget is sufficient to allow parliament to pay MPs' compensation, hire staff, develop and finance non-partisan analysis and oversight offices, ensure the security of parliament, invest in technology and infrastructure, procure supplies and equipment, and acquire other assets and resources as necessary for its operations.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Budget management and scrutiny

Parliament has the expertise and resources to use its funds effectively. Management of the parliamentary budget is subject to regular scrutiny through internal audits and an external, independent supreme audit institution.

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.*

_____

Dimension 1.1.4: Administrative autonomy

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.1: Parliamentary autonomy
- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the extent to which parliament has an independent parliamentary administration that allows MPs, staff and parliamentary offices to function effectively. Administrative autonomy includes independence over the organization of parliamentary services and the recruitment of parliamentary staff. It implies that the relevant parliamentary official or body has the power to:

- define the organizational structure of parliament
- establish or rearrange units necessary for parliament's effective operation of the parliament,
- to manage its own staff

The services managed by the parliamentary administration typically include the parliamentary premises, IT systems, human resources, communications and media, archiving and public records, supplies and equipment, ethics and conduct regulations, and other services as needed by members and staff, such as health care, commissary and food.

In most cases, the parliamentary administration is overseen by a non-partisan Secretary General or by a general services office. This role operates independently of the executive, and is elected or appointed by, and accountable to, parliament.

See also _Indicator 1.5: Administrative capacity and independence_.

Aspiring goal

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

An independent parliamentary administration allows parliament to operate as an effective, capable, well-staffed and well-resourced institution.

The parliamentary administration is housed exclusively within, and is directed under the sole authority of, the legislative branch. It manages its apparatus and structural units and staff independently.

Parliament has effective authority and control over the precincts in which its premises are located.

The parliamentary administration is non-partisan. Staff work in accordance with the administrative procedures outlined in the rules of procedure and corresponding regulations, and their services are equally accessible to all MPs and parliamentary party groups. A clear distinction exists between partisan and non-partisan 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 from the legal framework establishing an independent legislative branch

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- Provisions from laws or rules of procedure establishing a framework for an independent parliamentary administration
- The existence of non-partisan administrative offices that are independently managed, resourced and staffed by parliament alone

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

Assessment criterion 1: Legal framework

The legal framework provides for parliament's administrative autonomy, enabling parliament to organize and staff its administration independently and to exercise effective control over the precincts in which its premises are located.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Management

The parliamentary administration is overseen by a non-partisan, objective individual or office, such as a Secretary General, who is exclusively appointed or elected by, and accountable to, parliament.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Non-partisan administration

A clear distinction exists between non-partisan staff serving parliament itself, and partisan staff who support individual members and parties.

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.

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Indicator 1.2: Members of parliament

About this indicator

The effectiveness of parliament is strongly dependent on the ability of MPs to effectively perform the core parliamentary functions. This indicator covers a number of factors that contribute to this effectiveness, namely arrangements for taking up and leaving office, parliamentary non-accountability and inviolability, incompatibility of office, the remuneration, support and resources available to MPs, and ongoing professional development opportunities.

This indicator comprises the following dimensions:

- Dimension 1.2.1: Status of members of parliament
- Dimension 1.2.2: Non-accountability and inviolability
- Dimension 1.2.3: Incompatibility of office
- Dimension 1.2.4: Access to resources
- Dimension 1.2.5: Professional development

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Dimension 1.2.1: Status of members of parliament

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.2: Members of parliament

- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the arrangements by which MPs formally take up and/or leave office, as reflected in provisions of the legal framework and/or in rules of procedure. These provisions should be clear and should not unreasonably impede a duly elected (or appointed) MP from taking up and continuing in office until the completion of their term. MPs should expect that, once they have taken up office, they will continue for a full term.

In bicameral parliaments, there may be different rules on the taking-up and leaving of office, and on the duration of MPs' term of office, for each chamber. In some countries, there are provisions for an MP to resign before their term of office expires, or to be removed from office in line with a recognized process or procedure.

Forfeiture of an MP's office pursuant to a judicial decision, usually termed "disqualification", is a practice that exists in almost all countries. Where the legal framework provides for the termination of an MP's office, the relevant provisions should be clearly defined, leaving no ambiguity as to the process and to the court or tribunal by whose judgement the office may be terminated. Similarly, the provisions should specify the severity of the penalty leading to termination. MPs should not be subject to political attempts to remove them from office.

This dimension also addresses what happens to an MP's seat when they voluntarily leave, or are expelled from, their political party. Although rules and practice in this matter significantly differ across parliaments, three main scenarios can be observed:

- The seat is held by the political party, and the MP who leaves their party loses their seat.

- The seat is held personally by the MP, who keeps their seat regardless of whether or not they are in the same political party as when they were elected.

- The seat belongs neither to the party nor to the individual MP, and when an MP leaves their political party, a by-election must be held to fill the seat.

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Aspiring goal

> _Based on a global comparative analysis, an aspiring goal for parliaments in the area of "status of members of parliament" is as follows:_
>
> There are clearly defined provisions on the taking-up and leaving of office by MPs, and on the duration of MPs' term of office.
>
> Duly elected MPs are entitled to participate fully in the proceedings of parliament.
>
> Clear, formal provisions are in place for MPs who wish to voluntarily resign from office.
>
> The situations in which an MP can be removed from office before their term expires are limited, specific and precisely defined.
>
> Individual MPs cannot lose their seat as a result of expressing views that differ from those of their political party.
>
> Parliament has clear and impartial rules and procedures governing cases where an MP leaves their political party during their term of office.

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 and/or rules of procedure relating to the taking-up and leaving of office by MPs

- Provisions of the legal framework and/or rules of procedure relating to the swearing-in of MPs

- Practices relating to the taking-up or leaving of office of MPs, or assessments by independent and credible organizations

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

Assessment criterion 1: Term of office

Provisions of the legal framework and/or rules of procedure clearly define when duly elected or appointed MPs take up and leave office.

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

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Assessment criterion 2: Swearing-in of MPs

The legal framework provides for the swearing-in of MPs so that they can participate fully in the proceedings of parliament. The relevant provisions are non-discriminatory; for example, they do not require MPs to take a religious oath against their conscience.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Ending the mandate before the end of the term

Clear, formal provisions establish the process by which an MP's mandate may end before the end of their term. These provisions include a clearly defined process for MPs to voluntarily resign. Where there are provisions for involuntary leaving of office – such as expulsion by parliament, incompatibility of office, or disqualification – such provisions are limited, specific and implemented in accordance with due-process standards.

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

Assessment criterion 4: Leaving a political party

Clear, formal provisions are in place for cases where MPs leave, or are expelled from, their political party before their term of office expires. Individual MPs cannot lose their seat as a result of expressing views that differ from those of their political party.

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.*

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Dimension 1.2.2: Non-accountability and inviolability

> This dimension is part of:
>
> - Indicator 1.2: Members of parliament
> - Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the legal protections that allow MPs to carry out their parliamentary duties freely and without concern about possible legal action. The ability of MPs to speak freely is fundamental to the ability of parliament to perform its core functions. These protections, which are known as "parliamentary non-accountability", can normally never be lifted. They should also be extended to former MPs in respect of their previous participation in parliamentary proceedings.

Some jurisdictions also provide MPs with varying degrees of protection against detention and arrest, whether or not the potential legal action against relates directly to exercise of their parliamentary duties. In this scenario, which is known as "parliamentary inviolability", parliament needs to lift the immunity before an MP can be arrested or detained, or before their office can be searched.

The strict application of parliamentary inviolability in situations in which an MP is accused of something which has little or nothing to do with the exercise of their parliamentary duties can lead to unfair consequences for victims, who should have access to an effective remedy. At the same time, a criminal charge might be brought against an MP for the sole purpose of silencing them. A careful balance is therefore required between protecting MPs and upholding the principle that all people should be treated equally before the law.

Aspiring goal

> *Based on a global comparative analysis, an aspiring goal for parliaments in the area of "non-accountability and inviolability" is as follows:*
>
> Parliamentary non-accountability is established in the legal framework, which contains clear provisions that protect MPs from legal reprisals for the votes they cast, and for the words they express both within and outside parliament in connection with the exercise of their parliamentary duties. This non-accountability can never be lifted.
>
> Parliamentary inviolability is established in the legal framework, under which parliament must give its consent before an MP can be arrested, detained and/or prosecuted. The only exceptions are situations of *in flagrante delicto* and situations in which an MP's alleged wrongdoing is unrelated to the exercise of their parliamentary duties.
>
> Due process is followed throughout the procedure for lifting parliamentary inviolability. The MP in question can defend themselves and is heard before the decision on whether or not to lift the inviolability is taken. Parliament, or its relevant committee, reviews the lifting request carefully and only agrees to do so if it is convinced that the proposed legal action is grounded in law and supported by evidence.
>
> MPs are able to claim in court that they were not caught *in flagrante delicto* and/or that the charge brought against them relates to the exercise of their parliamentary duties and, therefore, that the legal action taken against them should have required the lifting of inviolability first. Likewise, a victim of wrongdoing by an MP is able to claim in court that the wrongdoing does not relate to the exercise of the MP's parliamentary duties.
>
> The legal provisions on parliamentary inviolability are implemented in such a way that MPs are both adequately protected when needed, but also prosecuted when justified. No majority in parliament should shield an MP from criminal action when there are clear reasons for prosecution. Similarly, no

_____

> majority in parliament should lift the inviolability of an MP when such a decision does not appear to be justified.

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 concerning parliamentary non-accountability

● Provisions placing restrictions on the detention and arrest of MPs in connection with alleged wrongdoing related to the exercise of their parliamentary duties

● Provisions protecting of the rights of others directly affected by the (alleged) wrongdoing of MPs which is unrelated to the exercise of their parliamentary mandate

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

Assessment criterion 1: Legal provisions on parliamentary non-accountability

The legal framework contains strongly entrenched provisions on parliamentary non-accountability for MPs, covering votes cast and expressions made both within and outside parliament. This protection is also extended to former MPs in respect of their previous participation in parliamentary proceedings. It can never be lifted.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Restrictions on MPs' freedom of speech

Any restrictions on the free expression of views by MPs both within and outside parliament are clearly defined in the legal framework and are limited to matters such as maintaining order and decorum in the chamber, and eliminating hate speech.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Legal provisions on parliamentary inviolability

The legal framework contains strongly entrenched provisions restricting the arrest or detention of MPs, and/or searches of their person and their personal/working space, without parliamentary consent. Such consent is always required when an MP faces legal action in connection the exercise of their parliamentary duties.

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

Assessment criterion 4: Parliamentary inviolability in practice

Parliament follows due process when it receives a request to lift the inviolability of an MP, including by allowing them to present a defence and by carefully reviewing the legal and factual soundness of the request. The legal framework governing the inviolability of MPs is implemented in a clear and unambiguous manner. MPs, regardless of political affiliation, are not faced with politically motivated legal action.

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.

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Dimension 1.2.3: Incompatibility of office

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.2: Members of parliament
- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns limits on the additional offices or roles that an MP can occupy while holding parliamentary office. Known as "incompatibilities of office", these limits are primarily aimed at preventing MPs from breaching the principle of the separation of powers that exists in many political systems, thereby guaranteeing the independence of parliament. They also are designed to ensure that MPs are in a position to devote their time and effort principally to the performance of their responsibilities as MPs, and to reduce the opportunity for conflicts of interest.

In many jurisdictions, MPs are typically unable to:
- hold office in both chambers of bicameral parliaments
- hold office as a member of the judiciary
- hold office in the civil service of the executive branch
- hold ministerial office in some jurisdictions with a very clear separation of powers

Private-sector employment or roles are generally seen as compatible and are permitted. However, some parliaments impose limits relating to private contracts with the government, or to roles with foreign companies or international organizations, as well as to service on boards and to the representation of special interests.

Where incompatibility arises, MPs are normally expected resolve the issue by resigning from the incompatible office. The holding of an incompatible office in some jurisdictions can lead to (automatic) disqualification as an MP or from the incompatible office. In some jurisdictions, there is some flexibility for MPs to continue to hold office in the civil service, and to be recognized as being on "leave" from that role when performing their duties as an MP. Such exceptions should be clearly defined, limited and implemented impartially.

See also _Indicator 2.1: Parliamentary ethics_.

Aspiring goal

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

The legal framework places limits on MPs holding offices that are incompatible with their role as an MP, such as being a member of both houses in a bicameral parliament, holding judicial office or holding office in the civil service.

Where incompatibilities of office arise, provisions and processes are in place for the issue to be resolved quickly, by the MP either resigning from the incompatible office or being disqualified from holding their parliamentary office.

The legal framework and parliamentary practices effectively protect against the possibility of conflicts of interest arising from incompatibility of office, and against any unnecessary diversion of MPs from their duties. Parliament maintains and publishes data on the other offices and roles held by MPs.

Assessment

This dimension is assessed against several criteria, each of which should be evaluated separately.

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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 concerning the holding of incompatible offices

● Provisions of the legal framework enabling MPs to resolve incompatibility-of-office issues quickly, and the supporting processes

● Provisions limiting the holding of private-sector roles by MPs to prevent conflicts of interest and diversion from their responsibilities as an MP

● Data on MPs holding other offices and roles

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

Assessment criterion 1: Legal framework

The legal framework places specific limits on MPs holding incompatible offices, such as being a member of both houses in a bicameral parliament, holding judicial office or holding office in the civil service.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Resolution of incompatibility of office

The legal framework enables MPs to quickly resolve incompatibility-of-office issues when they arise, and supporting processes are in place for this purpose.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Practice

In practice, rules and provisions on the incompatibility of office of MPs are implemented fully and impartially. Parliament publishes data on other offices and roles held by MPs.

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

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Recommendations for change

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

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Dimension 1.2.4: Access to resources

> This dimension is part of:
>
> • Indicator 1.2: Members of parliament
>
> • Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the remuneration and resources available to MPs to enable them to perform their duties. This includes MPs' salary and any parliamentary allowances, as well as access to the staff, facilities and other resources they need to support their work.

MPs should be adequately remunerated and resourced for the following reasons:
● To ensure that all citizens, regardless of their means, can stand as an MP
● To ensure that MPs have sufficient means of livelihood to be able to focus on their parliamentary responsibilities
● To ensure that MPs have adequate support to carry out quality work and undertake their responsibilities effectively

Different jurisdictions have widely differing levels of, and approaches to, remuneration and allowances. MPs' remuneration and allowances are likely to include a salary, subsistence and travel allowances, additional allowances depending on the office held, and pension arrangements.

Remuneration and allowances should in all cases be adequate for their purpose and be made available fairly to all MPs. Increasingly, they are determined independently by a body outside parliament in order to enhance the legitimacy and transparency of the process.

In almost all parliaments, MPs have also access to facilities and other resources. These could include computing and other equipment, communication tools, official transport and constituency offices. Many parliaments also provide funding for MPs to hire staff to work directly for them.

In addition, MPs are able to draw upon expert services provided by the parliamentary administration, such as research services and budget offices. Access to these services should be granted fairly and in a non-partisan manner

See also *Dimension 1.5.3: Expert and administrative support*.

Aspiring goal

> *Based on a global comparative analysis, an aspiring goal for parliaments in the area of "access to resources" is as follows:*
>
> Parliament has clear and impartial rules and procedures governing access to resources for MPs, including remuneration and allowances.
>
> The resources available to MPs are adequate to support their work.
>
> All MPs, irrespective of their political party, have access to a fair and proportional level of resources, including 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.

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

●   Rules and procedures governing access to resources for MPs

●   Feedback from MPs about the adequacy of remuneration, allowances, staff and resources

●   Independent reports or evidence regarding the adequacy of the remuneration, allowances, staff and resources provided to MPs

●   Independent reports or evidence regarding the fair and non-partisan provision of remuneration, allowances, staff and resources to MPs

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

Assessment criterion 1: Rules and procedures

Clear rules and procedures, possibly established in law, govern access to resources for MPs, including how these resources are determined and how MPs have to account for their use of these resources.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Adequacy of remuneration and allowances

MPs' remuneration and allowances are set at a level that allows any citizen, regardless of their means, to stand as an MP and to perform their duties effectively.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Process for determining remuneration and allowances

A proper process is in place to ensure that MPs' remuneration and allowances are determined fairly and in a non-partisan manner, possibly via an independent body or process.

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

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Assessment criterion 4: Staff, facilities and other resources

All MPs, irrespective of their political party, have access to staff, facilities and other resources, as proportionate to parliament's circumstances and to their particular role, to enable them to perform their duties effectively.

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.

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Dimension 1.2.5: Professional development

> This dimension is part of:
>
> - Indicator 1.2: Members of parliament
>
> - Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the professional development opportunities available to MPs to help them perform their core functions. It covers both programmes and resources offered by parliament, and those delivered in conjunction with partner organizations. It does not include programmes developed by political parties or informal support from other MPs, although these aspects can play an important role in MPs' professional development.

MPs usually come to their roles with varied life and work experience and well-developed political skills. However, the task of being an MP requires different types of knowledge and skills, some of which are quite specialized, such as knowledge of parliamentary procedures and practices, the operation of parliamentary structures such as committees, or managing a busy constituency office.

Parliament therefore has an important responsibility to help MPs acquire knowledge and skills relating to their core responsibilities. This role is normally undertaken by, or overseen by, the parliamentary administration.

Induction programmes for new MPs are especially critical. Ideally, parliament should also have an ongoing professional development programme that provides regular training opportunities tailored to MPs' needs.

Aspiring goal

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

All new MPs complete an induction programme when they take up office, covering their rights and responsibilities as well as the specialized knowledge and skills they need to carry out their work.

All MPs receive a comprehensive information package when they take up office.

All MPs have access to an ongoing professional development programme, which is tailored to their needs and schedules.

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:

- Induction programmes delivered to all new MPs

- Ongoing professional development programmes accessible to all MPs

- Feedback from MPs about induction or ongoing professional development programmes

- A comprehensive information package, including guides, manuals and/or handbooks, covering MPs' core responsibilities

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

Assessment criterion 1: Induction programme

Parliament has an induction programme that is tailored to, and attended by, all new MPs, and covers key aspects of their work, rights and responsibilities. This programme is delivered or overseen by the parliamentary administration.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Comprehensive information package

All MPs receive a comprehensive information package, covering parliamentary procedures and their rights and responsibilities as MPs.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Ongoing professional development

All MPs have access to an ongoing professional development programme, which is developed in consultation with MPs and tailored to their needs.

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.

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Indicator 1.3: Parliamentary procedures

About this indicator

This indicator concerns the unique responsibilities assigned to MPs to conduct legislative business. It describes the frameworks that define MPs' activities in the plenary, including in a chamber's rules of procedure, as well as the regulations outlining the ability of MPs to set the agenda, convene meetings, conduct debates, make decisions, ensure institutional record-keeping and address general plenary matters. It also covers methods for maintaining parliamentary activities in times of emergency or crisis.

This indicator underpins the mandated roles of MPs for making laws in a responsible, orderly and accountable manner.

This indicator comprises the following dimensions:

● Dimension 1.3.1: Rules of procedure

● Dimension 1.3.2: Emergency or crisis procedures

● Dimension 1.3.3: Parliamentary calendar

● Dimension 1.3.4: Convening sessions and setting the agenda

● Dimension 1.3.5: Quorum

● Dimension 1.3.6: Debate

● Dimension 1.3.7: Voting

● Dimension 1.3.8: Record-keeping

● Dimension 1.3.9: Dissolution

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Dimension 1.3.1: Rules of procedure

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.3: Parliamentary procedures

- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension outlines the specific powers and provisions defined in parliament's rules of procedure, which codify all procedural aspects of parliamentary business. The rules of procedures should cover all of parliament's activities, potentially including the following matters:

- The individual actions and conduct of MPs, including the powers and privileges of members of majority and minority parties and groups

- The composition of parliament's membership

- The conduct of plenary sessions and debates

- The setting of parliament's agenda

- Ethics and conflicts of interest

- Political activities and funding

- Independent budgetary authorities

- The establishment and operation of committees

- Staffing and the parliamentary administration, including the appointment of a Secretary General

In unicameral parliaments, there is only one set of rules of procedure for the entire institution. In bicameral parliaments, each chamber may have separate rules of procedure, reflecting their institutional independence.

Some countries have an overarching legal framework defining the process by which parliament's actions and mandate are exercised. The rules of procedure should be consistent with the relevant provisions of this legal framework. Parliament's rules of procedures should be introduced, adopted and amended by parliament alone, and adhered to by all MPs and parliamentary staff.

The rules of procedure should be expressed in plain language that both MPs and the public can easily understand. They should be transparent and publicly available.

The rules of procedure should be implemented and interpreted consistently and impartially. Past practices and interpretations (such as rulings by the Speaker) should be documented in guides, handbooks or other documents made available to MPs.

The rules of procedure may be reviewed periodically or on an ongoing basis, and proposals for amendments may be submitted by a relevant committee or other group of MPs representing the composition of parliament.

See also _Dimension 1.1.1: Institutional autonomy_ and _Dimension 1.1.2: Procedural autonomy_.

Aspiring goal

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

Parliament has clear and comprehensive rules of procedure, which are introduced, adopted and amended by parliament alone. They are subject to regular review and amendment.

The rules of procedure codify all procedural aspects of parliamentary business. They are expressed in plain and easy-to-understand language and are publicly available.

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> The rules of procedure are interpreted consistently and impartially. Past practices and interpretations are documented and made available to MPs and the public.

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 of procedure adopted and/or amended by parliament alone

- Separate rules of procedure for each chamber in a bicameral parliament

- Guides, handbooks or other documents documenting past practices and interpretations of parliament's rules of procedure

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

Assessment criterion 1: Autonomy to set own rules of procedure

Parliament has the authority to independently adopt and amend its rules of procedure.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Scope

Parliament's rules of procedure are consistent with the legal framework and codify all procedural aspects of parliamentary business.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Implementation and interpretation

The rules of procedure are implemented and interpreted consistently. Past practices and interpretations are documented and made available to MPs and the public.

Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good	Excellent
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

_____

Evidence for this assessment criterion:

Assessment criterion 4: Revision of the rules

The rules of procedure are subject to periodic review and proposals for amendments by MPs, typically through a procedure committee.

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.

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Dimension 1.3.2: Emergency or crisis procedures

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.3: Parliamentary procedures

- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the procedures under which parliament may conduct business in times of emergency or crisis. These procedures may alter the regular functioning of parliament and are only to be used in legally defined, exceptional circumstances. Emergency provisions may be contained in a country's legal framework or in parliament's rules of procedure, as well as in other state-of-emergency legislation.

These special procedures allow parliament to adjust the required composition of its membership or other operational matters in order to adapt during times of emergency or crisis. The nature of these adaptations depends largely on the circumstances. For example, the number of MPs required for a quorum may be reduced. Virtual or hybrid operation may be introduced in order to allow business to continue. This second approach was adopted by many parliaments during the COVID-19 pandemic, where the presence of the full plenary chamber was considered a health hazard.

Emergency or crisis procedures may also require business to be conducted in a truncated or exceptional format, such as debates being limited and votes being cast despite not all members being present.

Aspiring goal

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

The legal framework clearly defines the exceptional circumstances in which emergency or crisis procedures are to be used. It also defines parliament's emergency powers and the actions to be taken by parliament in such times, as well as the composition of parliament, and contains provisions for the use of virtual or hybrid proceedings.

The legal framework clearly defines the conduct of the executive in relation to parliament during an emergency or crisis, especially where it relates to the power of the executive over a nation's armed forces.

The emergency powers modify the usual agenda-setting and debate procedures to allow for parliamentary business to proceed quickly and effectively if it pertains to the crisis. They also give MPs an opportunity to modify the normal procedures set out in parliament's rules of procedure.

Business continuity plans are in place to ensure that parliament is able to operate under all circumstances.

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 and/or rules of procedure defining the action to be taken in the event of an emergency or crisis, including limited or modified rules of procedure, and evidence of flexibility in their use

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●   Records of virtual or hybrid meetings of the plenary and committees

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

Assessment criterion 1: Legal framework

The legal framework and legal precedent clarify the role of parliament in emergencies and crises, and define the circumstances in which emergency or crisis procedures can be used.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Emergency or crisis procedures

Parliamentary rules of procedure outline how debate, agenda-setting, oversight and law-making activities are to be conducted in an emergency or crisis situation, including clarification of the respective roles of executive and legislative bodies.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Flexibility

The emergency or crisis procedures allow for flexibility in the representation and number of MPs present for a debate, and prescribe the specific powers available to MPs with regard to speaking time, directives and voting. They also establish whether parliamentary business may be conducted in person, virtually or using a hybrid model.

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

Assessment criterion 4: Business continuity plans

The parliamentary administration has business continuity plans that support the operation of parliament during emergency and crisis situations. Business continuity plans are reviewed and updated periodically.

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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.

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Dimension 1.3.3: Parliamentary calendar

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.3: Parliamentary procedures

- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the existence of a publicly available parliamentary calendar that establishes the timetables for debate and in-session periods and sittings, in addition to recesses and holidays. The parliamentary calendar also includes information related to committees.

This dimension also covers the process by which the calendar is developed and maintained. This process should be included in parliament's rules of procedure. The calendar is typically developed and maintained by the parliamentary leadership. In some systems, the calendar is subject to approval and amendment by parliament.

See also _Dimension 1.3.4: Convening sessions and setting the agenda_.

Aspiring goal

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

The process by which the parliamentary calendar is developed and maintained, including the timetabling and planning of sessions, is included in parliament's rules of procedure.

The parliamentary calendar is prepared ahead of each new session and is publicly available. It indicates the days on which parliament is in session throughout the year and the days on which it is in recess. It clearly identifies plenary and committee days, as well as other key times such as constituency days or weeks, if applicable.

The parliamentary calendar is kept up to date by the parliamentary leadership and includes details of all legislative and oversight activities in the plenary and in committees.

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 of procedure covering the development and maintenance of the parliamentary calendar, which gives an overview of session and recess times, legislative activity and committee events/activities, in addition to the powers of the parliamentary leadership in maintaining the calendar

- Parliamentary calendars, including evidence of regular updates and public availability

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

Assessment criterion 1: Development and maintenance

The rules of procedure outline the times throughout the year when parliament is in session and conducts legislative sittings and other business. They define the process for the development and maintenance of the parliamentary calendar.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Scope

The parliamentary calendar includes detailed information related to plenary sessions, committee affairs and forthcoming legislative activity.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Transparency

The calendar is publicly available and is regularly updated in a timely manner.

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.

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Dimension 1.3.4: Convening sessions and setting the agenda

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.3: Parliamentary procedures

- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the means by which parliament convenes sessions, including initial (constitutive) sessions following elections, and by which it sets its agenda during these sessions.

It also covers the rights of parliament and MPs to hold regular, special or extraordinary sessions, and to ensure that there is a specified maximum period between sessions. In addition, it concerns the responsibilities for developing and maintaining the agenda, and the powers under which MPs may vote to change the agenda, including determining legislation for debate.

This dimension pays particular attention to the rights of MPs to meet regularly in order to exercise their core functions, to the opportunities for MPs to contribute to agenda-setting, and to the means by which parliament may be called into a special or extraordinary session.

Aspiring goal

Based on a global comparative analysis, an aspiring goal for parliaments in the area of "convening sessions and setting the agenda" is as follows:

The legal framework specifies a maximum number of days within which the parliament must meet following elections.

Parliament meets at regular intervals in order to fulfil its core functions. Sessions are determined by the parliamentary leadership or special committees.

All MPs have the right to participate in agenda-setting, including to propose agenda items and to hold special or extraordinary sessions.

The agendas for sessions are published well in advance, giving MPs sufficient time to prepare.

Extraordinary sessions, and sittings convened using urgent procedures, are convened in accordance with the rules, and only when required for public-interest reasons.

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 specifying times for the holding of sessions following elections and at other times

- Rules of procedure clarifying the ability of the parliamentary leadership or special committees to establish parliament's own agenda, and establishing the right of MPs to amend that agenda, including to determine legislation for debate

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

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Assessment criterion 1: Convening parliament after elections

The legal framework specifies a maximum number of days within which parliament must meet for its first session following an election, and establishes that parliament meets at regular intervals in order to exercise its core functions.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Sessions

Sessions are determined by the parliamentary leadership or special committees as set out in the rules of procedure. Extraordinary sessions, and sittings convened using urgent procedures, are convened in accordance with the rules, and only when required for public-interest reasons.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Agenda-setting

All MPs have the right to participate in agenda-setting in accordance with parliament's rules of procedure, including to propose agenda items. Agenda-setting provisions are applied consistently in practice.

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

Assessment criterion 4: Publication and advance notice

The agendas for sessions are published well in advance, giving MPs sufficient time to prepare.

Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good	Excellent
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

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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.

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Dimension 1.3.5: Quorum

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.3: Parliamentary procedures

- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the requirements for a quorum, or the minimum number of MPs who must be present in order for parliament to validly conduct its business. The existence of a quorum is therefore a practical measure that allows parliament to effectively operate without all MPs being present.

Different countries have different practices in terms of the quorum needed for debate, and the quorum needed for voting for different pieces of legislation. Practice in recent decades shows that many parliaments have lowered or abolished the quorum requirement for debates, while maintaining it for voting on legislation and other acts. Regardless of these variations, a quorum is intended to protect against decision-making by a very small number of MPs.

Quorum rules are typically set out in a country's legal framework and in a chamber's rules of procedure. Often, the rules set out a specific time frame from when a "quorum call" is announced to when a quorum must be formed to begin or continue a debate. In some parliaments, MPs can raise a "point of order" to draw attention to a quorum not being present, which forces the Speaker to call for a quorum to be formed in order that business can continue.

Aspiring goal

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

The legal framework defines the minimum number of MPs who must be present in order for parliamentary business to be conducted in the event of a quorum call.

Where the legal framework provides for virtual or hybrid participation, this is reflected in the rules on quorum.

Parliament's rules of procedure define the powers of MPs to request a quorum, and these rules are consistently implemented in practice.

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:

● Quorum rules defined in the legal framework and/or the chamber's rules of procedure

● Records of parliamentary sessions

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

Assessment criterion 1: Legal framework

The legal framework defines the minimum number of MPs who must be present in order for parliamentary business to be conducted in the event of a quorum call.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Right to call for a quorum

Parliament's rules of procedure define the powers of MPs to request a quorum to verify if the number of MPs present is lower than the minimum needed to conduct parliamentary business.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Practice

Quorum rules are consistently implemented in practice.

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.

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Dimension 1.3.6: Debate

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.3: Parliamentary procedures

- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns arrangements for parliamentary debate. The right to debate is universally considered one of the most critical rights of MPs in a democratic system. Debate provides MPs with the opportunity to publicly declare their support for or rejection of an idea, policy or act based on the priorities of their constituency and/or party, and to oversee the actions of executive by discussing matters relating to government proposals, programmes and services. It is also the mechanism by which a chamber deliberates on matters under consideration, and enables MPs to be informed so that they can make a decision. Debate can occur within committees or in full plenary. This dimension deals specifically with plenary debate.

It is important for parliament to have rules of procedure for structuring and regulating debate, which should be clearly understood and impartially applied to all MPs regardless of party affiliation. They should allocate time for debate and give MPs the ability to table motions and determine the order of motions tabled, to make comments for the record, to propose amendments, to raise points of order and to hold open a debate. There should also be legislative rules to ensure that debate can take place in an orderly and respectful way with members being able to express their views freely.

MPs should be allotted adequate time and opportunity for debate ahead of a scheduled vote, to ensure that all sides are equally able to contribute on a proposed matter, and for citizens to contact their MP regarding the pending legislation.

Aspiring goal

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

Parliament has clearly defined rules of procedure for structuring and regulating debate. Rules on debate are applied impartially to all MPs.

These rules provide for ample time for MPs to debate issues, legislation and other matters. They give MPs the ability to table motions and determine the order of motions tabled, to make comments for the record, to propose amendments, to raise points of order and to hold open a debate.

Debates are open to the public in-person and online and official records of debates are published.

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 parliament's rules of procedure on the structuring and regulation of debate

- Constitutional provisions that indicate the important role of MPs in debating legislative priorities

- Parliamentary practice related to debate, such as rulings by the Speaker

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

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Assessment criterion 1: Rules of procedure

Parliament's rules of procedure clearly define MPs' powers in relation to debate. They give MPs the ability to table motions and determine the order of motions tabled, to make comments for the record, to propose amendments, to raise points of order and to hold open a debate.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Time allocation

Ample time is allocated for debate on issues, legislation and other matters.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Transparency

Debates are open to the public in-person and virtually, and official records of debates are published in a timely manner.

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

Assessment criterion 4: Impartiality

Debate is conducted in manner consistent with parliament's rules of procedure, which are impartially applied by the Speaker to all MPs regardless of party or group affiliation.

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

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Recommendations for change

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

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Dimension 1.3.7: Voting

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.3: Parliamentary procedures

- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns arrangements for voting by MPs, including by voice or by ballot. The ability of MPs to cast votes for or against a policy or proposal for a law is essential to the exercise of their representative function. Voting powers should be exercised by MPs only, who should be able to vote freely without interference or improper influence.

Votes should be recorded – by roll call, electronic record, or paper record/tally – and published, so as to give an "on-the-record" account of how each MP voted. Parliamentary rules should stipulate any exceptions to the official recording and publication of MPs' votes. Under these rules, a minority of MPs should be able to demand that a recorded vote be held.

If parliament allows proxy or remote voting, the related mechanisms should be stipulated in its rules of procedure.

Aspiring goal

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

Parliament has clearly defined rules of procedure for allowing, calling and recording votes in the chamber. The rules of procedure establish how a minority of MPs can call for a vote be held on a specific matter. Voting powers are restricted to MPs.

MPs are able to vote freely without interference or improper influence.

Votes are recorded and published, so as to give an "on-the-record" account of how each MP voted. The rules should stipulate any exceptions to the official recording and publication of MPs' votes.

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 parliament's rules of procedure on voting

- Publicly available records of votes in parliament

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

Assessment criterion 1: Restricted to MPs

Parliament's rules of procedure set out provisions on voting. Voting powers are restricted to MPs. If parliament allows proxy or remote voting, the related mechanisms are also stipulated in its rules of procedure.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Minority right to call for a vote

Parliament's rules of procedure establish how a minority of MPs can call for a vote be held on a specific matter.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Recording and publication

Parliament's rules of procedure clearly define how votes will be recorded and published. Any exceptions are set out in the rules.

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

Assessment criterion 4: Practice

Parliament's rules of procedure on voting are applied consistently in practice. MPs are able to vote freely without interference or improper influence.

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

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Recommendations for change

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

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Dimension 1.3.8: Record-keeping

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.3: Parliamentary procedures

- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns parliamentary record-keeping, which is critical to institutional sustainability. Records should include evidence of the formal decisions and proceedings of parliament, and a direct transcript of all MP deliberations and votes, daily proceedings, statements, and questions for the record, as well as any other business conducted in plenary. They should also include documents presented to the chamber and copies of proposals for laws and motions tabled for debate. Parliament should also keep records of all official business conducted in all committees, including submissions, hearings and meetings.

Records should be available to the public, with the exception of records from classified or private committee meetings as foreseen in the rules of procedure.

Records should be maintained for every year that parliament has been in existence.

These records should be kept securely in a central repository that is easily accessible to all MPs, staff and the public. Records should be made available in print and online in the official working languages as outlined in the constitution.

Records are often compiled by parliamentary staff such as Hansard reporters or stenographers, who are responsible for recording transcripts of all daily proceedings, plenary business and committee affairs, as well as staff responsible for recording the formal decisions and proceedings of parliament, including votes. Such records should be adequately protected and stored in the necessary repositories following the casting of votes.

Aspiring goal

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

Parliament keeps records of all decisions, votes, deliberations, daily proceedings, documents presented and considered, and other plenary business, as well as committee business and hearings.

Records are available for every year that parliament has been in existence (and that record-keeping was maintained/possible).

Parliament's written records are stored securely in a central repository and are easily accessible to all MPs, staff and the public in print and online.

Records are made available in all official working languages as outlined in the constitution.

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:

- Evidence of a Hansard reporter, stenographer or official record-keeper for all plenary and committee business

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- Evidence of parliament's central record-keeping repository
- Provisions stipulating that records should be kept in all working languages as outlined in the constitution

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

Assessment criterion 1: Record-keeping procedures

Parliament keeps records of all decisions, votes, deliberations, daily proceedings, documents presented and considered, and other plenary business, as well as committee business and hearings.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Storage and publication

Parliament's records are stored securely in a central repository that is easily accessible to MPs, staff and the public in print and online. Any exceptions to the publication of records are defined in the rules of procedure.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Availability in all official working languages

Records are made available in the official working languages outlined in the constitution.

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

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Recommendations for change

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

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Dimension 1.3.9: Dissolution

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.3: Parliamentary procedures

- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the process by which parliament may be dissolved in order to allow for new elections to take place. The legal framework should stipulate all powers and arrangements for the dissolution of parliament. The power to dissolve parliament is highly dependent on the structure of government and the powers vested in both the executive and parliament.

Dissolution normally occurs automatically at the scheduled end of a parliamentary session or term, but may also happen earlier. There are many different ways in which parliament can be dissolved. For instance, it can occur when there is a loss of confidence by a majority in the parliamentary leadership. In some systems, the executive, the prime minister or the head of parliament may have the ultimate power to force dissolution at will. Other systems have fixed parliamentary terms, which can only be altered in exceptional circumstances.

Regardless of how dissolution occurs, the legal framework should provide clarity as to how the process takes place. There should also be clear guidance or practice relating to the roles of those involved in this process, as well as clear rules defining the length of the parliamentary term, what happens when that term ends, timelines for MPs leaving or taking up office, allowable resources for outgoing/incoming officials, and rules on record storage or official record-keeping requirements. Parliament's rules of procedure and/or relevant committee regulations may also stipulate rules on vacating or moving onto the parliamentary premises.

The rules and procedures for dissolution should reflect an awareness of the importance of institutional memory, including processes for collecting evidence, information and handover records for MPs leaving office. Provision should be made for the preservation and public accessibility of any official records developed by an outgoing MP while in office, in line with general record-keeping, archiving and ethics requirements as outlined in the country's legal framework.

Aspiring goal

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

The constitution stipulates clear powers for the dissolution of parliament. Laws, practice and guidance clearly specify the roles of those involved in this process.

There are clear rules defining the length of the parliamentary term, what happens when that term ends, and timelines for MPs leaving and taking up office.

The rules also stipulate requirements for keeping and archiving official records and transcripts, and complying with ethics requirements, upon the dissolution of parliament.

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:

- Constitutional provisions stipulating powers to dissolve parliament

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- Relevant rules of procedure or other regulations

- Rules and procedures requiring MPs to comply with record-keeping, archiving and ethics requirements upon the dissolution of parliament

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

Assessment criterion 1: Constitutional provisions

The constitution defines the end of the parliamentary term, as well as the authority and procedure for dissolution of parliament before the end of the term. These provisions and any associated rules clearly specify the roles of those involved in this process.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Dissolution procedures

The impact of dissolution on the work of parliament is detailed in parliament's rules of procedure and practice, including the procedures for ending the parliamentary session and for the end of the term of outgoing MPs.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Archiving and ethics requirements

Parliament's rules of procedure set out the record-keeping, archiving and ethics requirements that outgoing MPs must comply with when parliament is dissolved.

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

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Recommendations for change

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

Sources and further reading

● Elliot Bulmer, *Dissolution of Parliament: International IDEA Constitution-Building Primer 16*, second edition (2017).

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Indicator 1.4: Parliamentary organization

About this indicator

Parliament is a unique setting that brings together MPs with equal status who represent diverse political opinions. Organizing the work of parliament therefore requires a collective decision-making system and a complex structure.

The plenary is the most visible part of parliament's work and represents the culmination of the business carried out in committees. The presidium, as a collective governing body, ensures that political issues are submitted before parliament, while the Speaker is responsible for managing the operation of parliament fairly and impartially.

Parliamentary committees are groups of MPs who are usually appointed or elected by parliament to examine matters more closely. The political structure of parliament is usually guided by political groups, which bring together MPs – normally from the same party – with the aim of coordinating their activities and achieving shared political goals. MPs may also cooperate across party lines, through cross-party groups.

This indicator comprises the following dimensions:

- Dimension 1.4.1: Plenary
- Dimension 1.4.2: Speaker
- Dimension 1.4.3: Presidium
- Dimension 1.4.4: Parliamentary committees
- Dimension 1.4.5: Political groups
- Dimension 1.4.6: Cross-party groups

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Dimension 1.4.1: Plenary

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.4: Parliamentary organization

- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the arrangements for plenary sessions. Parliament's most important law-making and oversight work is done in the plenary. It is usually where the highest-ranking State officials, such as presidents and prime ministers, are heard. A plenary session is an arena for holding political debates and for voting on legislation previously discussed in committees. All major decisions made on behalf of parliament – including those regarding parliamentary rules and procedures – should be debated and voted on by the plenary.

In unicameral systems, plenaries bring together all MPs. In bicameral systems, each chamber has its own plenary sessions. Plenary sessions are normally held on the parliamentary premises, except where the rules provide for alternative venues or virtual sittings. The legal framework should provide for the transparency of plenary sessions through broadcasting and/or live-streaming, as well as attendance by the media.

See also _Indicator 1.3: Parliamentary procedures_, _Indicator 3.1: Transparency of parliamentary processes_, _Dimension 3.2.2: Parliamentary website_, and _Indicator 3.3: Access to parliament_.

Aspiring goal

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

The legal framework provides for the holding of plenary sessions. All major decisions made on behalf of parliament are debated and voted on by the plenary.

Parliament's rules of procedure cover all aspects related to the conduct of plenary sessions. The Speaker enforces these rules impartially.

Plenary sessions are held in the respective chamber(s) on the parliamentary premises, except where the legal framework provides for alternative venues or virtual sittings.

Plenary sessions are open to the public. Duly accredited media representatives are authorized to attend plenary sessions, as are members of the public. Closed plenary sessions are only held in exceptional circumstances as prescribed by law.

Agendas for plenary sessions are approved by the plenary itself and are made publicly available in advance of the session.

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 constitution, laws or parliamentary resolutions/decrees outlining the regulatory framework for the holding of plenary sessions, including the required quorum, the timing and duration of ordinary plenary sessions, and the grounds and procedures for calling extraordinary sessions

_____

- Provisions of the constitution or laws establishing that plenary sessions are only to be held in the respective chamber(s) on the parliamentary premises
- Provisions of parliament's rules of procedure establishing that plenary sessions are public unless specified as closed

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

Assessment criterion 1: Legal framework

The legal framework provides for the holding of plenary sessions. All major decisions made on behalf of parliament are debated and voted on by the plenary.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Venue

The legal framework establish that plenary sessions are only to be held in the respective chamber(s) on the parliamentary premises, except where alternative venues or virtual sittings are permitted, or in other circumstances where imperative reasons dictate such changes.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Transparency

The legal framework establishes that plenary sessions are public. Agendas for plenary sessions are available in advance. Duly accredited media representatives are authorized to attend plenary sessions, as are members of the public. Closed plenary sessions are only held in exceptional circumstances as prescribed by law.

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.

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Dimension 1.4.2: Speaker

> This dimension is part of:
>
> - Indicator 1.4: Parliamentary organization
>
> - Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the mandate, role, functions and duties of the Speaker, whose primary responsibility is to facilitate orderly and meaningful discussion and debate in parliament. The Speaker is usually an MP elected at the beginning of each legislature by fellow MPs to preside over the parliamentary chamber or, in a unicameral system, to preside over parliament. As the first among equals, the Speaker has the necessary powers and resources to discharge this responsibility.

The Speaker's official role usually includes to:

- preside over debates and votes
- rule on questions of parliamentary procedure and privilege
- maintain discipline and order within the house
- supervise administrative matters
- be responsible for the organization of parliament's work
- represent parliament or a chamber at official functions, both domestically and internationally.

In some political systems, the Speaker has the casting vote in the event of a deadlock.

The Speaker has the power to enforce the rules of procedure and to call to order and discipline any MP who breaches those rules.

Aspiring goal

> *Based on a global comparative analysis, an aspiring goal for parliaments in the area of "Speaker" is as follows:*
>
> The legal framework defines the mandate, role, functions and duties of the Speaker, and establishes the rules for electing the Speaker and their term of office.
>
> The Speaker is mandated to coordinate and manage the work of the parliamentary bodies, to manage the overall functioning of parliament or a chamber, to preside over sessions and to exercise full administrative powers within the parliament or chamber.
>
> The Speaker discharges their duties impartially and neutrally, manages the floor fairly, provides equal opportunities for all political groups and members to engage in debates, and distributes parliamentary resources equitably.
>
> The Speaker is responsible for enforcing parliament's rules of procedure and codes of conduct, and has the power to call to order and discipline any MP who breaches those rules.
>
> The Speaker enjoys privileged material status, including higher remuneration and a personal apparatus with sufficient members of 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:

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- Provisions of the constitution and/or other aspects of the legal framework defining the mandate, functions and duties of the Speaker

- Provisions of the legal framework or rules of procedure establishing that the role of the Speaker is to coordinate and manage the work of the parliamentary bodies, to manage the overall functioning of parliament or a chamber, to preside over sessions and to exercise full administrative powers within the parliament or chamber

- Provisions of the legal framework or rules of procedure establishing that the Speaker is required to discharge their duties impartially and neutrally

- Provisions of the legal framework or rules of procedure establishing that the Speaker is responsible for enforcing parliament's rules of procedure and code of conduct

- Information about the resources and staff available to the Speaker

- Copies of asset declarations submitted by the Speaker

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

Assessment criterion 1: Legal framework

The legal framework defines the mandate, role, functions and duties of the Speaker, establishes the rules for electing the Speaker and defines the Speaker's term of office.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Role

The legal framework mandates the Speaker to coordinate and manage the work of the parliamentary bodies, to manage the overall functioning of parliament or a chamber, to preside over sessions, and to exercise full administrative powers within the parliament or chamber.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Impartiality

The Speaker is required to discharge their duties impartially and neutrally, to manage the floor fairly, to provide equal opportunities for all political groups and members to engage in debates, and to distribute parliamentary resources equitably.

Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good	Excellent

_____

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Evidence for this assessment criterion:					

Assessment criterion 4: Resources

The Speaker has access to the necessary resources to carry out their mandate, including a personal apparatus with sufficient members of staff.

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.

Sources and further reading

● Georges Bergougnous, *Presiding Officers of National Parliamentary Assemblies* (1997)

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Dimension 1.4.3: Presidium

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.4: Parliamentary organization

- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the provisions defining the composition and mandate of the collective governing body of parliament (the "presidium"). The presidium is typically responsible for organizing the work of parliament, coordinating the work of committees, drafting the agenda for plenary sessions, and deciding on other operational issues of importance.

The presidium is usually representative of the political configuration of parliament, with the majority and minority parties represented. It is generally chaired by the Speaker and often includes the Deputy Speaker(s), the chairs of parliamentary committees and the leaders of political groups. The Secretary General of parliament, though not a formal member of the presidium, usually attends its meetings.

The frequency and timing of presidium meetings differ across parliaments and are often established by parliament's rules of procedure. The frequency of presidium meetings is usually an indicator of its importance.

Presidium meetings may be public – and broadcast and/or live-streamed – or closed. Both practices are observed across countries.

Aspiring goal

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

The constitution and/or other aspects of the legal framework define the composition of the presidium and establish its mandate as the collective governing body of parliament.

The presidium is representative of the political configuration of parliament. It is chaired by the Speaker and includes the Deputy Speaker(s), the chairs of parliamentary committees and the leaders of political groups.

The presidium organizes the work of parliament, coordinates the work of committees, drafts the agenda for plenary sessions and decides on other operational issues of importance.

The frequency and timing of presidium meetings, as well as the openness of its meetings, are established in parliament's rules of procedure.

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 constitution and/or other aspects of the legal framework on the functioning of parliament establishing the composition and mandate of the presidium of parliament

- Provisions of the legal framework or parliament's rules of procedure establishing the representative nature of the presidium

- Provisions of legal framework or parliament's rules of procedure establishing that the presidium
  -is responsible for organizing the work of parliament, coordinating the work of committees,

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drafting the agenda for plenary sessions, and deciding on other operational issues of importance

● Evidence of the frequency and openness of presidium meetings

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

Assessment criterion 1: Legal framework

The legal framework defines the composition of the presidium and establishes its mandate as the collective governing body of parliament.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Composition

The presidium is representative of the political configuration of parliament. It is chaired by the Speaker, and includes the Deputy Speaker(s), the chairs of parliamentary committees and the leaders of all political groups.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Role

The presidium organizes the work of parliament, coordinates the work of committees, drafts the agenda for plenary sessions, and decides on other operational issues of importance.

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

Assessment criterion 4: Transparency

The presidium meets on a regular basis as foreseen in the rules of procedure. Information about its meetings and conclusions are made publicly available.

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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.

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Dimension 1.4.4: Parliamentary committees

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.4: Parliamentary organization
- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the provisions on the powers, functions, composition, governance and procedures of parliamentary committees. A comprehensive system of committees provides accountability and efficiency while ensuring systematic engagement with the public.

The types of committees, as well as their duties and powers, vary from parliament to parliament. Generally, parliamentary committees fall into one of two categories: "standing" (also known as "permanent") and "ad hoc" (also known as "temporary"). In some systems, standing committees review proposed legislation and at the same time oversee the activities of the executive branch. In other cases, law-making and oversight functions are divided between ad hoc and standing committees. In some bicameral systems, both types of committees might include members of one or both chambers.

The distribution of committee chair roles among the parties represented in parliament can differ. In some systems, the party with the majority of seats has the benefit of chairing all committees, while in others, committee chair roles are distributed among the political groups.

The number and size of committees, as well as the frequency of committee meetings, should be clearly regulated by the legal framework or by parliament's rules of procedure.

Committee meetings and documents should be open and accessible to the public, unless there is sufficient justification for a closed meeting to be held.

See also *Indicator 7.3: Composition of parliamentary bodies*.

Aspiring goal

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

Parliament has the authority to establish committees, and to define their powers, functions, composition, governance and procedures.

Parliamentary committees are mandated to review proposals for laws, to obtain information from the executive, to summon government officials, to report to parliament on their findings, and to make recommendations.

Parliament's rules set out clear procedures with regard to committee meetings, such as the time of a meeting, notice of a meeting, the preparation, approval and distribution of the agenda, quorum, chairing, record-keeping, voting and reporting.

Committee meetings are open and accessible to the public, unless there is sufficient justification for a closed meeting to be held. Committee documents, such as agendas, evidence taken by the committee and conclusions of committee meetings, are publicly available.

Parliamentary committees have sufficient administrative capacity, including qualified staff to support MPs in carrying out their law-making and oversight work.

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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 constitution and/or other aspects of the legal framework on the functioning of parliament concerning the establishment and organization of parliamentary committees

● Provisions of parliament's rules of procedure concerning committee meetings

● Provisions of parliament's rules of procedure showing that committee meetings are open and accessible to the public, unless there is sufficient justification for a closed meeting to be held

● An organization chart of committee staff

● Committee reports and recommendations

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

Assessment criterion 1: Legal framework

Parliament has a clear legal mandate to establish committees, and to define their powers, functions, composition, governance and procedures.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Role

Parliamentary committees are mandated to review proposals for laws, to obtain information from the executive, to summon government officials, to report to parliament on their findings, and to make recommendations.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Procedures

Parliament's rules of procedure provide clear guidance with regard to committee meetings, such as the time of a meeting, notice of a meeting, the preparation, approval and distribution of the agenda, quorum, chairing, record-keeping, voting and reporting.

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Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good	Excellent
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Evidence for this assessment criterion:

Assessment criterion 4: Transparency

Committee meetings are open and accessible to the public, unless there is sufficient justification for a closed meeting to be held. Meetings are broadcast, live-streamed and/or recorded for future public access. Committee documents are publicly available.

Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good	Excellent
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Evidence for this assessment criterion:

Assessment criterion 5: Resources

Parliamentary committees are supported by sufficient human, financial and administrative resources, including qualified staff.

Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good	Excellent
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Evidence for this assessment criterion:

Assessment criterion 6: Practice

In practice, committee meetings are held regularly on the basis of a meeting agenda that is duly approved and published. Committees interact with the public in multiple ways. Committee decisions, findings, recommendations and other conclusions are produced and reported to parliament.

Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good	Excellent
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Evidence for this assessment criterion:

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Recommendations for change

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

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Dimension 1.4.5: Political groups

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.4: Parliamentary organization

- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the provisions establishing that MPs are entitled to form political groups within parliament in order to coordinate their activities and achieve shared political goals. The members of a political group typically belong to the same party.

The rules on political groups, including on their formation, on the privileges granted such groups, and on the rights of MPs not belonging to any political group (i.e. independent MPs), vary from parliament to parliament.

Parliamentary rules often identify a minimum number of MPs required to form a political group. The threshold should not be set too high and should not run counter to MPs' right to form such a group. In some parliaments, there may be restrictions on changes within, or transfers between, political groups.

Political groups often have the right to initiate actions such as proceedings, motions and interpellations, as stipulated in parliament's rules of procedure.

Political groups are typically granted specific resources, proportional to that group's representation in parliament. Resources may include access to additional working space, financial and administrative resources, and additional professional and administrative support for their work. The staff of a political group are not part of the parliamentary administration. Political groups are required to account for these additional resources

See also _Dimension 2.1.4: Parliamentary income and use of parliamentary resources_.

Aspiring goal

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

The legal framework clearly establishes the right for MPs to form political groups, and stipulates the rules governing their formation, rights and responsibilities.

Parliament's rules of procedure guarantee the equitable allocation of speaking time to political groups in plenary sessions and debates, and ensure that such groups are represented in parliamentary bodies, including the presidium and committees.

Political groups are granted specific privileges, typically including access to additional working space, financial and administrative resources, and additional professional and administrative support for their work. Political groups must account for these additional resources.

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:

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- Provisions of the constitution, other aspects of the legal framework and/or parliament's rules of procedure on the formation of political groups

- Provisions of the legal framework and/or parliament's rules of procedure guaranteeing additional financial, administrative and human resources for political groups

- Provisions of parliament's rules of procedure ensuring that political groups are represented in parliament's management structures

- Provisions of parliament's rules of procedure guaranteeing the equitable allocation of speaking time to political groups in plenary sessions and debates

- Reports by political groups, possibly including communication by the group with the executive (such as written questions or requests for information), as well as information on the number of hearings or summons of government representatives requested by a political group or its MPs

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

Assessment criterion 1: Legal framework

The legal framework clearly establishes the right for MPs to form political groups, and stipulates the rules governing their formation, rights and responsibilities.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Equitable representation

Parliament's rules of procedure guarantee the equitable allocation of speaking time to political groups in plenary sessions and debates, and ensure that such groups are represented in parliament's management structures, including the presidium and permanent committees.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Resources

The legal framework grants political groups financial and administrative resources to support their functioning. Political groups account publicly for their use of these resources.

Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good	Excellent
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

_____

Evidence for this assessment criterion:

Assessment criterion 4: Practice

In practice, political groups exercise their powers in parliament systematically and rigorously, and all rights prescribed by law or in parliament's rules of procedure, including those on equitable speaking time and access to resources, are duly implemented.

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.

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Dimension 1.4.6. Cross-party groups

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.4: Parliamentary organization

- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the provisions on the establishment and functioning of cross-party groups. Cross-party groups provide an important forum for MPs from different parties to share information, discuss policy issues, channel common concerns and engage with relevant organizations.

Cross-party groups – such as "caucuses", "all-party parliamentary groups" or "inter-parliamentary friendship groups" – bring together MPs from different political parties and, in bicameral systems, from one or both chambers of parliament, to pursue a specific cause or issue. Such groups vary significantly in terms of their objectives, size and operating rules. They can be formal, semi-formal or informal in different systems. Some types of cross-party groups, such as caucuses of women parliamentarians, are found in many parliaments.

Aspiring goal

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

MPs are authorized to establish cross-party groups.

Cross-party groups publish information about their structure, resources and activities. The code of conduct for MPs also applies to the activities of cross-party groups.

Cross-party groups meet regularly and engage with relevant organizations.

Parliament may in some cases provide cross-party groups with administrative support for their activities.

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 establishment and organization of cross-party groups

● Articles from the statutes of cross-party groups on transparency and the ethical conduct of members

● Evidence of the existence of cross-party groups, as well as information about their composition, purpose and term

● Records of cross-party group meetings

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

_____

Assessment criterion 1: Legal framework

The legal framework authorizes MPs to establish cross-party groups or presents no impediment to the establishment of such groups.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Resources

Parliament provides cross-party groups with meeting venues and, in some cases, other resources such as administrative support.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Practice

In practice, cross-party groups have been established in parliament. Cross-party groups meet regularly and interact with relevant organizations, and the public is informed about their work.

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.

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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

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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 assessment criterion:					

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 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 assessment criterion:					

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 assessment criterion:					

Recommendations for change

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

Sources and further reading

- Charles Lusthaus and others, _Organisational Assessment: A Framework for Improving Performance_ (2002)

- Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), _Comparative research paper on parliamentary administration_ (2020)

- IPU, _Putting parliamentary self-development into practice: A Guide to the Common Principles for Support to Parliaments_ (2020)

- United States Agency for International Development (USAID), _Organizational Capacity Assessment_ (2016)

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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.

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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 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 assessment criterion:					

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 assessment criterion:					

Recommendations for change

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

Sources and further reading

- Association of Secretaries General of Parliaments (ASGP), _Principles for recruitment and career management of staff of the parliamentary administration_ (2014)

- Charles Lusthaus and others, _Organisational Assessment: A Framework for Improving Performance_ (2002)

- Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), _Comparative research paper on parliamentary administration_ (2020)

- United States Agency for International Development (USAID), _Organizational Capacity Assessment_ (2016)

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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

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- 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 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 assessment criterion:					

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 assessment criterion:					

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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.

Sources and further reading

- 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)

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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

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☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
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 assessment criterion:					

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 assessment criterion:					

Recommendations for change

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

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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

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- 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:					

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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.

Sources and further reading

● Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), *World e-Parliament Report 2020* (2020)

● IPU, *World e-Parliament Report 2022* (2022)

● IPU, "IPU Innovation Tracker" (quarterly electronic bulletin from the Centre for Innovation in Parliament)

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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.

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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 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 assessment criterion:					

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:					

Sources and further reading

- International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), _Implementing a records management strategy to complement Parliament's knowledge management initiatives_ (2015)

- Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), _Technological Options for Capturing and Reporting Parliamentary Proceedings_ (2014)

- IPU, _World e-Parliament Report 2020_ (2020)

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Indicator 1.6: Law-making

About this indicator

In most jurisdictions, law-making is regarded as parliament's primary function. The principles that underpin law-making are usually set out in the country's constitution and/or other aspects of the legal framework.

This indicator covers all aspects of the law-making function. It includes the processes by which legislation is prepared (legislative drafting), the powers of the various participants in the legislative process to initiate, debate, amend and adopt legislation, and the ordinary procedure by which legislation passes through all stages of parliament, including both houses in bicameral systems. It also includes processes for the fast-tracking of legislation, as well as the necessary protections to ensure proper consideration even when legislation is fast-tracked.

For the purposes of this indicator, arrangements for making and amending the constitution are treated separately from the processing of ordinary laws.

This indicator also covers processes for the promulgation (assent and enactment) of legislation and its publication in the official journal once it has passed through parliament.

Many parliaments have recognized that their role does not end once legislation has been passed, and have therefore introduce processes for post-legislative scrutiny (PLS), including for delegated legislation. These processes are also covered in this indicator.

This indicator comprises the following dimensions:

● Dimension 1.6.1: Powers in law-making

● Dimension 1.6.2: Constitution-making and amendment

● Dimension 1.6.3: Legislative procedure

● Dimension 1.6.4: Legislative drafting

● Dimension 1.6.5: Enactment

● Dimension 1.6.6: Official publication

● Dimension 1.6.7: Post-legislative scrutiny

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Dimension 1.6.1: Powers in law-making

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.6: Law-making

- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the powers of various participants in the legislative process to initiate, debate, amend and adopt legislation. These powers primarily concern MPs although, in some jurisdictions, other participants also have the right to initiate legislation, such as the executive and its agencies, or groups of citizens.

All MPs should have the right to initiate, and propose amendments to, legislation. Reasonable restrictions can be placed on the authority of individual MPs – or, in bicameral systems, a house – to initiate or amend proposals that involve, for example, the spending of public money or the imposition of taxes.

In some countries, these powers may be reserved for the lower house in a bicameral system, or for MPs from parliamentary majority groups or political parties that form the executive. There may also be limits on opportunities to debate proposals for laws or amendments. However, such restrictions should not impose unreasonable limits on MPs' freedom to play a full role in the legislative process.

All legislation, including budgetary legislation, should be approved by parliament before enactment. In some legislatures, different adoption requirements may apply to different forms of legislation. In some cases, only a simple majority of MPs' votes is required, while in others, an absolute majority of MPs' votes (i.e. 50% + 1) is necessary.

In bicameral systems, the same text should have been approved by both houses. In some jurisdictions, there may also be special circumstances where full passage through both houses is not required, with the lower house being able to bypass or override passage through the upper house.

Aspiring goal

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

The constitution clearly establishes the right of all MPs to initiate legislation and to propose amendments to legislation as it passes through parliament. Any restrictions to this right are limited and clearly defined.

The constitution clearly establishes that all legislation, including budgetary legislation, must be approved by parliament before being enacted. This includes approval by both houses in bicameral systems, except where particular restrictions on the upper house are in place.

Parliament puts into practice the constitutional principles relating to MPs' law-making powers, and MPs are empowered to participate in all stages of the legislative process. Particular attention is given to opportunities for participation for opposition and independent MPs in law-making.

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:

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- Provisions of the constitution and/or parliament's rules of procedure concerning the right of MPs to initiate legislation

- Provisions of the constitution and/or parliament's rules of procedure concerning the power of MPs to propose amendments to legislation

- Provisions of the constitution and/or parliament's rules of procedure concerning the adoption of legislation by MPs

- Any practice relating to the initiation of proposals for laws, or the proposal of amendments to legislation, by individual MPs

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

Assessment criterion 1: Right to initiate legislation

The constitution establishes the right of all MPs to initiate legislation in parliament. Any restrictions on this right, such as a requirement for a minimum number of MPs to initiate legislation, or restrictions concerning financial proposals, are limited and clearly defined. The constitution may also permit other participants to initiate legislation, such as the executive and its agencies, or groups of citizens.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Right to propose amendments

The constitution establishes the right of all MPs to propose amendments to legislation as it proceeds through parliament. Any restrictions on this right, such as restrictions concerning financial proposals, are limited and clearly defined.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Approval of legislation

The constitution establishes that all legislation, including budgetary legislation, must be approved by parliament before enactment. This includes approval by both houses in bicameral systems, except where particular restrictions on the upper house are in place.

Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good	Excellent
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

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Evidence for this assessment criterion:

Assessment criterion 4: Practice

In practice, MPs – and, where applicable, other participants – are empowered to participate in all stages of the legislative process. Particular attention is given to opportunities for participation for opposition and independent MPs.

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.

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Dimension 1.6.2: Constitution-making and amendment

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.6: Law-making

- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the process for making and amending the constitution. Constitution-making and amendment are distinct cases of law-making that usually involve special or additional requirements, such as passage by a supermajority of parliament, adoption by a majority of states or provinces in federal systems, and/or public approval.

Most countries have written constitutions that, at the highest level, provide for matters such as the separation of powers between the different branches of government, define the respective powers and responsibilities of the executive, parliament and the judiciary, and address other aspects of a democratic form of government. These constitutions have been adopted and are subject to amendment through processes that vary across jurisdictions.

Since the constitution protects the democratic system as well as minority and other rights, it should not be possible to change it easily, otherwise the protections that it affords could be threatened. Conversely, however, it should not be so difficult to amend that constitutional change is impossible to achieve.

The right to propose constitutional amendments also is significant. In some jurisdictions, the right of initiative rests solely with parliament , i.e. with individual MPs or groups of MPs. In others, different mechanisms for constitutional amendment are also permitted, such as citizen-initiated proposals. Ideally, a range of mechanisms should be available to ensure that the opportunity to initiate change is not restricted.

Aspiring goal

Based on a global comparative analysis, an aspiring goal for parliaments in the area of "constitution-making and amendment" is as follows:

The constitution and/or other aspects of the legal framework establish a range of mechanisms for initiating constitutional amendments, including initiation by MPs and citizen-initiated proposals.

Broad public consultations, with reasonably extensive time frames, are required after the initiation of constitutional amendments.

The constitution and/or other aspects of the legal framework establish that parliament must approve a new constitution or a constitutional amendment, ideally by a supermajority. There may also be other special or additional requirements.

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 constitution and/or other aspects of the legal framework concerning constitution-making and amendment

- Evidence of public consultation on proposals for constitution-making and amendment

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●   Any practice relating to constitution-making and amendment

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

Assessment criterion 1: Initiation of constitutional amendments

The constitution and/or other aspects of the legal framework establish a range of mechanisms for initiating constitutional amendments, including initiation by MPs and citizen-initiated proposals.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Public consultations

Broad public consultations, with reasonably extensive time frames, are undertaken after the initiation of constitutional amendments.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Adoption

The constitution and/or other aspects of the legal framework establish that parliament must approve a new constitution or a constitutional amendment, ideally by a supermajority.

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

Assessment criterion 4: Ease of constitution-making or amendment

In practice, the constitution is not so difficult to amend that constitutional change is impossible to achieve, but not so easy to amend as to threaten its protection of the democratic system as well as minority and other rights.

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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.

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Dimension 1.6.3: Legislative procedure

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.6: Law-making

- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the processes for the passage of legislation, as reflected in the constitution and/or other aspects of the legal framework, and as normally expanded upon in parliament's rules of procedure. These processes should be clear, transparent and understandable, and should allow for the proper consideration and debate of legislation as it progresses through all stages. In bicameral systems, there should be clear, well-understood and accepted procedures set by each house for its own consideration of legislation, as well as clear, accepted and manageable arrangements to allow for the resolution of any differences between the houses.

MPs should have sufficient time and opportunity to reflect on and debate proposals for laws before voting on them. Although practice differs from one parliament to the next, most have least two major stages for the consideration of proposals for laws (sometimes referred to as "readings"): one for debate on the general principles of the proposal for a law, and another when the detail of the proposal for a law is considered and amendments can be proposed and voted on.

For the purposes of this dimension, it is presumed that, at some point in the process, all proposals for laws will be referred to one or more relevant committees for detailed consideration. These committees should have the power either to recommend amendments or to amend the legislation directly. This committee stage allows for direct participation by the public in the legislative process, which should be provided for in parliament's rules of procedure and be reflected in its practice, with sufficient time allowed for public consultation.

In some circumstances, parliament may need to pass legislation more quickly than the routine process allows, such as in response to a natural disaster, pandemic or act of terrorism, or to an adverse court judgment. Under this fast-track procedure – also known an "expedited" or "urgent" procedure – the legislation passes through all the usual stages, but with an expedited timetable. While the urgency may be justifiable, the procedure should still allow for proper parliamentary scrutiny to the extent possible.

This dimension also covers the consideration of delegated legislation, which parliament should have the opportunity to scrutinize, debate, and approve or reject.

Aspiring goal

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

The legal framework contains clear provisions on the passage of legislation through all stages in parliament.

Parliament has sufficient time and opportunity to properly consider and debate proposals for laws.

As part of the ordinary legislative process, all proposals for laws are referred to one or more relevant committees for detailed consideration and amendment. This process also includes expert and public consultations.

Where there is a fast-tracking procedure for the urgent consideration of legislation, such procedure includes a requirement to justify the need for urgent consideration, as well as opportunities for MPs to debate, amend and vote on the urgent legislation, and for reasonable scrutiny of such legislation.

Delegated legislation is made in accordance with the powers defined by the legal framework, which establishes that parliament has the opportunity to scrutinize, debate, and approve or reject such legislation.

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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 constitution, other aspects of the legal framework and/or parliament's rules of procedure concerning the passage of legislation through parliament, including through both houses in bicameral systems

● Statistics on the passage of legislation through parliament in practice, such as time spent considering legislation and the numbers of amendments proposed and voted on

● Any practice relating to the resolution of legislative differences between the houses in bicameral systems

● Practice of committees in the scrutiny of legislation, including statistics on public participation (such as the number of submissions or hearings) and the number of proposals for amendment

● Evidence of parliamentary scrutiny of impact assessments accompanying legislation

● Statistics on the use of fast-track procedures by parliament

● Practice relating to parliament's consideration of delegated legislation

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

Assessment criterion 1: Clear provisions for the passage of legislation

The legal framework sets out clear provisions for the passage of legislation through parliament, including through both houses in bicameral systems. The procedures provide mechanisms for the resolution of differences between the houses in bicameral systems.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Ordinary procedure

The legal framework provides for the use of ordinary legislative procedure as a rule. This procedure includes, as a minimum, general debate on legislation with reasonable time allocated to MPs to prepare and participate in the debate, and opportunities to consider the details of legislation and to propose and vote on amendments.

Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good	Excellent
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

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Evidence for this assessment criterion:

Assessment criterion 3: Committee stage

As part of the ordinary procedure, all proposals for laws are referred to one or more relevant committees for detailed consideration and amendment. This committee stage also includes expert and public consultations.

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

Assessment criterion 4: Fast-track procedure

Where there is a fast-track procedure for the urgent consideration of legislation, such procedure provides MPs with the opportunity to debate, amend and vote on the urgent legislation, and for reasonable scrutiny mechanisms, such as inserting obligatory post-legislative scrutiny after a period of time, or using sunset clauses.

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

Assessment criterion 5: Use of ordinary versus fast-track procedures

In practice, most legislation is subject to ordinary procedure and parliament does not unduly rely on the use of fast-track procedure.

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

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Assessment criterion 6: Scrutiny of delegated legislation

The constitution, other aspects of the legal framework and/or parliament's rules of procedure establish that parliament has the opportunity to scrutinize, debate, and approve or reject delegated legislation.

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.

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Dimension 1.6.4: Legislative drafting

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.6: Law-making
- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the principles of legislative drafting as they apply to all proposals for laws tabled in parliament, as well as to amendments to existing laws, delegated legislation and other legislative instruments.

Legislation should be drafted in a way that is clear, viable and consistent with the existing legal framework. Good legislative drafting provides legal certainty and equality before the law, ensuring that citizens and others who might be impacted by a proposal for a law can understand the rights and obligations it establishes. It makes clear the spirit and intent of legislation, avoids any misinterpretation, loopholes and conflicting provisions, and helps MPs properly consider and debate proposals for laws as they progress through parliament.

In many cases, the executive will have access to a specialist legislative drafting office or service. It is important that legislative drafting resources are also available to MPs and political groups, including to opposition, minority-party and independent MPs, in order to help them prepare proposals for laws to be tabled in parliament.

Proposals for laws should be drafted in clear, precise and plain language, with no unnecessary jargon or expressions. Drafters should aim to ensure that citizens and others who might be impacted by a proposal for a law can understand the rights and obligations it establishes. Legislative drafts should use gender-neutral language wherever possible.

Aspiring goal

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

Guidance for clear and effective legislative drafting is set out in a manual or similar document, and is followed in the drafting of all proposals for laws tabled in parliament.

Before drafting a proposal for a law, legislative drafters analyse the proposal, including its practical implications, the scope and content of existing legislation on the same subject, and its respect for fundamental rights and public liberties. The analysis may also consider the necessity of a proposal for a law, its potential adverse implications, its effectiveness, and the balance of cost and benefits.

This analysis is documented in the form of explanatory notes accompanying the proposal for a law and in a regulatory impact assessment.

There is a standard structure for proposals for laws, which ensures a high level of consistency with the existing legal framework. The content of proposals for laws is homogeneous and arranged in a logical order, so that later provisions can build upon earlier ones.

Proposals for laws are drafted in clear, precise and plain language, with no unnecessary jargon or expressions, in order to ensure legal certainty and equality before the law. Legislative drafts use gender-neutral language wherever possible.

Legislation is amended in a logical order and a coherent manner. Amendments are made in the form of text inserted into the amended legislation. Amending acts follow the structure and terminology of the existing legislation.

Specialist legislative drafting resources are available to all MPs and political groups, including to opposition, minority-party and independent MPs.

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Assessmen

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:

● Drafting manuals, guidance and other documents

● Preliminary rationales for proposals for laws, as well as reports and impact assessments

● Evidence that legislative drafting resources, including specialists, are available to MPs

● Existing legislation, proposals for laws, amending acts, delegated legislation and other legislative instruments

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

Assessment criterion 1: Guidance

Guidance for clear and effective legislative drafting is set out in a manual or similar document.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Analysis of legislative proposals

An analysis of the proposal for a law is documented, for instance in the form of explanatory notes accompanying the proposal, including the proposal's practical implications, the scope and content of existing legislation on the same subject, and its respect for fundamental rights and public liberties.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Clear and plain language

Legislation is drafted in clear and plain language. Ambiguity, vagueness, contradictions and over-generality within the text and regarding other laws are avoided. Gender-neutral language is used wherever possible.

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

Assessment criterion 4: Amendment of existing legislation

Proposals for laws that amend existing legislation follow the structure and terminology of the existing legislation. Amendments are made in a logical order in the form of text inserted into the amended legislation.

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

Assessment criterion 5: Drafting resources

Specialist legislative drafting resources are available to all MPs and political groups, including to opposition, minority-party and independent MPs.

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.

Sources and further reading

- European Union (EU), _Joint Practical Guide of the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission for persons involved in the drafting of European Union legislation_ (2015).

- Piedad García-Escudero Márquez, _Manual de técnica legislativa_ (Cizur Menor: Thomson Reuters-Civitas, 2011).

- Maria Mousmouti, _Designing Effective Legislation_ (2019).

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- New Zealand Parliamentary Counsel Office (PCO), "Principles of clear drafting".
- United Kingdom Office of the Parliamentary Counsel (OPC), "Drafting Guidance" (2020).
- Helen Xanthaki, *Thornton's Legislative Drafting* (2022).

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Dimension 1.6.5: Enactment

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.6: Law-making

- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the provisions by which a proposal for a law that has gone through all stages of the legislative process and been approved by parliament finally becomes law. In most countries, proposals for laws adopted by parliament require the consent of, or signature by, the Head of State in order enter into force – a process known as "promulgation".

In some jurisdictions, the constitution gives the Head of State the power to refuse to give assent to, or to veto, a law approved by parliament. Where a Head of State can veto legislation, parliament usually has the power to override this veto. Different jurisdictions provide different grounds for applying veto powers, as well as different levels of complexity for overriding them.

The nature of the power to refuse to give assent to, or to veto, a piece of legislation also varies. In some cases, assent by the Head of State is a formality, whereas in others, the Head of State has the authority to prevent legislation from being enacted, and even to propose specific amendments to a proposal for a law.

Overriding a veto normally requires a supermajority vote in parliament. The relevant procedure is typically prescribed in the constitution. In systems where the Head of State has the authority to propose specific amendments to the law, as a rule, parliament is allowed to approve the proposal for a law by ordinary majority if the proposed amendments are fully adopted.

Constitutions usually provide for a special procedure and timeline for the promulgation of laws, which can include the number of days for submitting the adopted proposal for a law to the Head of State, the number of days for signing the proposal for a law or imposing a veto, and arrangements for proposing amendments to parliament. The detailed procedures for overriding a veto should also be outlined in the constitution and/or in other aspects of the legal framework.

Aspiring goal

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

The constitution establishes clear procedures for the promulgation of a law after the proposal for a law has been approved by parliament.

If the Head of State has the authority to refuse or withhold assent, parliament is constitutionally authorized to override the veto.

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 constitution and/or other aspects of the legal framework concerning the enactment of laws, including signature and promulgation

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- Provisions of parliament's rules of procedures concerning the procedures and timelines for the submission of passed proposals for laws to the Head of State for signature

- Other parliamentary and committee rules of procedure concerning the overriding of a veto by the Head of State

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

Assessment criterion 1: Procedure for the promulgation of laws

The constitution establishes a clear procedure for the promulgation of laws that have been approved by parliament.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Veto powers

Where the Head of State has the power to veto legislation or propose amendments, the grounds on which such veto power might be exercised, and the scope of such veto power, are clearly established.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Overriding a veto

Where the Head of State has the power to veto legislation or propose amendments, parliament has the power to override the veto with a larger-than-usual majority.

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

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Recommendations for change

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

Sources and further reading

- Elliot Bulmer, _Presidential Veto Powers: International IDEA Constitution-Building Primer 14_ (2017).

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Dimension 1.6.6: Official publication

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.6: Law-making

- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the provisions by which laws are officially published and made available to any interested party. Open and effective access to laws is vital to understanding and applying the rule of law. Laws can only be properly implemented if they are accessible, predictable and clear.

Citizens are more likely to comply with laws that they know and understand. If people have efficient, effective and free access to laws, they are better positioned to exercise their legal rights, plan their actions, and efficiently resolve any problems and disputes that may arise.

Current laws should be freely and easily accessible, including through publication in official journals/gazettes. In recent times, standards in this area have evolved to include online access to updated, accessible and searchable information.

Laws should be published proactively and should be accessible in a consolidated version, including any amendments passed by parliament, so that citizens can track their progress. Alongside the text of laws, it is reasonable to expect the publication of explanatory notes and MPs' rationale for the adoption or amendment of pieces of legislation, so that citizens can fully grasp the intention and meaning of the legislation in question.

Aspiring goal

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

The legal framework outlines the rules on the official publication of legislation approved by parliament, including the procedure and timeline between its passage and publication.

The legal framework provides for full and effective access to an official collection of laws that is comprehensive, free of charge and up to date.

The official collection of laws is searchable online, and organized by category, type, date, geographic region, agency, legislative area and sector.

Amendments to legislation are published in a consolidated version, allowing users to access full and up-to-date versions of laws.

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 constitution, other aspects of the legal framework and/or parliament's rules of procedure concerning the publication of laws

- Official journals/gazettes and/or a unified website or registry where laws are published

- Consolidated versions of laws published on an official website or in an official journal/gazette

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

Assessment criterion 1: Legal framework

The legal framework outlines the rules on the official publication of legislation, including the procedure and timeline between its passage and publication. Laws only become effective once they have been officially published.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Central registry

There is an official collection of laws, which is comprehensive and up to date, and can be accessed online by the public free of charge.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Consolidated versions of laws

Amendments to existing laws are published in a consolidated version of the law, allowing users to access the complete text and to easily identify the amendments.

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.

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Sources and further reading

- Renzo Falla Lopez and Valentina Saltane, _Regulatory Governance in the Open Government Partnership_, Open Government Partnership and World Bank (2020).

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Dimension 1.6.7: Post-legislative scrutiny

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.6: Law-making

- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the provisions by which parliament has the authority to carry out post-legislative scrutiny (PLS), which is an important tool for ensuring that laws are implemented effectively and their impact assessed. It also helps to review the interpretation and application of a given piece of legislation by courts, and to understand how legal practitioners and citizens apply its provisions. PLS therefore contributes to the identification of legislative gaps and shortcomings in the application of legislation, and to the promotion of targeted and evidence-led law-making. PLS also enables MPs to review secondary/delegated legislation, thus ensuring more comprehensive scrutiny of the implementation of laws.

PLS can be an inclusive process that invites input from political parties, academia, experts and civil society. This type of engagement enables parliament to access additional sources of information, increases the credibility of parliamentary work, and promotes public trust in the institution.

For the purposes of transparency, clarity and predictability, parliament's rules of procedure should provide for the systematic monitoring of the implementation and consequences of legislation. They should establish the parliamentary bodies responsible for carrying out PLS, identify when PLS should be conducted, and enable parliament to allocate the necessary human, financial and administrative resources to this process.

Even when there are no specific procedures for conducting PLS, parliament should still be capable, within its general oversight mandate, of overseeing the implementation of legislation through the provision of timely access to governmental information, the conduct of hearings, the collection of information from relevant sources, and the issuing of findings and recommendations.

Aspiring goal

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

There is a legal framework for PLS. The relevant provisions identify the parliamentary bodies that conduct PLS, their mandates, mechanisms for the selection of legislation to be reviewed, and the methodology by which the PLS process is conducted.

PLS is an established part of the legislative and/or oversight process, and is conducted regularly.

Parliament has the necessary human, financial and administrative resources to conduct PLS, including trained and skilled staff.

PLS is an inclusive process that invites input from political parties, academia, experts and civil society. Laws to be reviewed under the PLS process are selected via an inclusive and non-partisan process.

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:

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- Provisions of the constitution, other aspects of the legal framework and/or parliament's rules of procedure establishing the rules for the PLS process

- The availability of trained committee personnel, and administrative and financial resources to carry out PLS

- PLS reports and recommendations issued by committees and/or dedicated bodies

- Monitoring reports on the implementation of PLS recommendations

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

Assessment criterion 1: Legal framework

There is a legal framework for PLS.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Practice

PLS is an established part of the legislative and/or oversight process.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Resources

Parliament has the necessary human, financial and administrative resources to conduct PLS, including trained and skilled staff.

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

Assessment criterion 4: Inclusiveness

PLS is an inclusive process that invites input from political parties, academia, experts and civil society.

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

Assessment criterion 5: Follow-up

Committees and/or other parliamentary bodies conducting PLS regularly interact with the executive and other stakeholders in order monitor the implementation of PLS recommendations.

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.

Sources and further reading:

- Franklin De Vrieze, *Principles of Post-Legislative Scrutiny by Parliaments*, Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) (2018).

- Franklin De Vrieze, *Post-Legislative Scrutiny in Europe*, WFD (2020).

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Indicator 1.7: Oversight

About this indicator

Parliamentary oversight is one of the core functions of parliament. Its aims are to promote people's freedoms and well-being, and to improve accountability and transparency in government.

Oversight processes assess the impact of government action on society, help ensure that appropriate resources are provided to implement government programmes, identify unintended or negative effects of government policy and actions, and monitor the meeting of national and international commitments.

Parliamentary oversight should be rigorous, systematic, constructive, transparent and evidence-based, and carried out with the participation of relevant bodies, organizations and the wider public.

This indicator comprises the following dimensions:

●   Dimension 1.7.1: Election and dismissal of the executive

●   Dimension 1.7.2: Access to information from the executive

●   Dimension 1.7.3: Summoning the executive in committee

●   Dimension 1.7.4: Summoning the executive in plenary

●   Dimension 1.7.5: Questions

●   Dimension 1.7.6: Hearings

●   Dimension 1.7.7: Parliamentary committees of inquiry

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Dimension 1.7.1: Election and dismissal of the executive

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.7: Oversight

- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns three key parliamentary powers relating to the election and dismissal of the executive, namely:

- to elect a Head of State/Government
- to hold a vote of confidence in the executive
- to censure or impeach a Head of State/Government and/or ministers.

Various political systems provide for different mandates for parliaments with regard to these powers. The mandate of parliament is typically defined in the constitution and further developed in laws and in parliament's rules of procedure.

In some countries, parliament may play a direct role in electing the Heads of State/Government, while in others parliament has a limited or no role in the process. The meaning of "vote of confidence in the executive" also varies across political systems, for the purposes of this dimension, it refers to parliament's power to withdraw confidence if it considers that the executive as a whole, or some of its members, are failing to carry out their duties.

In parliamentary systems, the executive's tenure usually depends on the continued support of parliament, which therefore has the power to bring down the executive by a vote of no confidence where necessary. In such systems, there should be clear criteria and rules on the nomination of candidates for Head of State/Government and members of cabinet, proceedings for the debate of a proposed government programme and the composition of the cabinet, related deadlines, and the minimum quorum necessary for gaining parliamentary confidence in the executive.

In presidential systems, the directly elected Head of State/Government is still accountable to citizens between elections. Parliament usually has the power to approve ministers and cabinet members individually, and there should be clear rules for the submission of candidates for approval, hearing procedures and a minimal quorum for final decision. Parliament typically also has mechanisms to impeach the Head of State/Government and/or ministers for breaches of their constitutional duty or for unlawful conduct.

Regardless of the specifics of each country, it is important that parliamentary powers in these areas be clearly set out in the legal framework, and that procedures are clearly defined and consistently applied in practice.

Aspiring goal

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

The constitution clearly establishes the mandate of parliament concerning its powers:

- to elect the Head of State/Government
- to hold a vote of confidence in the executive
- to censure or impeach the Head of State/Government and/or ministers

The procedure for applying these powers is clearly established in law and in practice.

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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 constitution and/or other aspects of the legal framework relating to the procedures for electing the Head of State/Government, for holding a vote of confidence in the executive, and for censuring or impeaching the Head of State/Government and/or ministers

- Provisions of parliament's rules of procedure relating to the procedures for electing the Head of State/Government, for holding a vote of confidence in the executive, and for censuring or impeaching the Head of State/Government and/or ministers

- Examples of decisions by parliament or its committees relating to confidence or no confidence in the executive, and to the censure or impeachment of the Head of State/Government and/or ministers

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

Assessment criterion 1: Election of the Head of State/Government

The constitution lays down clear criteria and rules for the election of the Head of State/Government and, where relevant, the role that parliament plays in this election.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Votes of confidence in the executive

In systems where the executive requires parliamentary confidence in order to govern, the legal framework lays down clear rules and criteria for the establishment of such confidence. In systems not based on parliamentary confidence, parliament approves ministers and cabinet members individually.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Censure or impeachment of the executive

Parliament has the power to remove the Head of State/Government and/or ministers for breaches of their constitutional duty or for unlawful conduct through processes of censure or impeachment. The

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rules and criteria for such processes are clearly set out in the legal framework and in parliament's rules of procedure.

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

Assessment criterion 4: Practice

In practice, the procedures for electing the Head of State/Government, for holding a vote of confidence in the executive, and for censuring or impeaching the Head of State/Government and/or ministers are applied consistently and in accordance with the relevant provisions of the constitution and other aspects of the legal framework.

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.

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Dimension 1.7.2: Access to information from the executive

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.7: Oversight
- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the legal authority of parliament, parliamentary committees and individuals MPs to obtain information from the executive as part of parliament's oversight duties.

The legal framework and/or parliament's rules of procedure should establish clear and effective procedures and specific timelines for obtaining information from the executive, including through mechanisms such as:

- question time in the plenary,
- the provision of information to parliamentary committees or of written responses to individual MPs
- the submission of questions or letters to the executive
- fact-finding visits to government institutions and other sites for oversight purposes.

In some cases, the legal framework may prescribe rules that limit access to classified information, such as state secrets from the military, security and intelligence services. In these cases, requests for classified information may be limited to a special committee or to individual MPs who have the necessary security clearances or authority to oversee these areas. Any such limitations should be precisely defined by law.

In some systems, the failure of a minister to provide information when requested by parliament may constitute grounds for censure or impeachment, or be considered a breach of privilege.

Aspiring goal

Based on a global comparative analysis, an aspiring goal for parliaments in the area of "access to information from the executive" is as follows:

The legal framework authorizes parliament, parliamentary committees and individual MPs to obtain information, including classified information, from the executive. Ministers are legally obliged to provide such information in full and in a timely manner.

There are clear and effective procedures and specific timelines for obtaining information from the executive. These procedures are applied rigorously and systematically in practice.

Parliament has a designated committee or other body tasked with monitoring the executive's compliance with these legal requirements and procedures and for keeping track of matters such as delays, failures to submit information and justifications for delays.

Where a minister or other representative of the executive systematically fails to provide information when requested by parliament, this may constitute grounds for censure or impeachment, or lead to other forms of parliamentary action.

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:

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- Provisions of the constitution and/or other aspects of the legal framework relating to parliamentary access to information from the executive

- Provisions of parliament's rules of procedure laying down the procedures for the submission of information requests to the executive, as well as timelines and procedures by which government agencies should respond to such requests

- Provisions of the legal framework relating to the legal or political action that may be taken against a representative of the executive for systematically failing to provide information to parliament

- Parliamentary or committee reports on parliamentary access to information from the executive, possibly including the number of requests submitted, the number of timely and full responses, and the number of delayed responses and justifications for delays.

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

Assessment criterion 1: Legal framework

The constitution and/or other aspects of the legal framework authorize parliament, its committees and individual MPs to obtain information from the executive and establish the obligation for ministers to provide such information in full and in a timely manner.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Procedures

Parliament's rules of procedure establish clear and effective procedures and specific timelines for obtaining information from the executive. These procedures are applied rigorously and systematically in practice.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Classified information

Special procedures are in place regarding access to classified information. Any limitations on access to classified information, such as State secrets from the military, security and intelligence services, are precisely defined by law.

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

Assessment criterion 4: Executive compliance with requests for information

Parliament has a designated committee or other body tasked with monitoring the executive's compliance with these legal requirements and procedures and for keeping track of matters such as delays, failures to submit information and justifications for delays.

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

Assessment criterion 5: Failure to provide information

The constitution and/or other aspects of the legal framework establish that ministers or other government representatives are to be held to account for systematically failing to provide information to parliament or to MPs. Such a failure may constitute grounds for censure or impeachment, or lead to other forms of parliamentary action.

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.

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Dimension 1.7.3: Summoning the executive in committee

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.7: Oversight
- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns parliament's authority to summon representatives of the executive to appear before parliamentary committees. This power is important for parliament's role in scrutinizing the effectiveness and efficiency of the executive, as well as in verifying the compliance of its actions with relevant policies and laws.

Parliament should have the authority to summon ministers, as well as senior officials of the administration, and of the military, law enforcement and intelligence services. When ministers are summoned, they should be obliged to appear in person rather than to send staff members in their place.

The procedures for summoning representatives of the executive are normally laid down in parliament's rules of procedure. These procedures should provide for specific rights for the opposition.

It is important that committees have sufficient resources and expert staff to assist with the process of summoning representatives of the executive. This includes gathering evidence and information from a wide range of sources in order to enhance the effectiveness of oversight and questioning of representatives of the executive.

See also _Dimension 1.7.4: Summoning the executive in plenary_.

Aspiring goal

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

The legal framework establishes the authority of parliament and its committees to summon representatives of the executive to appear before committees. This includes the power to summon ministers, as well as senior officials of the administration, and of the military, law enforcement and intelligence services.

Parliament's rules of procedure lay down the procedures for summoning representatives of the executive, and provide specific rights for the opposition.

Committees have sufficient resources and expert staff to assist with the process of summoning representatives of the executive. Committees gather evidence and information from a wide range of sources in order to enhance the effectiveness of oversight and questioning.

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 establishing the authority of parliament to summon representatives of the executive, including members of cabinet, and senior officials of the military, law enforcement and intelligence services, to appear before committees

- Provisions of parliament's rules of procedure laying down the procedures for summoning representatives of the executive

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- Committee records/reports on the summoning of representatives of the executive
- Committee records on information and evidence gathered prior to the summoning of representatives of the executive
- The percentage of committee meetings addressing the summoning of officials per year

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

Assessment criterion 1: Legal framework

The legal framework clearly establishes the authority of parliament to summon representatives of the executive to appear before committees. This includes members of cabinet, as well as senior officials of the administration, and of the military, law enforcement and intelligence services.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Procedures

Parliament's rules of procedure lay down the procedures for summoning representatives of the executive, and provide specific rights for the opposition.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Resources

Committees have sufficient resources and expert staff to assist with the process of summoning representatives of the executive. Committees gather evidence and information from a wide range of sources in order to enhance the effectiveness of oversight and questioning.

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

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Assessment criterion 4: Practice

In practice, parliament consistently summons representatives of the executive, who appear before committees when invited and provide full and timely information to the committee.

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.

Sources and further reading

- Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), *Global Parliamentary Report 2017 – Parliamentary oversight: Parliament's power to hold government to account* (2017).

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Dimension 1.7.4: Summoning the executive in plenary

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.7: Oversight
- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the authority of parliament to summon representatives of the executive, including the prime minister, ministers and other representatives of the executive, to appear in the plenary. This process is often known as "interpellation" and can involve deliberation on their possible dismissal from the government.

Interpellation is a powerful tool that enables parliament and MPs to publicly express their opinions and conduct effective oversight. Interpellations are usually written requests for information from the executive by a group of MPs or a political group, with the intention of launching a debate. After a motion on interpellation has been submitted, representatives of the executive are required to respond to the request or question in person in the plenary. Interpellations almost always address matters of national importance.

The legal framework should establish clear procedures for summoning representatives of the executive in plenary, including the initiation of interpellations, the associated time frame, and guaranteed speaking time for the opposition. The number of MPs required to launch an interpellation procedure varies from one country to another.

Following an interpellation, parliament may take actions such as a censure motion, or a resolution expressing parliament's opinion on the subject of the debate. Such debates may even result in a no-confidence motion seeking a political sanction.

See also _Dimension 1.7.3: Summoning the executive in committee_

Aspiring goal

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

The legal framework authorizes parliament to summon representatives of the executive to appear in the plenary. Representatives of the executive are legally required to respond to an interpellation in person in the plenary.

Parliament's rules of procedures establish the procedure for interpellations, including the number of MPs required to launch an interpellation and the possible results of the process.

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 constitution and/or other aspects of the legal framework on the summoning of representatives of the executive to appear in the plenary

- The percentage of plenary time that parliament devotes to interpellations versus other activities

- Examples of motions on the initiation of interpellations

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- The number of times cabinet members appear in the plenary during the year for interpellation or summons

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

Assessment criterion 1: Legal framework

The legal framework authorizes parliament to summon representatives of the executive to appear in the plenary. Representatives of the executive are legally required to respond to an interpellation in person in the plenary.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Procedures

Parliament's rules of procedure establish the procedure for interpellations, including the number of MPs required to launch an interpellation and the possible results of the process.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Practice

In practice, parliament makes use of the interpellation procedure and representatives of the executive appear in the plenary when requested to do so.

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

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Recommendations for change

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

Sources and further reading

● Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), *Global Parliamentary Report 2017 – Parliamentary oversight: Parliament's power to hold government to account* (2017).

● Hironori Yamamoto, *Tools for parliamentary oversight: A comparative study of 88 national parliaments* (2007).

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Dimension 1.7.5: Questions

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.7: Oversight
- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the authority of MPs to submit oral and written questions to the prime minister, ministers and other representatives of the executive, and to receive answers to those questions.

Oral questions allow MPs to publicly address representatives of the executive with regard to politically acute topics. Dedicated sessions for oral questions, known as "question time", "prime minister's hour" or "ministers' hour", regularly take place in many parliaments. During these sessions, MPs should also be allowed to ask supplementary questions where the initial response is incomplete or in order to seek clarification.

The Speaker plays a significant role during oral questions, by maintaining the balance among political parties, managing the floor and setting a constructive tone of debate. Parliament's rules of procedure should provide the Speaker with the necessary powers to exercise this responsibility.

Written questions, meanwhile, are a useful tool for gathering detailed information that may not otherwise be available. Parliament's rules of procedure should provide guidance on submitting written questions, as well as deadlines for providing answers and possible sanctions for breaching the obligation to respond.

The meaning of the term "written question" varies across countries. It usually refers to questions submitted in writing that require written answers, though some parliaments allow the authors of written questions to request either written or oral answers. MPs can also ask the executive to provide oral answers to written questions that remain unanswered. In some cases, unanswered questions become the subject of interpellations

See also _Dimension 1.4.2: Speaker_ and _Dimension 1.7.4: Summoning the executive in plenary_.

Aspiring goal

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

The legal framework authorizes MPs to submit both oral and written questions to the executive and its representatives, which are required to respond to these questions in a full and timely manner or face sanctions.

Parliament's rules of procedure provide for dedicated sessions for oral questions. MPs can ask supplementary questions where the initial response is incomplete or in order to seek clarification.

Parliament's rules of procedure provide the Speaker with the necessary powers to maintain the balance among political parties during oral questions, to manage the floor and to set a constructive tone of debate.

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:

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- Provisions of the legal framework authorizing MPs to submit oral and written questions to the executive and requiring the executive to respond to such questions

- Provisions of parliament's rules of procedure providing for dedicated sessions for oral questions, establishing the timeline for responding to written questions, and laying down sanctions for breaching the obligation to respond

- The percentage of time that parliament devotes to oral questions versus other oversight activities

- Reports on the percentage of full and timely responses to MPs' questions by representatives of the executive

- Evidence from the parliamentary records

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

Assessment criterion 1: Legal framework

The legal framework authorizes MPs to submit both oral and written questions to the executive and its representatives, which are required to respond to these questions in a full and timely manner or face sanctions.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Procedures

Parliament's rules of procedure set out detailed procedures for the submission of both oral and written questions to representatives of the executive, authorize MPs to ask supplementary questions, and provide the Speaker with the necessary powers to manage the floor effectively during oral questions.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Practice

In practice, the submission of both oral and written questions to representatives of the executive is a permanent part of parliamentary life. The procedures are applied consistently and effectively. Representatives of the executive respond in full and in a timely manner to both written and oral questions.

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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.

Sources and further reading

- Hironori Yamamoto, *Tools for parliamentary oversight: A comparative study of 88 national parliaments* (2007).

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Dimension 1.7.6: Hearings

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.7: Oversight
- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the provisions and practices relating to the holding of committee hearings. Hearings are a very important way for parliamentary committees to gather information on a topic, to obtain data and opinions, to seek evidence from a wide range of individuals and, therefore, to inform the legislative process and exercise oversight of the executive's policies and actions.

Hearings are one of the most common forms of public engagement in the work of parliament. They provide an opportunity for individuals and groups of citizens to contribute written and oral evidence.

Committee hearings are typically held on the parliamentary premises, and in many parliaments can also be held outside parliament. In principle, hearings should be open to the public, and any exceptions to this rule – such as a valid need to hear confidential evidence – should be clearly defined in parliament's rules of procedure. Committee hearings are increasingly being broadcast, for example through the parliamentary website.

There should be clear rules and procedures on the planning and organization of hearings, covering matters such as notice of hearings, the preparation, approval and distribution of the agenda, quorum, chairing, recording and voting. It is also important that the results of committee hearings are properly documented – ideally published as a transcript – and that the committee's decisions, findings, recommendations and other conclusions resulting from the hearing are made public.

Parliamentary staff should support the organization of committee hearings, including by seeking evidence from a wide range of sources.

Aspiring goal

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

The legal framework establishes the mandate of parliamentary committees to conduct hearings, both on the parliamentary premises and outside parliament.

There are clear rules and procedures on the planning and organization of committee hearings. Committee hearings are prepared with the assistance of parliamentary staff and take evidence from a wide range of sources.

Committee hearings are open to the public in principle, and any exceptions to this rule are clearly defined. Where possible, committee hearings are broadcast through the parliamentary website.

The results of committee hearings are properly documented and the committee's conclusions resulting from such hearings are made public.

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 relating to the holding of committee hearings

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- Provisions of parliament's rules of procedure relating to the planning and organization of committee hearings, covering matters such as notice of hearings, the preparation, approval and distribution of the agenda, quorum, chairing, recording and voting
- Committee reports on hearings

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

Assessment criterion 1: Legal framework

The legal framework establishes the mandate of parliamentary committees to conduct hearings, both on the parliamentary premises and outside parliament.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Procedures

Parliament has clear rules and procedures on the planning and organization of committee hearings, and on the production of committee reports.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Openness

Committee hearings are open to the public in principle, and any exceptions to this rule are clearly defined. Where possible, committee hearings are broadcast through the parliamentary website.

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

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Assessment criterion 4: Practice

In practice, parliament rigorously and systematically conducts committee hearings and takes evidence from a wide range of sources. These hearings are open to the public unless there is a legitimate reason to close the meeting. The conclusions and results of committee hearings are documented and published.

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.

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Dimension 1.7.7: Parliamentary committees of inquiry

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.7: Oversight
- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concern's parliament's powers to inquire into an issue independently by setting up a parliamentary committee of inquiry (PCI) – a specific fact-finding process that typically aims to investigate possible maladministration, misconduct or policy failure by the executive.

The rules governing PCIs vary considerably across parliaments. They are typically conducted by permanent committees, or by ad hoc committees specifically mandated to conduct a particular investigation within a predefined scope. PCIs may conduct fairly intense investigations over a relatively short period of time. They can potentially reveal facts that may be uncomfortable for the executive, hold senior representatives of the executive, including cabinet ministers, accountable for their actions, and even lead to impeachment. A PCI usually ceases to function upon submission of its final report.

PCIs should be able to summon officials and/or private individuals, as well as obtain written and oral evidence, and information and documentation, from governmental, judicial, administrative and private institutions.

The legal framework should not contain excessive barriers to the launching of an inquiry. Political participation in such PCIs should be proportional to political representation in parliament, and the role of the opposition should be guaranteed by law.

Parliamentary staff should support PCIs in carrying out their inquiry.

Aspiring goal

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

The legal framework and/or parliament's rules of procedure contain clear provisions on the establishment of PCIs, and on the related procedures.

PCIs have the power to summon officials and/or private individuals, to obtain written and oral evidence, as well as information and documentation, from governmental, judicial, administrative and private institutions, to conduct hearings, and to issue findings and recommendations.

Political participation in PCIs is proportional to political representation in parliament, and the role of the opposition is guaranteed by law.

PCIs have the trained personnel and administrative and financial resources necessary to support the process.

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 and/or parliament's rules of procedure relating to the establishment of PCIs

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- Provisions of the legal framework and/or parliament's rules of procedure guaranteeing the proportional participation of political groups in PCIs

- Provisions of the legal framework establishing a legal responsibility to appear before a PCI, as well as sanctions for the unlawful refusal to appear before a PCI and to provide information

- PCI reports and recommendations

- Details of the trained personnel and administrative and financial resources available to support the conduct of PCIs

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

Assessment criterion 1: Legal framework

The legal framework and/or parliament's rules of procedure contain clear provisions on the establishment of PCIs.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Powers

PCIs have the power to summon officials and/or private individuals, to obtain written and oral evidence, as well as information and documentation, from governmental, judicial, administrative and private institutions, to conduct hearings, and to issue findings and recommendations.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Participation

Political participation in PCIs is proportional to political representation in parliament, and the role of the opposition is guaranteed by law. PCIs are open to the public, except in clearly defined exceptional circumstances.

Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good	Excellent
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

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> Evidence for this assessment criterion:

Assessment criterion 4: Resources

PCIs have the trained personnel and administrative and financial resources necessary to support the process.

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

Assessment criterion 5: Practice

In practice, parliament sets up PCIs to investigate possible maladministration, misconduct or policy failure by the executive. PCIs are able to carry out their inquiry with the full cooperation of the relevant authorities. The findings of PCIs result in representatives of the executive being held to account.

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.*

Sources and further reading

- Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), *Evaluating Parliament: A self-assessment toolkit for parliaments* (2008).
- Eva-Maria Poptcheva, *Parliament's committees of inquiry and special* committees, European Parliamentary Research Service (2016).

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Indicator 1.8: Budget

About this indicator

Annual budget legislation, and any associated legislation related to government revenue-raising and expenditure, are among the most important pieces of legislation considered by parliament. In democratic systems, parliament plays a key role in approving and overseeing the raising and spending of public funds on behalf of citizens. Whereas revenue-raising is usually considered a part of the normal law-making process, the spending of funds constitutes a special function, and many parliaments therefore have separate finance (raising) and budget (spending) committees.

This indicator concerns parliament's role at all stages of the annual budget cycle. The first broad phase of this cycle, known as "ex-ante review", involves the formulation and examination of the draft budget, the proposal of amendments by MPs, and the approval of the budget. The second phase, known as "ex-post review", comprises the oversight of budget execution after the budget has been passed.

A specialized parliamentary body, such as the Public Accounts Committee (PAC), as well as other committees and the supreme audit institution, typically play a significant role in this scrutiny process.

As budgetary knowledge and scrutiny are specialized areas, this indicator also concerns the expert support available to parliament to help it fulfil its role.

This indicator comprises the following dimensions:

● Dimension 1.8.1: Formulation, examination, amendment and approval

● Dimension 1.8.2: In-year and ex-post oversight

● Dimension 1.8.3: Public Accounts Committee

● Dimension 1.8.4: Expert support

● Dimension 1.8.5: Supreme audit institution

See also *Dimension 1.1.3: Budgetary autonomy* and *Dimension 5.1.4: Gender-responsive budgeting*.

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Dimension 1.8.1: Formulation, examination, amendment and approval

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.8: Budget

- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns all aspects of the process by which parliament considers and approves budget legislation, and the annual budget in particular. The draft budget represents the executive's statement of priorities and commitments, and can include both revenue and expenditure proposals, although this is not the case in all parliaments.

The process of parliamentary consideration of the budget commences with the formulation of the budget and its presentation to parliament. The budget is then examined and deliberated by parliament, and may be amended during this process. The final step is the approval of the budget by parliament.

In many jurisdictions, parliament plays a substantial role in formulating the budget. This enables parliament to influence the content of the budget. Parliamentary involvement in this stage can also facilitate the later passage of the budget through parliament.

To help parliament properly consider the budget, it should be accompanied by detailed information, including about the proposals its contains, the budget's effect on different groups in society – such as women, youth, people with disabilities, and disadvantaged and minority groups – and any short- and long-term trends in the country's budgetary position. The executive and its agencies are responsible for providing such information.

The budget examination process should give MPs an opportunity to scrutinize and amend the budget before voting to approve it.

See also *Dimension 1.1.3: Budgetary autonomy*, *Dimension 3.1.3: Transparency of the budget cycle and the parliamentary budget* and *Dimension 5.1.3: Gender mainstreaming*.

Aspiring goal

Based on a global comparative analysis, an aspiring goal for parliaments in the area of "formulation, examination, amendment and approval" is as follows:

The legal framework establishes clear arrangements covering all aspects of parliament's consideration of budget legislation. Only parliament can give final approval to budget legislation.

The executive presents the draft budget to parliament along with detailed supporting information about its proposals and its effect on different groups in society.

There is sufficient time and opportunity for scrutiny of budget legislation, including by the opposition and/or minority parties.

Parliament is substantially involved in the process of formulating the budget. Parliament is able to influence its content and to amend the draft budget. Any limits on the scope of amendments that can be proposed by MPs are reasonable and clearly defined.

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.

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

● Provisions of the constitution, other aspects of the legal framework and/or parliament's rules of procedure relating to parliament's consideration and approval of budget legislation

● Information about the involvement of MPs, members of the public, civil society and others in budget formulation

● Statistics on the time spent on budget consideration, and on the involvement of different groups of MPs, such as opposition, minority-party and independent MPs

● Proposed amendments to budget legislation

● Records of budget approval

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

Assessment criterion 1: Legal framework

The legal framework establishes clear arrangements covering all aspects of parliament's consideration of budget legislation. Only parliament can give final approval to budget legislation.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Information about the draft budget

The executive presents the draft budget to parliament along with detailed supporting information about its proposals and its effect on different groups in society.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Time available for budget consideration

There is sufficient time and opportunity for scrutiny of budget legislation, including by the opposition and/or minority parties.

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

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Assessment criterion 4: Ability to influence the budget

Parliament is substantially involved in the process of formulating the budget. Parliament is able to influence its content and to amend the draft budget. Any limits on the scope of amendments that can be proposed by MPs are reasonable and clearly defined.

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

Assessment criterion 5: Practice

In practice, the budget is presented to parliament within the time frame defined by law. Budget consideration in committee and in the plenary is substantive and in line with parliament's rules of procedures. Parliament approves the budget in a way and within a time frame defined by law or its rules of procedure.

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.

Sources and further reading

- David Beetham, *Parliament and democracy in the twenty-first century: A guide to good practice* (2006).
- Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), *Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislators*, revised edition (2018).
- National Democratic Institute (NDI), *Towards the Development of International Standards for Democratic Legislatures* (2007).
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), *OECD Best Practices for Budget Transparency* (2002).
- OECD, *Recommendation of the Council on Budgetary Governance* (2015).
- OECD, *Parliament's role in budgeting* (2019).
- Franklin De Vrieze, *Keeping an eye on the money we don't have. Parliament's oversight role on public debt* (2022).

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Dimension 1.8.2: In-year and ex-post oversight

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.8: Budget
- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the provisions and processes by which parliament exercises in-year and ex-post oversight of the budget.

Parliament's role does not end once it has approved the budget. Beyond this point, it is important for parliament to monitor budget execution, including whether the funds have been spent on the purposes for which they were approved. Parliament can carry out this oversight in a number of ways:

- Conducting periodic in-year review of actual government spending, based on monthly and/or quarterly reports on budget execution
- Requiring agencies funded by the budget to report to parliament on the details and outcomes of their budget expenditure in a way that is accessible to parliament
- Using its committee system to examine the spending of the agencies that fall within each committee's area of responsibility
- Including, in its rules of procedure, provisions that allow for budgetary outcomes to be subject to discussion and debate in parliament, including opportunities for the opposition and/or minority parties

Ex-post oversight allows parliament to scrutinize of the outcomes of the previous budget, which can then inform its consideration of the current budget.

See also _Dimension 1.8.3: Public Accounts Committee_, _Dimension 1.8.4: Expert support_ and _Dimension 1.8.5: Supreme audit institution_, which cover important parts of the ex-post oversight framework in detail.

Aspiring goal

Based on a global comparative analysis, an aspiring goal for parliaments in the area of "in-year and ex-post oversight" is as follows:

The legal framework provides for periodic in-year and ex-post oversight of budget execution by permanent committees such as the budget committee and/or the PAC.

Agencies funded by the budget are required to account fully to parliament for their budgetary expenditure and outcomes through regular and comprehensive reporting.

Parliamentary committees systematically inquire into the budgetary expenditure and outcomes of executive agencies for which they have responsibility. MPs have the right to receive information that is needed for effective ex-post oversight, subject to legally defined limitations.

Parliament's rules of procedure allow for budgetary outcomes to be subject to discussion and debate in parliament, including opportunities for the opposition and/or minority parties.

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:

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- Provisions of the legal framework and/or parliament's rules of procedure requiring agencies funded by the budget to account fully to parliament for their budgetary expenditure and outcomes through regular and comprehensive reporting

- Provisions of the legal framework and/or parliament's rules of procedure relating to committee scrutiny of the budgetary outcomes of executive agencies

- Committee reports on budgetary scrutiny of agencies

- Provisions of parliament's rules of procedure providing for opportunities to debate budgetary outcomes

- Statistics on parliamentary debates on budgetary outcomes

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

Assessment criterion 1: Role of parliament

Parliament's budget committee, PAC or equivalent bodies conduct periodic in-year review of the execution of the budget as a whole, or of certain parts of the budget, either at their own initiative, or based on the government's monthly and/or quarterly reports on budget execution.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Reporting to parliament

Agencies funded by the budget are required to account fully to parliament for their budgetary expenditure and outcomes through regular and comprehensive reporting.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Scrutiny by parliamentary committees

Parliamentary committees systematically inquire into the budgetary expenditure and outcomes of executive agencies for which they have responsibility, and have access to the information that is needed for effective ex-post oversight, subject to legally defined limitations.

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

_____

Assessment criterion 4: Debate of budgetary outcomes

Budgetary outcomes are subject to discussion and debate in parliament, including opportunities for the opposition and minority parties.

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

Assessment criterion 5: Practice

In practice, budget scrutiny and the debate of budgetary outcomes are regular and meaningful, with wide participation by MPs. Information on budget scrutiny is made publicly available.

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.

Sources and further reading

- David Beetham, _Parliament and democracy in the twenty-first century: A guide to good practice_ (2006).
- Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), _Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislators_, revised edition (2018).
- National Democratic Institute (NDI), _Towards the Development of International Standards for Democratic Legislatures_ (2007).
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), _OECD Best Practices for Budget Transparency_ (2002).
- OECD, _Recommendation of the Council on Budgetary Governance_ (2015).
- OECD, _Parliament's role in budgeting_ (2019).

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Dimension 1.8.3: Public Accounts Committee

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.8: Budget
- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the role and activities of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC), budget committee, or the equivalent body that is responsible for, or has a role in, scrutiny of the budget both before and after its passage through parliament.

The roles of the PAC may include the following:
- Providing information to assist with formulating and debating the budget
- Conducting ex-post oversight of government expenditure
- Examining the financial affairs or performance of any government entity
- Receiving and examining reports from the supreme audit institution
- Promoting the efficient, effective and corruption-free expenditure of public funds

In order to perform its role effectively, the PAC needs to have authority and powers derived from the legal framework and parliament's rules of procedure. Such authority and powers include the PAC's mandate, its membership, and its power to obtain records and information from government entities in relation to budgetary matters.

The membership of the PAC should reflect the important role played by the opposition and minority parties in budget scrutiny. In some parliaments, it is a requirement that the chair of the PAC be a member of the opposition.

Aspiring goal

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

The legal framework establishes the PAC as parliament's primary oversight body in relation to budgetary matters. The PAC has a broad mandate to fulfil its budgetary oversight duties and to assess the performance of entities funded by the budget.

Parliament's rules of procedure require that opposition and/or minority parties be represented proportionally in the membership of the PAC and, ideally, that the PAC be chaired by a member of these parties.

The PAC has the authority to require entities funded by the budget to provide it with records and information about their budgets and performance. Such information is readily accessible to parliament.

The PAC is adequately resourced to enable it to exercise its mandate on behalf of parliament.

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 constitution, other aspects of the legal framework and/or parliament's rules of procedure establishing a PAC (or similar committee) and granting it authority and powers

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- Provisions of the constitution, other aspects of the legal framework and/or parliament's rules of procedure relating to the mandate and membership of the PAC
- Examples of PAC reports
- Evidence of the availability of adequate financial and human resources to enable the PAC to exercise its mandate

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

Assessment criterion 1: Legal framework

The legal framework establishes the PAC as parliament's primary oversight body in relation to budgetary matters. The PAC has a broad mandate to fulfil its budgetary oversight duties and to assess the performance of entities funded by the budget.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Composition

Parliament's rules of procedure require that opposition and/or minority parties be represented proportionally in the membership of the PAC and, ideally, that the PAC be chaired by a member of these parties.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Access to information

Entities funded by the budget are required to provide the PAC with records and information about their budgets and performance. Such information is readily accessible to parliament.

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

Assessment criterion 4: Resources

The PAC is adequately resourced to enable it to exercise its mandate on behalf of parliament.

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

Assessment criterion 5: Practice

In practice, the PAC plays an active role in parliament's scrutiny of the budget. It regularly informs parliament and the public about the outcomes of its budget scrutiny.

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.

Sources and further reading

- David Beetham, _Parliament and democracy in the twenty-first century: A guide to good practice_ (2006).
- Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), _Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislators_, revised edition (2018).
- National Democratic Institute (NDI), _Towards the Development of International Standards for Democratic Legislatures_ (2007).
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), _OECD Best Practices for Budget Transparency_ (2002).
- OECD, _Recommendation of the Council on Budgetary Governance_ (2015).
- OECD, _Parliament's role in budgeting_ (2019).

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Dimension 1.8.4: Expert support

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.8: Budget

- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the expert support available to MPs to enable them to effectively scrutinize the budget, and government financial management and performance. In this specialist area, parliament needs information and expertise in order to hold the executive to account for the use of public resources.

Although the executive is expected to provide detailed and transparent information to parliament about the budget, parliament needs its own sources of expertise, including to help it evaluate this official information.

Some parliaments have a well-resourced, independent parliamentary budget office with the expertise to provide parliament with independent commentary and information on the budget, including analysing current budgets and long-term budgetary trends, and evaluating budgetary outcomes. Others have budgetary analysis and scrutiny experts among committee staff, or within their research or other related services.

Parliament should also be able to access available expertise in the community, such as academics, civil society organizations, think tanks and professional associations. Parliament could engage with such experts through the work of parliamentary committees including the PAC, or through political parties or individual MPs who wish to pursue particular areas of interest. These outside experts can also provide valuable perspectives on how the budget impacts different groups in society such as women, youth and people with disabilities, as well as disadvantaged and minority groups.

Aspiring goal

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

Parliament has a parliamentary budget office or other specialized support service that has sufficient funding and expertise to provide expert support and advice on budgetary matters.

Parliament routinely engages with external sources of expertise throughout the budget cycle, and seeks to gain a perspective on how the budget impacts different groups in society.

MPs have access to specialized training to build capacity to scrutinize the budget.

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 constitution, other aspects of the legal framework and/or parliament's rules of procedure establishing a parliamentary budget office or other specialized support service on budgetary matters
- Details of the resources available to the parliamentary budget office or other specialized support service on budgetary matters

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- Reports of the parliamentary budget office or other specialized support service on budgetary matters
- Evidence of engagement with external sources of expertise on budgetary matters

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

Assessment criterion 1: Internal resources

Parliament has a parliamentary budget office or other specialized support service that has sufficient funding and expertise to provide expert support and advice on budgetary matters.

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

Assessment criterion 2: External sources of expertise

Parliament routinely engages with external sources of expertise throughout the budget cycle, and seeks to gain a perspective on how the budget impacts different groups in society.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Capacity building

MPs have access to specialized training to build capacity to scrutinize the budget.

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

Assessment criterion 4: Practice

In practice, MPs are well-equipped to scrutinize the budget and have access to and engage with a wide range of internal and external sources of expertise and advice on budgetary matters.

Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good	Excellent

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☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
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.

Sources and further reading

● David Beetham, *Parliament and democracy in the twenty-first century: A guide to good practice* (2006).
● Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), *Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislators*, revised edition (2018).
● National Democratic Institute (NDI), *Towards the Development of International Standards for Democratic Legislatures* (2007).

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Dimension 1.8.5 Supreme audit institution

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.8: Budget
- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the supreme audit institution (SAI) as the body responsible for auditing public financial administration and the management of public funds. The SAI plays a central role in the efficient, effective, transparent and accountable use of the public resources approved by parliament through the annual budget process.

The SAI is an important, independent source of information for parliament about budget outcomes and performance. Through its reporting to parliament and the public, the SAI provides information to the public about the use of public funds, thereby acting as a significant check on possible misuse of, or corruption in relation to, public funds.

The SAI should have a sufficiently broad mandate, and should audit both the legality and regularity of the accounts of the entities it audits. It should also conduct performance audits, which examine the efficiency and effectiveness of public entities and programmes. An independent SAI is therefore an essential body in a democratic system.

Aspiring goal

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

The constitution and/or other aspects of the legal framework provide the basis for the existence, functions and powers of the SAI, which is independent of the executive and the entities it audits.

Members of the SAI enjoy independence in terms of their appointment to, and cessation of, office, and are persons of integrity and competence.

The SAI has access to the entities it audits and their records and documents, and has the power to require a response to its findings. The SAI has the funding and expert staff necessary to perform its audit functions.

Parliament and the SAI have a special relationship, which is legally defined and well-functioning in practice. The SAI is legally required to report regularly and independently to parliament and the public.

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 constitution and/or other aspects of the legal framework establishing an independent SAI, and outlining its membership, powers, mandate, resources and reporting requirements
- Information relating to the mandate, resources and powers of the SAI
- Examples of SAI reports and findings

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

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Assessment criterion 1: Legal framework

The constitution and/or other aspects of the legal framework provide the basis for the existence, functions and powers of the SAI, and define the entities that it audits.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Independence of members

SAI members are independent of the executive and the entities that they audit. Members enjoy independence in terms of their appointment to, and cessation of, office, and are persons of integrity and competence.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Independence of mandate and resources

The SAI has access to the entities it audits and their records and documents, and has the power to require a response to its findings. The SAI has the funding and expert staff necessary to perform its audit functions.

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

Assessment criterion 4: Relationship between parliament and the SAI

Parliament and the SAI have a special relationship, which is legally defined and well-functioning in practice. The SAI is legally required to report regularly and independently to parliament and the public.

Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good	Excellent
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

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Evidence for this assessment criterion:

Assessment criterion 5: Practice

In practice, the SAI demonstrates its independence, conducts its auditing work thoroughly, and reports regularly and independently to parliament and the public. Parliament systematically scrutinizes SAI reports and takes action as necessary on their findings and recommendations.

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.

Sources and further reading

- David Beetham, *Parliament and democracy in the twenty-first century: A guide to good practice* (2006).
- International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI), *INTOSAI-P 1: The Lima Declaration*, endorsed in 1977, revised edition (2019).
- INTOSAI, *INTOSAI-P 10: Mexico Declaration on SAI Independence*, endorsed in 2007, revised edition (2019).
- INTOSAI, *INTOSAI-P 12: The Value and Benefits of Supreme Audit Institutions – making a difference to the lives of citizens*, endorsed in 2013, revised edition (2019).

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Indicator 1.9: Representative role of members of parliament

About this indicator

The representative role is a core function of parliament and of MPs. This indicator focuses on two key aspects of that representative role: the interaction between MPs and the people they represent, and the role of the opposition. The common thread is that parliament should be the place where opinions across society, in all their diversity, are expressed. Democracy is an inclusive process in which all citizens – men and women – representing all political and social forces in the country can participate.

This indicator comprises the following dimensions:

● Dimension 1.9.1: Interaction with the electorate

● Dimension 1.9.2: Opposition

For indicators and dimensions relating to parliament's overall representativeness, see also *Indicator 7.1: Electoral integrity, Indicator 7.2: Composition of parliament* and *Dimension 7.3.3: Gender and age balance in parliamentary bodies*.

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Dimension 1.9.1: Interaction with the electorate

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.9: Representative role of members of parliament

- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the interaction between MPs and the people they represent. The primary responsibility of an MP is to represent all constituents, including those who did not vote for them or did not vote at all.

This representative role concerns all MPs, regardless of differences in the political or electoral system. It applies equally to MPs in countries where there are no individual constituencies or where there are multi-member constituencies, as well as to MPs in upper chambers in bicameral or federal systems, who represent subnational territorial units. The number of constituents that an MP represents necessarily influences the way in which MPs carry out their representative role.

The parliamentary calendar should provide reasonable opportunities for MPs to interact with their constituents. This might mean, for example, that plenary sittings and committee meetings take place on certain days of the week, allowing MPs to meet with their electorate on other days.

It is also important for there to be a range of procedural opportunities for MPs to raise issues on behalf of the electorate, including in plenary debates and in committee. Such procedural opportunities include, for example, speaking in debates, asking written or oral questions, drafting laws, and requesting information from the executive. Issues raised by MPs should be given due consideration.

Parliament's institutional capacities play a significant role in helping MPs fulfil their representative role. Parliaments may, for example, provide access to resources such as constituency offices, staff, travel allowances, constituency relations funds and other forms of support.

Some parliaments require MPs to report back to parliament and to the public about their constituency work.

Aspiring goal

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

The legal framework recognizes representation as a core function of MPs and clearly sets out the duties and expectations of their representative role.

All MPs have reasonable opportunities to raise issues of concern to their constituents in parliament, including in debates and in committee and plenary work.

The organization of the parliamentary calendar facilitates the representative role of MPs. MPs have sufficient time available to interact with their electorate.

Parliament provides MPs with adequate resources to support engagement with their constituents. These resources are allocated in an equitable, non-partisan manner.

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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 and/or parliament's rules of procedure establishing that representation is a core function of MPs

● Provisions of parliament's rules of procedure providing all MPs with the opportunity to raise issues of concern to their constituents in parliament

● Provisions of parliament's rules of procedure relating to the resources available to MPs to effectively perform their representative function

● Parliamentary records of debates in the plenary and committees

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

Assessment criterion 1: Legal framework

The legal framework clearly sets out the duties and expectations concerning the representative role of MPs.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Opportunities to raise issues in parliament

Parliament's rules of procedure provide all MPs with reasonable opportunities to raise issues of concern to their constituents in parliament, including in debates and in committee and plenary work.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Parliamentary calendar

The organization of the parliamentary calendar facilitates the representative role of MPs. MPs have sufficient time available to interact with their electorate.

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

Assessment criterion 4: Resources

Parliament provides MPs with adequate resources to support engagement with their constituents. These resources are allocated in an equitable, non-partisan manner.

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.

Sources and further reading

● 　David Beetham, *Parliament and democracy in the twenty-first century: A guide to good practice* (2006).

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Dimension 1.9.2: Opposition

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.9: Representative role of members of parliament

- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension covers the various means by which the opposition may perform its functions in a democratic parliament. Parliament is the institution that embodies society in the diversity of its composition and its opinions, and the opposition in parliament is a necessary and indispensable component of democracy.

The primary function of the opposition is to offer a credible alternative to the majority in power. Moreover, by overseeing and scrutinizing the actions of the executive, it works to ensure transparency, integrity and efficiency in the conduct of public affairs and to prevent abuses by the authorities and individuals, thereby ensuring the defence of the public interest.

The opposition plays a key role in both parliamentary and presidential systems. In parliamentary systems, where the opposition represents the "government in waiting", its role is to hold the sitting executive to account, and to propose an alternative policy and legislative agenda. The distinction between the ruling executive and the opposition in parliament may be less clear in presidential systems, particularly when the president of the country is from a different political party than the party with the most seats in parliament.

To be able to function effectively, the opposition needs the right to raise or debate issues of concern. This includes having the opportunity to initiate legislation or motions for debate, having reasonable debating opportunities, being able to put questions to the executive and to propose amendments to laws, and having equitable representation on committees and in other parliamentary bodies.

Furthermore, the opposition, including its leader(s), needs access to adequate resources to effectively perform its oversight function and develop an alternative policy agenda.

Aspiring goal

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

The legal framework recognizes the special role of the opposition in parliament.

The legal framework and parliament's rules of procedure provide the opposition with specific rights in parliament, such as the ability to scrutinize and question the government, to initiate legislation or motions for debate, to participate equally in debates and votes, to propose amendments to laws, and to be equitably represented on committees and in other parliamentary bodies.

The opposition, including its leader(s), has access to adequate resources and facilities to effectively perform its role. In systems where the opposition comprises several parties, resources are allocated in a manner proportional to their representation.

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:

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- Provisions of the legal framework and/or parliament's rules of procedure recognizing the special role of the opposition and/or guaranteeing equal treatment for all MPs

- Proposals for laws or amendments to existing laws that might affect the status and role of the opposition

- Provisions of parliament's rules of procedure providing the opposition with opportunities to contribute to parliamentary work

- Provisions relating to the resources available to the opposition

- Parliamentary records of debates in the plenary and committees

- Reports from the media and civil society organizations

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

Assessment criterion 1: Legal framework

The legal framework recognizes the special role of the opposition in parliament.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Opposition rights

The legal framework and/or parliament's rules of procedure provide the opposition with specific rights in parliament, such as to scrutinize and question the government, to initiate legislation or motions for debate, to participate equally in debate and votes, to propose amendments to laws, and to be represented equitably on committees and in other parliamentary bodies.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Opposition resources

The opposition, including its leader(s), has access to adequate resources and facilities to effectively perform its role. In systems where the opposition comprises several parties, resources are allocated in a manner proportional to their representation.

Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good	Excellent

_____

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Evidence for this assessment criterion:					

Assessment criterion 4: Practice

In practice, the above provisions are implemented consistently and without discrimination.

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

Sources and further reading

● David Beetham, _Parliament and democracy in the twenty-first century: A guide to good practice_ (2006).

● Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), _Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislators_, revised edition (2018).

● Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), _Guidelines on the rights and duties of the opposition in parliament_ (1999).

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Indicator 1.10: Relations with other branches of government

About this indicator

This indicator concerns the constitutional separation of powers between parliament, as the legislative branch, and other branches of government, namely the executive, the judiciary and subnational levels of government. It also covers mechanisms for communication or coordination between parliament and other branches with regard to parliament's jurisdictional powers, such as legislative oversight of the executive, judicial appointments, and coordination and information-sharing with subnational levels of government.

This indicator comprises the following dimensions:

● Dimension 1.10.1: Relations with the executive

● Dimension 1.10.2: Relations with the judiciary

● Dimension 1.10.3: Relations with subnational levels of government

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Dimension 1.10.1: Relations with the executive

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.10: Relations with other branches of government

- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the relationship between parliament and the executive. In democratic systems, parliament and the executive have distinct and autonomous roles with established mechanisms for a well-functioning working relationship.

One of the key roles of an effective parliament is to hold the executive to account. It is therefore critical that mechanisms and channels exist to allow parliament to access information, data and officials, in order to report on public accounts, services and performance, and to ensure the accountability of government expenditure and programmes. These mechanisms may include an ombudsperson, auditors-general, inspectors-general, oversight and accountability committees, commissions and agencies, audit offices, anti-corruption commissions and information commissions.

In some systems, the executive may have dedicated legislative liaisons, who are responsible for providing MPs with direct access to data and information on programmes and accounts. This helps to ensure better exchange of information between the two branches at all times, and enables both MPs and their caseworkers to enquire about public programmes and services on behalf of citizens. The existence of legislative liaisons also helps to maintain the executive-legislative relationship in law-making, such as when the executive proposes new legislation or changes to existing laws.

A nation's laws may require periodic information-sharing between the executive and legislative branches, such as through semi-annual, annual or periodic performance reports, audits and reviews. Such laws should require these reports, audits and reviews to be made available to parliament and the public.

See also *Indicator 1.1: Parliamentary autonomy* and *Indicator 1.7: Oversight*.

Aspiring goal

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

The constitution establishes a separation of powers between the legislative and executive branches. It also establishes mechanisms for the relationship between the executive and parliament, including fluid communication and parliamentary access to information.

The executive is legally required to report on its activities, including through regular reporting on performance and services, periodic audits, inspector-general reports, ombudsperson reports and other relevant commission reports.

The legal framework and mechanisms in place enable parliament and the executive to perform their respective roles, and support the effective sharing of information between the executive and legislative branches.

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:

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- Provisions of the constitution establishing an independent legislative branch
- Provisions of the legal framework establishing mechanisms for the relationship between the executive and parliament, as well as timetables for reporting, audits and reviews, as applicable
- Details of mechanisms providing both branches with fluid and consistent access to information, and evidence of communication with liaisons who can supply direct information on public expenditure, services and programmes

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

Assessment criterion 1: Constitution

The constitution establishes a separation of powers between the legislative and executive branches, and establishes a framework for the relationship between the executive and parliament. In countries where the Head of State is a part of the executive branch, there are constitutional and legal provisions regarding the election, mandate and roles of the Head of State, as well as the conditions and procedures for impeachment.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Legal framework

The legal framework defines the powers and duties of the executive and parliament, as well as mechanisms for a well-functioning relationship between them. The legal framework requires the executive to report periodically to parliament on its activities, and establishes a systematic approach to the review and scrutiny of such activities.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Information-sharing

There are established mechanisms for periodic information-sharing, as well as for access to, and oversight of, executive expenditure, programmes, services and performance. Any offices or commissions established for this purpose are non-partisan in nature and enable fluid communication and access to information between the branches.

Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good	Excellent
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

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> Evidence for this assessment criterion:

Assessment criterion 4: Coordination

Both parliament and the executive have dedicated offices or staff to manage and coordinate issues including parliamentary agenda-setting, prime minister's questions, the participation of ministers in parliamentary meetings, the summoning of executive officials to parliament, answers to MPs' questions, and similar matters.

Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good	Excellent
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

> Evidence for this assessment criterion:

Assessment criterion 5: Practice

In practice, there is a well-functioning working relationship between the executive and parliament, which is based on a mutual understanding of, and respect for, their respective roles. Information is shared effectively between the executive and legislative branches.

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.*

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Dimension 1.10.2: Relations with the judiciary

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.10: Relations with other branches of government

- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the relationship between parliament and the judiciary which, owing to the political nature of the former and the political impartiality of the latter, should be strictly separated under the constitution. This relationship entails both parliament's responsibility for law-making and the judiciary's responsibility for interpreting and applying the law.

It is the responsibility of parliament to establish a legal framework setting clearly defined criteria for judicial appointments, unambiguous and fair rules on the suspension or removal of judges, and appropriate security of tenure and guarantees of independence for judges, and to ensure that the judicial system has adequate budgetary resources.

In many jurisdictions, the system of checks and balances requires parliament's consent in the confirmation of senior judges, and parliament has the power to impeach such judges for serious crimes or misconduct. The relationship between parliament and the judiciary also implies that the interpretation and application of the law is the responsibility of the judiciary and not parliament. In most legal systems, the judiciary has the mandate to rule on the constitutionality of laws adopted by parliament and, in some cases, even abolish them.

In addition to these formal relationships between parliament and the judiciary, the separation of powers also requires both branches to perform their roles with mutual respect and restraint. For instance, parliament's rules of procedure may restrict MPs from making adverse comments about judges or raising matters before the courts in debate, while the judiciary may be prohibited from interfering in matters that are solely within the jurisdiction of parliament.

Aspiring goal

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

The constitution establishes a separation of powers between the legislative and judicial branches. All relations and interactions between the judiciary and parliament take place in strict compliance with the constitution and law, and in a spirit of mutual respect for their independence.

Parliament has established a legal framework that sets clearly defined criteria for judicial appointments, unambiguous and fair rules on the suspension or removal of judges, and appropriate security of tenure and guarantees of independence for judges. Judges may only be suspended or removed for reasons of incapacity or misconduct that renders them unfit to carry out their duties.

Parliament allocates adequate budgetary resources for the judicial system to operate effectively without any constraints.

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:

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- Provisions of the constitution, or equivalent rules, on the separation of powers between the legislative and judicial branches, as well as procedures and practices reflecting mutual regard for their independence

- Provisions of the legal framework establishing clearly defined criteria for judicial appointments, unambiguous and fair rules on the suspension or removal of judges, and independence safeguards

- Budgetary allocations providing adequate resources to the judiciary in order for it to operate effectively

- Provisions of the legal framework establishing explicit and detailed procedures for the appointment and impeachment of senior judges

- Reports on judicial appointments and impeachments issued by parliament

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

Assessment criterion 1: Constitution

The constitution clearly establishes a separation of powers between the legislative and judicial branches. The relationship between parliament and the judiciary is based on mutual respect and restraint.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Legal framework

The legal framework, as established by parliament, sets clearly defined criteria for judicial appointments and establishes appropriate security of tenure and guarantees of independence for judges. In countries where parliament confirms and/or impeaches senior judges, it does so in accordance with this legal framework, using clear and transparent procedures, and by way of a majority or supermajority vote. Rules on the suspension or removal of judges are unambiguous and fair, and judges may only be suspended or removed for reasons of incapacity or misconduct that renders them unfit to carry out their duties.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Resources

Parliament allocates adequate budgetary resources for the judicial system to operate effectively without any constraints.

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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.

Sources and further reading

- The Commonwealth, *Commonwealth Principles of the Accountability of and the Relationship Between the Three Branches of Government* (2004).
- National Democratic Institute (NDI), *Toward the Development of International Standards for Democratic Legislatures* (2007).

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Dimension 1.10.3: Relations with subnational levels of government

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.10: Relations with other branches of government

- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the relationship between parliament and subnational levels of government, such as states and/or provinces, and local and municipal governments. The nature of this relationship may vary significantly depending on a nation's legal framework and the representational status of parliament. This dimension therefore covers the key issues that generally apply to the relationship between parliament and subnational levels of government in all countries, whether they are federations, unitary States or somewhere in between.

The constitution and/or other aspects of the legal framework should clearly delineate the respective roles, responsibilities and authorities of parliament and subnational levels of government. There should also be mechanisms and practices in place for communication, coordination, cooperation and information-sharing. These could include:

- a parliamentary committee dedicated to coordination with subnational levels of government, particularly in bicameral parliaments

- a communications or policy office that assists it in tracking or sharing information on subnational affairs

- centralized hubs and/or organized associations through which subnational levels of government share information with parliament

- a national ministry dedicated to subnational governance affairs, which is tasked with maintaining connectivity between affairs at the State and local levels.

Aspiring goal

Based on a global comparative analysis, an aspiring goal for parliaments in the area of "relations with subnational levels of government" is as follows:

The constitution and/or other aspects of the legal framework clearly delineate the respective roles, responsibilities and authorities of parliament and subnational levels of government.

Parliament has established mechanisms and practices in place for communication, coordination, cooperation and information-sharing, and for maintaining awareness of subnational affairs.

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 constitution and/or other aspects of the legal framework delineating the respective roles, responsibilities and authorities of parliament and subnational levels of government

- Provisions of the legal framework establishing shared responsibility between parliament and subnational levels of government

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● Information on a centralized parliamentary mechanism for tracking subnational affairs, and on mechanisms and practices in place for communication, coordination, cooperation and information-sharing

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

Assessment criterion 1: Constitution and legal framework

The constitution and/or other aspects of the legal framework clearly delineate the respective roles, responsibilities and authorities of parliament and subnational levels of government.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Mechanisms and practices

Parliament has established mechanisms and practices in place for communication, coordination, cooperation and information-sharing with subnational levels of government.

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.

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Indicator 1.11: Key parliamentary powers

About this indicator

This indicator concerns key parliamentary powers relating to security, defence and foreign affairs. Although some of these policy areas have often traditionally been considered to be led by the executive, many parliaments have key decision-making powers, and all parliaments play an important oversight role.

As an ever-increasing number of policy areas – such as climate change, trade and internet policy – can only be addressed at a global level, parliaments are playing an increasingly prominent role in international affairs. There is therefore a need for regular interaction between parliament and the executive around the international dimensions of policymaking.

This indicator also covers parliamentary diplomacy, which has taken on new forms and significance in recent years.

This indicator comprises the following dimensions:

● Dimension 1.11.1: Security

● Dimension 1.11.2: Defence

● Dimension 1.11.3: Foreign affairs and international agreements

● Dimension 1.11.4: Parliamentary diplomacy

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Dimension 1.11.1: Security

> This dimension is part of:
>
> - Indicator 1.11: Key parliamentary powers
>
> - Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the role of parliament in security policy and governance.

State security providers are the security institutions established by the State and authorized to use force on its behalf. The use of force includes the threat to use force and the limitation of certain basic rights under specific circumstances defined by law. Every security sector is different, but typical State security providers include:

- armed forces, such as the army, navy, air force, coastguard, and other military and auxiliary formations

- public law enforcement agencies, such as police, gendarmerie and auxiliary policing forces

- executive protection forces, such as presidential guards or close protection units

- intelligence services, both military and civilian, foreign and domestic

- border guards and customs authorities

- reserves and local security units, civil defence forces, national guards, civil protection and emergency formations, and commercial security providers contracted by the State.

The principle that security services should be subordinate and accountable to democratically elected political leaders has long been seen as a basic condition for the effective functioning and well-being of democratic societies.

Parliament plays an essential role in ensuring that the security sector operates in a manner that is rooted in respect for the rule of law and human rights. Parliament is required to determine the legal framework for security policy and, in its oversight role, to ensure that the actions of the security sector are mediated through participatory and transparent processes which take into account the needs of all groups in society.

Parliament should have permanent mechanisms for oversight of the security sector, which should be included in the mandate of one or more committees, such as a specialized committee addressing security, law enforcement and intelligence, or a joint committee which also covers defence issues.

MPs need sufficient knowledge and ability to undertake the necessary legislative groundwork to develop and implement security sector policy frameworks. It is therefore important to strengthen the capacity of parliamentary committees responsible for security issues and to empower MPs in their security oversight work.

See also _Dimension 1.7.2: Access to information from the executive_.

Aspiring goal

> _Based on a global comparative analysis, an aspiring goal for parliaments in the area of "security" is as follows:_
>
> The legal framework invests parliament with powers to scrutinize, amend, adopt or reject legislation related to the security sector and to ensure that it is compliant with human rights standards and international obligations.
>
> Parliament has well-established practices for security sector oversight, including oversight of policies, budgets and appointments. MPs have the opportunity to debate security-sector policy and practice in the plenary and in committees. A specialized committee has wide-ranging powers to

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investigate security-sector issues, gather evidence and carry out inquiries. Parliament has access to the information needed for effective oversight.

The legal framework establishes an ombudsman or similar public body which addresses public concerns or complaints about security issues, and which reports to parliament.

Parliament has in-house expertise on security-sector issues, and training on such issues is available for MPs and 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 constitution and/or other aspects of the legal framework establishing parliament's role in security-sector governance
- The terms of reference of one or more parliamentary committees indicating their responsibility for security-related issues
- Publications such as committee reports on parliamentary inquiries into security issues detailing evidence taken from ministers, government officials, members of the public, civil society and others
- Annual parliamentary reports or reviews on the functioning of all security services
- Press releases or pages on the parliamentary website providing public information on parliament's role in security-sector policy

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

Assessment criterion 1: Legal framework

The legal framework invests parliament with powers to scrutinize, amend, adopt or reject legislation related to the security sector, to ensure that it is compliant with human rights standards and international obligations, and to hold the executive to account. It also sets out the arrangements for parliamentary access to specific categories of classified information.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Parliamentary oversight

Parliament has well-established practices for security sector oversight, including oversight of policies, budgets and appointments. MPs have the opportunity to debate security-sector policy and practice in the plenary and in committees. A specialized committee has wide-ranging powers to investigate security-sector issues, gather evidence and carry out inquiries.

Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good	Excellent
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

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Evidence for this assessment criterion:

Assessment criterion 3: Addressing public concerns

The legal framework establishes an ombudsman or similar public body which addresses public concerns or complaints about security issues, and which reports to parliament.

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

Assessment criterion 4: Resources

Parliament has in-house expertise on security-sector issues, and training on such issues is available for MPs and staff.

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

Assessment criterion 5: Practice

In practice, the provisions of the legal framework on the security sector and data classification are implemented consistently. The executive cooperates with parliamentary committees and provides the information requested by them in a timely manner. Parliamentary committees conduct regular oversight of the security sector, and undertake investigation and inquiries as needed.

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

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Recommendations for change

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

Sources and further reading

- Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF), The Security Sector (2015).
- DCAF and ECOWAS Parliament, Parliamentary Oversight of the Security Sector: ECOWAS Parliament-DCAF Guide for West African Parliaments (2010).
- DCAF and Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), *Parliamentary Oversight of the Security Sector: Principles, Mechanisms and Practices* (2003).
- DCAF and NATO Parliamentary Assembly (NATO PA), *Oversight and Guidance: Parliaments and Security Sector Governance* (2015).
- Wolfgang Wagner, *Parliaments and Foreign Policy* (2017).
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), *Parliaments as partners supporting the Women, Peace and Security agenda* (2019).

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Dimension 1.11.2: Defence

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.11: Key parliamentary powers
- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the role of parliament in the area of defence policy, which covers declarations of war, states of emergency, the deployment of armed forces, sales and exports of arms, and the protection of civilians during conflict.

Civilian control of defence policy is essential in a well-functioning democratic society. Parliament is mandated to represent the interests of all groups in society and to uphold human rights, acting as a safeguard against the unjustified and disproportionate use of force and ensuring that decisions on defence policy are aligned with public needs.

The constitution and/or other aspects of the legal framework should establish the extent of parliamentary involvement in the declaration of war and the deployment of troops, and during states of emergency. Parliament's powers in this area vary considerably, from the authority to debate and question decisions to deploy armed forces, to merely being kept informed by the executive. In practice, and regardless of the system in question, it is important the parliament remain engaged and informed, with relations of trust between branches of government.

Parliament should ensure that defence policy remains subject to international law and under democratic control. This includes ensuring that, where arms are sold, their use is not in violation of international humanitarian law.

Transparent deliberation in parliament opens up defence decisions to public scrutiny, helping the public to understand the rationale for, and risks of, military engagement and emergency powers, as well as how they comply with societal norms and human rights.

Parliament may have a committee tasked with defence issues or a committee that is responsible for both security and defence. Some bicameral parliaments have a joint committee composed of MPs from both houses. Parliament should also have a mandate to oversee gender mainstreaming in defence policy, including the composition of the armed forces and other defence bodies, the gendered impact of military and peacekeeping operations, and the protection, during conflict, of women, girls, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning and intersex (LGBTQI+) persons.

Aspiring goal

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

The constitution establishes parliament's powers with regard to the use of military force, including the declaration of war and the deployment of troops. Parliament has the authority to investigate and debate the use of military force, including powers to summon representatives of the executive to testify before parliament. Parliament can effectively block the use of military force if there is a majority in favour.

Parliament has the legal authority to scrutinize, amend and approve the defence budget, including the authorization of funding for each deployment of troops, and for arms sales and weapons procurement.

Parliamentary committees have broad mandates to oversee defence issues, including the oversight of arms sales to ensure compliance with international humanitarian law and the oversight of gender mainstreaming in defence policy.

Parliament has in-house expertise on defence policy and has access to information and regular updates from the executive on such issues.

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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 constitution and/or other aspects of the legal framework providing parliament with the power to authorize war and the deployment of troops, and to amend the defence budget
● Provisions of the constitution and/or other aspects of the legal framework mandating parliament to play a role in the declaration, promulgation, prolongation and lifting of a state of emergency
● Hansard/parliamentary records on debates related to the declaration of war, the deployment of troops or states of emergency
● Items on the parliamentary website or media articles related to parliament's role in defence policy
● The terms of reference of parliamentary committees indicating their role in overseeing different aspects of defence policy
● Memorandums of understanding between defence-sector complaint bodies and parliament

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

Assessment criterion 1: Use of military force

The constitution establishes parliament's powers with regard to the use of military force, including the declaration of war and the deployment of troops. Parliament has the authority to investigate and debate the use of military force, including powers to summon representatives of the executive to testify before parliament. Parliament can effectively block the use of military force if there is a majority in favour.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Defence budget

Parliament has the legal authority to scrutinize, amend and approve the defence budget, including the authorization of funding for each deployment of troops, and for arms sales and weapons procurement.

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

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Assessment criterion 3: Parliamentary oversight

Parliamentary committees have broad mandates to oversee defence issues, including the oversight of arms sales to ensure compliance with international humanitarian law and the oversight of gender mainstreaming in defence policy.

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

Assessment criterion 4: Resources

Parliament has in-house expertise on defence policy and has access to information and regular updates from the executive on such issues.

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.

Sources and further reading

- Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) and Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), *Parliamentary Oversight of the Security Sector: Principles, Mechanisms and Practices* (Geneva, 2003).
- Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF), *Parliament's role in defence procurement* (Geneva, 2006).
- European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission), *Emergency Powers* (1995).
- European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission), *Respect for Democracy, Human Rights and the Rule of Law during States of Emergency – Reflections* (2020).
- Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF), *Parliamentary War Powers: A Survey of 25 European Parliaments* (2010)
- Emile Ouédraogo, Advancing Military Professionalism in Africa (2014).

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- Tom Ruys, "Parliamentary war powers and the role of international law in foreign troop deployment decisions: The US-led coalition against "Islamic State" in Iraq and Syria", *International Journal of Constitutional Law* (2019).
- Seppe Tiitinen, *Role of Parliament in the conduct of foreign relations*, (1996).
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), *Parliaments as partners supporting the Women, Peace and Security agenda* (2019).
- Wolfgang Wagner, *Parliaments and Foreign Policy* (2017).

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Dimension 1.11.3: Foreign affairs and international agreements

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.11: Key parliamentary powers

- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns parliament's mandate to determine and oversee foreign-policy priorities and to ratify international agreements.

Parliamentary powers with regard to foreign policy vary considerably. Almost all parliaments have a foreign affairs committee with a broad oversight mandate. In some countries, the executive is required to consult with this committee before important decisions are taken on foreign-policy issues.

International agreements on issues such as environmental policy, trade and security have a direct impact on the public and affect the rights and obligations of all. It is therefore important that such agreements are subject to transparent decision-making processes at the national level.

Agreements that include significant national obligations usually require parliamentary approval or ratification. Powers in this area differ, with parliaments variously able to accelerate the ratification process, amend the text, express reservations, or refuse to ratify the agreement and return the matter for new negotiations. Parliament can also put pressure on the executive to ratify outstanding agreements, and can use oversight mechanisms to receive answers and updates on progress.

Parliamentary committees should have an active role in scrutinizing agreements with international financial institutions, including ensuring that development assistance has a lasting impact and is conflict- and gender-sensitive. Parliament should have the power to accept or reject international loan agreements or send them back for amendment.

Aspiring goal

Based on a global comparative analysis, an aspiring goal for parliaments in the area of "foreign affairs and international agreements" is as follows:

The legal framework clearly establishes parliament's role with regard to foreign policy. Parliament has a committee with a broad mandate to oversee government policy and action on foreign affairs.

Parliament is legally responsible for the ratification of international agreements that include significant national obligations. The executive is required to report to parliament on the implementation of international agreements. Where the State is required to report to an international body, the report is debated in parliament first. Parliament also plays an active role in scrutinizing agreements with international financial institutions.

Parliament has in-house expertise on foreign policy issues and has access to information and regular updates from the executive on such issues, including on the preparation of international agreements.

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 constitution establishing parliament's role in determining and overseeing foreign-policy priorities, and in ratifying international agreements

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- Provisions of international treaties, conventions or agreements mandating regular reporting by the executive to parliament
- The terms of reference of parliamentary committees indicating their role in overseeing foreign-affairs policy
- Committee reports on foreign-affairs issues
- Research briefings and informational material on foreign affairs produced by parliamentary research services or other bodies of the parliamentary secretariat

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

Assessment criterion 1: Mandate

The legal framework clearly establishes parliament's role with regard to foreign policy. Parliament has a committee with a broad mandate to oversee government policy and action on foreign affairs.

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

Assessment criterion 2: International agreements

Parliament is legally responsible for the ratification of international agreements that include significant national obligations. The executive is required to report to parliament on the implementation of international agreements. Where the State is required to report to an international body, the report is debated in parliament first. Parliament also plays an active role in scrutinizing agreements with international financial institutions.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Resources

Parliament has in-house expertise on foreign policy issues and has access to information and regular updates from the executive on such issues, including on the preparation of international agreements.

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

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Recommendations for change

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

Sources and further reading

- Alexander Carius and others, A Foreign Policy Perspective on the Sustainable Development Goals (2018).
- Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), "Parliamentary Involvement in International Affairs", in Second World Conference of Speakers of Parliaments (2005).
- IPU and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), *Guidelines for enhancing the engagement and contribution of parliaments to effective development cooperation* (2020).
- IPU and World Bank, *Parliamentary Oversight of International Agreements and Related Processes* (2013).
- Seppe Tiitinen, *Role of Parliament in the conduct of foreign relations* (1996).
- Wolfgang Wagner, *Parliaments and Foreign Policy* (2017).

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Dimension 1.11.4: Parliamentary diplomacy

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 1.11: Key parliamentary powers

- Target 1: Effective parliament

About this dimension

This dimension examines the role of parliamentary diplomacy as an important part of international cooperation. By supporting political dialogue and mediation, parliamentary diplomacy plays a role in conflict prevention and crisis management, and contributes to finding solutions to political challenges at the international, regional and national levels. It helps to strengthen dialogue between countries and increase mutual understanding.

Parliamentary diplomacy can be conducted through bilateral relations between parliaments or through multilateral, international and regional organizations and channels. Engagement between MPs from different countries opens new channels for dialogue and offers a degree of flexibility when addressing complex issues. MPs are often included in official delegations during State visits and international events, which can offer opportunities for parliamentary diplomacy.

Parliaments regularly organize incoming and outgoing visits with other parliaments. There are also more formal arrangements, such as parliamentary friendship groups, that involve regular exchanges of views between MPs from different countries.

Information gained through parliamentary diplomacy also strengthens the work of MPs at the national level and provides them with the means to play an active role in scrutinizing foreign policy and the implementation of international agreements.

Aspiring goal

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

Parliamentary diplomacy is a regular part of the activity of parliament.

Delegations for bilateral visits and to multilateral parliamentary bodies are inclusive and reflect the composition of parliament and the diversity of society. Political, gender and age quotas for delegations are mandated in parliament's rules of procedure. If international bodies require such quotas for parliamentary delegations, parliament respects them.

Parliament receives support and information from the executive prior to international engagements.

Reports are produced following international engagements and are made available to all MPs and the public.

A specialized body exists to coordinate the preparation of, and the communication and reporting on, parliamentary diplomacy activities. This body produces regular summaries of the work of international organizations and the results of meetings and events.

Parliament has an international relations department or other, similar body tasked with supporting MPs in conducting international engagements.

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.

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

- Agendas of official bilateral engagements demonstrating parliamentary involvement
- Name lists for parliamentary delegations demonstrating a political, age and gender balance
- Reports from parliamentary committees, delegations and/or political groups on international engagements, indicating the outcomes achieved
- Items in parliament's budget for parliamentary diplomacy activities

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

Assessment criterion 1: Transparency

Clear and transparent procedures are in place for deciding on parliamentary diplomacy activities, including forming friendship groups, and organizing bilateral visits and international engagements.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Inclusiveness

There are opportunities for all MPs, including women and young MPs, to participate in parliamentary diplomacy activities. Parliamentary delegations are inclusive of different political groups.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Reporting

MPs are required to report back to parliament on their international engagements and other parliamentary diplomacy activities. Parliament monitors and regularly reports on follow-up action taken as a result of parliamentary diplomacy, including how resolutions of multilateral bodies have been addressed.

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

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Assessment criterion 4: Communication with the executive

There are well-established channels of communication with the executive about parliamentary diplomacy activities.

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

Assessment criterion 5: Resources

MPs have access to appropriate resources to support parliamentary diplomacy and international engagements, including financial resources, timely information and administrative support.

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.

Sources and further reading

- Daniel Fiott, "On the Value of Parliamentary Diplomacy", *Madriaga Papers* (2011).
- Geert Hamilton, *Parliamentary diplomacy: diplomacy with a democratic mandate* (2012).
- Davor Jančić and Stelios Stavridis, "Introduction: The Rise of Parliamentary Diplomacy in International Politics", *The Hague Journal of Democracy* (2016).

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Indicator 2.1: Parliamentary ethics

About this indicator

This indicator concerns parliamentary ethics, i.e. the standards of conduct that parliament as a whole, and MPs individually, are expected to follow both within and outside the parliamentary chamber.

It addresses professional and ethical standards spanning aspects including anti-corruption, conflicts of interest, codes of conduct, lobbying, and the disclosure of parliamentary income and expenditure.

This indicator comprises the following dimensions:

● Dimension 2.1.1: Anti-corruption

● Dimension 2.1.2: Conflicts of interest

● Dimension 2.1.3: Code of conduct

● Dimension 2.1.4: Parliamentary income and use of parliamentary resources

● Dimension 2.1.5: Lobbying

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Dimension 2.1.1: Anti-corruption

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 2.1: Parliamentary ethics
- Target 2: Accountable parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns parliament's duty to combat corruption in public institutions, including parliament, and across society as a whole. For the purpose of this dimension, corruption is understood as any action that is intended to abuse public power for private benefit, or that leads to such abuse.

Corruption is a global phenomenon that negatively affects the credibility of democratic institutions and their ability to deliver services and resources to citizens, thereby corroding human rights, threatening democracy and hampering economic development.

Parliament has an essential role to play in addressing corruption and creating environments that minimize opportunities and space for corrupt acts. MPs are responsible for ensuring that the legal framework is in line with the United Nations Convention against Corruption. The anti-corruption framework also applies to all elected officials, including MPs.

Through its oversight role, parliament systematically and effectively scrutinizes the work of the executive, the spending of public resources, the performance of ministerial portfolios and the overall implementation of national anti-corruption commitments.

Addressing corruption is a collective endeavour that requires parliament to cooperate with national anti-corruption bodies such as the independent supreme audit institution, the ombudsperson, inspectors-general and ethics commissions, as well as with other relevant bodies that report to parliament. The active participation of civil society organizations (CSOs) is also necessary in preventing and combating corruption.

Aspiring goal

Based _on a global comparative analysis, an aspiring goal for parliaments in the area of "anti-corruption" is as follows:_

A comprehensive anti-corruption legal framework is in place and complies fully with all the mandatory and recommended legislative measures set out in the United Nations Convention against Corruption.

Parliamentary committees conduct regular, in-depth oversight of the implementation of national anti-corruption commitments, laws and policies.

Parliament ensures that national anti-corruption bodies are adequately funded and able to operate independently, and regularly interacts with them.

The anti-corruption legal framework contains provisions relating to all elected officials, including MPs. Parliament's rules of procedure include measures to prevent, detect and address corrupt practices within parliament and, where necessary, to hold MPs and staff to account.

Parliament engages constructively with efforts by the public and CSOs to raise awareness, and to prevent and address corruption at all levels.

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.

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

- Laws and policies aimed at preventing and addressing corruption

- Parliamentary and committee reports on scrutiny of the implementation of anti-corruption laws, and on corruption cases

- Reports from national anti-corruption bodies and other independent bodies

- Provisions of parliament's rules of procedure addressing potential corrupt practices in parliament

- International and regional reports, such as Transparency International's *Corruption Perceptions Index*

- Reports by local CSOs and the media

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

Assessment criterion 1: Legal framework

A comprehensive anti-corruption legal framework is in place and complies fully with the mandatory and recommended legislative measures set out in the United Nations Convention against Corruption.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Oversight by committees

Parliamentary committees conduct regular, in-depth oversight of the implementation of national anti-corruption commitments, laws and policies.

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

Assessment criterion 3: National anti-corruption bodies

Parliament ensures that national anti-corruption bodies are adequately funded and able to operate independently, and regularly interacts with them.

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

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Assessment criterion 4: Elected officials

The anti-corruption legal framework contains provisions relating to all elected officials, including MPs. Parliament's rules of procedure include measures to prevent, detect and address corrupt practices within parliament and, where necessary, to hold MPs and staff to account.

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

Assessment criterion 5: Raising awareness

Parliament engages constructively with efforts by the public and CSOs to raise awareness, and to prevent and address corruption at all levels.

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.

Sources and further reading

- Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), *Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures,* revised edition (2018).

- Phil Mason, Rethinking strategies for an effective parliamentary role in combatting corruption (2021).

- National Democratic Institute (NDI)*, Toward the Development of International Standards for Democratic Legislatures* (2007).

- Transparency International, "Publications".

- United Nations, *United Nations Convention against Corruption* (2003).

- United Nations, *Report of the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption on its preparatory work for the special session of the General*

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Assembly on challenges and measures to prevent and combat corruption and strengthen international cooperation: Note by the Secretary-General – Addendum (2021).

● United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), *Legislative guide for the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption*, second revised edition (2012).

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Dimension 2.1.2: Conflicts of interest

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 2.1: Parliamentary ethics
- Target 2: Accountable parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns conflicts of interest, which are issues, matters or actions involving an MP or staff member whose private interests prevail over those of the public, and therefore come into direct conflict with that person's mandate as a public official.

Rules on conflicts of interest and measures for addressing them should be codified in parliament's rules of procedure or in the national legal framework. This dimension focuses primarily on conflicts of interest relating to the following aspects:

- The registration of private interests in parliamentary debates (known as "interest disclosure rules").
- The holding of multiple offices. Parliamentary rules may, for example, include time-bound restrictions following an MP's departure from office to prevent the MP from taking up elected office in a different government branch or level of government in the period immediately after an unsuccessful election or departure from office.
- The declaration of assets. Parliament's rules of procedure often require MPs to declare their assets and, potentially, the assets of close family members, as well as their liabilities. MPs are required to make such declarations when they join and leave parliament, and to provide regular updates.
- The accepting of gifts and hospitality. Parliament's rules of procedure contain clear rules on the accepting of gifts by MPs and other public office holders, including protocol gifts. MPs are typically required to declare sponsored travel and accommodation, and such declarations are made publicly available.
- The advising of foreign governments.

Practices in this area vary significantly among countries: some have separate laws aimed at preventing and managing conflicts of interest, while others have general anti-corruption legislation to address the issue. Some countries have adopted different requirements for public office holders, including MPs, and for parliamentary staff.

Such rules should be supported by strategies and practices to promote an organizational culture that does not tolerate conflicts of interest. For example, non-partisan parliamentary ethics bodies, commissions and councils offer distinct mechanisms to avoid conflicts of interest. It is also important that the process of identifying, resolving and managing conflict-of-interest situations is transparent.

See also _Dimension 1.2.3: Incompatibility of office_.

Aspiring goal

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

The legal framework codifies the rules on conflicts of interest and measures for addressing them. Any exemptions to these rules are limited and clearly defined.

Parliamentary mechanisms are in place to prevent, detect and address conflicts of interest within parliament and, where necessary, to hold MPs and staff to account.

Parliament's rules of procedure contain provisions regarding potential conflicts of interests, including the registration of MPs' private interests in parliamentary debates, the holding of multiple offices, the declaration of assets, the accepting of gifts and hospitality, and the advising of foreign governments.

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> A non-partisan or independent body is tasked with monitoring compliance with these rules and procedures, and with initiating procedures in the event of non-compliance. The process of identifying, resolving and managing conflicts of interest is transparent.
>
> Guidance is available to help MPs and staff ensure that they avoid conflicts of interest.

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 constitution and/or other aspects of the legal framework relating to conflicts of interest, particularly in a parliamentary context
- Provisions of parliament's rules of procedure addressing the registration of MPs' private interests in parliamentary debates, the holding of multiple offices, the declaration of assets, the acceptance of gifts and hospitality, and the advising of foreign governments
- Reports by the body tasked with monitoring compliance with conflict-of-interest rules and procedures
- Data on mandatory disclosures submitted by MPs
- Reports on compliance with conflict-of-interest rules and procedures

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

Assessment criterion 1: Rules on conflict of interest

The legal framework codifies the rules on conflicts of interest and measures for addressing them. Any exemptions to these rules are limited and clearly defined.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Parliamentary mechanisms

Parliamentary mechanisms are in place to prevent, detect and address conflicts of interest within parliament and, where necessary, to hold MPs and staff to account.

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

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Assessment criterion 3: Provisions regarding potential conflicts of interests

Parliament's rules of procedure contain provisions regarding potential conflicts of interests, including the registration of MPs' private interests in parliamentary debates, the holding of multiple offices, the declaration of assets, the accepting of gifts and hospitality, and the advising of foreign governments.

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

Assessment criterion 4: Compliance

A non-partisan or independent body is tasked with monitoring compliance with these rules and procedures, and with initiating procedures in the event of non-compliance. The process of identifying, resolving and managing conflicts of interest is transparent.

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

Assessment criterion 5: Guidance

Guidance is available to help MPs and staff ensure that they avoid conflicts of interest.

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.

Sources and further reading

- Gerard Carney, *Conflict of interest: Legislators, ministers and public officials* (1999).

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- Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), *Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures,* revised edition (2018).

- European Parliament, *The Effectiveness of Conflict of Interest Policies in the EU-Member States* (2020).

- Phil Mason, Rethinking strategies for an effective parliamentary role in combatting corruption (2021).

- Richard Messick, Income and assets declarations: Issues to consider in developing a disclosure regime (2009).

- National Democratic Institute (NDI)*, Legislative Ethics: A Comparative Analysis* (1999).

- NDI*, Toward the Development of International Standards for Democratic Legislatures* (2007).

- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), *Managing Conflict of Interest in the Public Service: OECD Guidelines and Country Experiences* (2003).

- OECD, "Managing conflict of interest".

- Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), *Background Study: Professional and Ethical Standards for Parliamentarians* (2012).

- Transparency International, "Publications".

- United Nations, *United Nations Convention against Corruption* (2003).

- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), *Legislative guide for the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption*, second revised edition (2012).

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Dimension 2.1.3: Code of conduct

> This dimension is part of:
>
> - Indicator 2.1: Parliamentary ethics
> - Target 2: Accountable parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns parliament's code of conduct, which may either be a standalone document or be combined with other codes such as a code of ethics.

In many parliaments, the conduct of MPs is partly regulated by the rules of procedure, which usually address the maintaining of order in the plenary. However, there is a growing trend towards the explicit codification of acceptable standards of parliamentary behaviour and conduct in general in the form of a code of conduct.

Parliament's code of conduct should be developed via an inclusive, transparent and consultative process, with the support of all political parties in parliament, and should be publicly available. All MPs should be required to accept the code of conduct upon taking office.

Depending on the jurisdiction, rules on the conduct of parliamentary staff, including senior officials such as the Secretary General and Deputy Secretary General, may be contained in the same code of conduct or in a separate code.

The code of conduct should establish clear, effective and fair rules of conduct, with mechanisms to ensure their enforcement in practice. It should clearly define the type of behaviour which constitutes an offence or misconduct and which may lead to a disciplinary process and sanctions. It should prohibit all forms of harassment – physical, sexual, economic, verbal, written and virtual – based on age, gender, ethnicity or any other personal characteristics.

Procedures for monitoring breaches of the code of conduct, for investigating whether misconduct has occurred and for sanctioning offenders should be clear, consistent and transparent.

See also _Dimension 2.2.4: Professionalism of the parliamentary administration_ and _Dimension 5.2.3: Combating sexism, harassment and violence_.

Aspiring goal

> _Based on a global comparative analysis, an aspiring goal for parliaments in the area of "code of conduct" is as follows:_
>
> Parliament has adopted a clear and enforceable code of conduct, which sets out the expected standards of conduct for MPs. Every MP must formally accept the code of conduct at the beginning of their parliamentary mandate.
>
> The code of conduct has been developed via an inclusive, transparent and consultative process, has the support of all political parties in parliament, and is publicly available.
>
> A designated body is tasked with overseeing compliance with the code of conduct, including receiving complaints, enforcing standards of conduct in parliament, and carrying out regular reviews and updates.
>
> Training is provided on the standards defined by the code, including induction training for new MPs. Guidance from the parliamentary administration is available to help MPs comply with the code.

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.

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

● Parliament's code of conduct

● A decision on the establishment of a conduct committee or similar designated body

● Information and records relating to the work of such a committee or body

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

Assessment criterion 1: Existence of a code of conduct

Parliament has adopted a clear and enforceable code of conduct, which sets out the expected standards of conduct for MPs. Every MP must formally accept the code of conduct at the beginning of their parliamentary mandate.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Support of all political groups

The code of conduct has been developed via an inclusive, transparent and consultative process, has the support of all political groups, and is publicly available.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Compliance

A designated body is tasked with overseeing compliance with the code of conduct, including receiving complaints, enforcing standards of conduct in parliament, and carrying out regular reviews and updates.

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

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Assessment criterion 4: Training and guidance

Training is provided on the standards defined by the code, including induction training for new MPs. Guidance from the parliamentary administration is available to help MPs comply with the code.

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.

Sources and further reading

● Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), *Recommended Benchmarks for Codes of Conduct applying to Members of Parliament* (2016).

● Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), *Background Study: Professional and Ethical Standards for Parliamentarians* (2012).

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Dimension 2.1.4: Parliamentary income and use of parliamentary resources

> This dimension is part of:
> - Indicator 2.1: Parliamentary ethics
> - Target 2: Accountable parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the responsibility for individual MPs, political groups and certain staff members to make disclosures as to their income and their use of parliamentary resources or funds allocated under the parliamentary budget. There is a legitimate public interest in how MPs and political groups use parliamentary resources or public funds, as well as a need for accountability.

Parliament should routinely publish information on MPs' salaries, allowances and other benefits, as well as the expenses they claim. In accordance with the legislative framework of each country, MPs might be required to disclose their non-parliamentary income, their assets, and the assets of their spouses and dependent children.

Information on the recruitment and remuneration of personal staff working for MPs – such as secretaries, assistants and researchers – should also be available to the public. In addition, some countries have rules and/or restrictions on the employment of family members.

Meanwhile, political groups usually have a legal obligation to provide information about their funding, and to regularly report on their expenditure, both to parliament and to the public.

It is important that the role of parliamentary staff is limited to the provision of legitimate support to MPs, and that parliamentary staff are not used for party-political purposes. Some parliaments have introduced provisions in their code of ethics that prohibit MPs from placing parliamentary staff in a position that could jeopardize their political impartiality or call into question the proper use of public funds.

See also *Dimension 2.2.1: Parliamentary expenditure*.

Aspiring goal

> *Based on a global comparative analysis, an aspiring goal for parliaments in the area of "parliamentary income and use of parliamentary resources" is as follows:*
>
> Parliament routinely publishes information about MPs' salaries, allowances and other benefits, as well as the expenses they claim.
>
> Political groups are required by law to report regularly on their funding and expenditure, and these reports are published on the parliamentary website.
>
> Parliament's rules of procedure contain clear provisions on recruitment, funding, remuneration and expenditure for MPs' personal staff who are not part of the parliamentary administration. Information about such recruitment, funding, remuneration and expenditure is publicly available.
>
> Parliament has rules and procedures in place to prevent the misuse of parliamentary resources, including parliamentary staff, for party-political or other purposes.
>
> A parliamentary body is responsible for monitoring the compliance of MPs and political groups with disclosure requirements, and for holding them to account in the event of non-compliance.

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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 parliament's rules of procedure or other regulations relating to the publication of information about MPs' salaries, allowances, other benefits and expenses
- Provisions of the legal framework requiring political groups to report on their funding and expenditure
- Reports by the parliamentary body tasked with monitoring the compliance of political groups with these requirements
- Provisions of parliament's rules of procedure relating to the employment of political staff of MPs or political groups
- Information about political staff and their salaries, allowances and other benefits
- Data on mandatory disclosures submitted by MPs

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

Assessment criterion 1: MPs' salaries, allowances, benefits and expenses

Parliament regularly publishes information about MPs' salaries, allowances and other benefits, as well as the expenses they claim.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Funding and expenditure of political groups

Political groups are required by law to report regularly on their funding and expenditure, and these reports are published on the parliamentary website.

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

Assessment criterion 3: MPs' personal staff

Parliament's rules of procedure contain clear provisions on recruitment, funding, remuneration and expenditure for MPs' personal staff who are not part of the parliamentary administration. Information about such recruitment, funding, remuneration and expenditure is publicly available.

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Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good	Excellent
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Evidence for this assessment criterion:

Assessment criterion 4: Misuse of parliamentary resources

Parliament has rules and procedures in place to prevent the misuse of parliamentary resources, including parliamentary staff, for party-political or other purposes.

Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good	Excellent
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Evidence for this assessment criterion:

Assessment criterion 5: Compliance

A parliamentary body is responsible for monitoring the compliance of MPs and political groups with these requirements, and for holding them to account in the event of non-compliance.

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.

Sources and further reading

● European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission), _Guidelines and Report on the Financing of Political Parties_ (2001).

● OpeningParliament.org, _Declaration on Parliamentary Openness_ (2012).

● Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), _Managing Conflict of Interest in the Public Service: OECD Guidelines and Country Experiences_ (2003).

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Dimension 2.1.5: Lobbying

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 2.1: Parliamentary ethics
- Target 2: Accountable parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the regulation of lobbying in the parliamentary context and its implementation in practice, as well as the transparency of lobbying activities. For the purpose of this dimension, lobbying is understood as acts by individuals or groups, each with varying and specific interests, which attempt to influence decisions taken at the political level.

While lobbying can be a legitimate means to put forwards the interests of a specific group, it can also be a mechanism to influence laws and policies at the expense of the public interest. Sound and enforceable legal frameworks, and corresponding parliamentary rules on lobbying, are important to prevent undue influence on MPs and other public decision makers.

The law should provide a precise definition of what lobbying is, what constitutes lobbying activities, and who must register as lobbyists. Potential categories of lobbyists could include professional consultancies and law firms, self-employed consultants, in-house lobbyists and trade/professional associations, civil society organizations, think tanks, research and academic institutions, organizations representing churches and religious communities, organizations representing local, regional and municipal authorities, and other public or mixed entities.

All lobbying activities, including so-called professional lobbying and lobbying by interest groups, should be recorded in a publicly available register with accurate and up-to-date information, including on lobbyists, their clients and finances.

Political activity between MPs with a view to obtaining support for their proposals does not fall within the scope of lobbying for the purpose of this dimension.

Aspiring goal

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

The legal framework contains provisions on the lobbying of MPs and other public office-holders. It sets out clearly defined categories of lobbyists who are required to register.

There are clear rules on transparency, confidentiality and conflicts of interest for lobbyists, as well as for MPs and other public office-holders.

There is a publicly available statutory register of parliamentary lobbyists, with complete information about lobbyists' clients and finances. Information in the register is updated in a timely manner.

MPs and other public office holders are obliged to report any suspicions of illegal lobbying activity to parliament and/or to other relevant authorities.

A non-partisan body is tasked with periodically reviewing compliance with disclosure requirements, and with holding lobbyists, MPs and other public office holders to account in the event of a breach of the rules.

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.

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

- Provisions of the legal framework relating to lobbying and lobbying activities
- Parliamentary rules of procedure relating to lobbying and lobbying activities
- Register of lobbyists (such as a statute or weblink)

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

Assessment criterion 1: Legal framework

The legal framework contains provisions on the lobbying of MPs and other public office holders. It sets out clearly defined categories of lobbyists who are required to register.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Rules on transparency, confidentiality and conflicts of interest

There are clear rules on transparency, confidentiality and conflicts of interest for lobbyists, as well as for MPs and other public office holders.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Register of lobbyists

There is a publicly available statutory register of parliamentary lobbyists, with complete information about lobbyists' clients and finances. Information in the register is updated in a timely manner.

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

Assessment criterion 4: Reporting of illegal lobbying activity

MPs and other public office holders are obliged to report any suspicions of illegal lobbying activity to parliament and/or to other relevant authorities.

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

Assessment criterion 5: Compliance

A non-partisan body is tasked with periodically reviewing compliance with disclosure requirements, and with holding lobbyists, MPs and other public office holders to account in the event of a breach of the rules.

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.

Sources and further reading

● European Commission, "Transparency Register".

● European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission), *Report on the legal framework for the regulation of lobbying in the Council of Europe member states* (2011).

● Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), *Recommendation of the Council on Principles for Transparency and Integrity in Lobbying* (2010).

● OECD, Lobbying in the 21st Century: Transparency, Integrity and Access (2021).

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Indicator 2.2: Institutional integrity

About this indicator

In democratic systems of government, parliament is often seen as the nation's highest institution. It is therefore essential for parliament to lead by example on institutional integrity, and to uphold the highest standards and values in its operations.

This indicator concerns various aspects of the institutional integrity that parliaments should aspire to achieve. These include accountability for the expenditure of parliamentary funds, and transparent procurement procedures. It also includes parliament's responsibilities with regard to freedom of information legislation.

This indicator also concerns the career development and professionalism of parliamentary staff, who are expected to perform their duties in a non-partisan manner in a highly political environment, as well as parliament's responsibility for its own institutional development.

This indicator comprises the following dimensions:

● 　　　Dimension 2.2.1: Parliamentary expenditure
● 　　　Dimension 2.2.2: Public procurement
● 　　　Dimension 2.2.3: Freedom of information
● 　　　Dimension 2.2.4: Professionalism of the parliamentary administration
● 　　　Dimension 2.2.5: Institutional development of parliament

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Dimension 2.2.1: Parliamentary expenditure

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 2.2: Institutional integrity
- Target 2: Accountable parliament

About this dimension

Parliament's autonomy over the setting and spending of its own budget implies a need for transparency and accountability as to how these funds are spent. This dimension covers the rules, procedures and practices by which parliament ensures such transparency and accountability.

Parliament should adhere to clear rules and procedures on all parliamentary expenditure. Clear rules and procedures are especially important for the salaries and allowances paid to MPs and staff, as well as for spending related to parliamentary office holders and political groups, which are matters of considerable public interest.

Parliament is expected to report to the public on its expenditure in all areas of the budget, including on the activities, services and performance of the parliamentary administration, and the salaries and allowances paid to MPs and their staff. Such reports should include comparisons with previous cycles, with data presented in a way that is easy for the general public to understand.

The expenditure of parliamentary funds should also be subject to various levels of oversight, including regular, independent audits and scrutiny by one or more parliamentary committees. The findings and reports of such audits and committees should be made public.

See also _Dimension 1.1.3: Budgetary autonomy_ and _Dimension 2.1.4: Parliamentary income and use of parliamentary resources_.

Aspiring goal

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

Parliament has clear and transparent rules and procedures on the expenditure of parliamentary funds, including the remuneration and allowances paid to MPs and their staff, as well as spending related to parliamentary office holders and political parties and groups.

Parliament is required to report regularly to the public on its expenditure.

Parliamentary expenditure is subject to regular, independent audits. Audit reports are made public.

A parliamentary committee provides oversight, including by scrutinizing the reports of the parliamentary administration and the audits of expenditure. Committee findings and reports are made public.

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 and/or parliament's rules of procedure relating to accountability for the expenditure of parliamentary funds
- Specific rules or procedures relating to the payment of remuneration and allowances to MPs and staff
- Parliamentary reports and information on expenditure published on the parliamentary website

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- Audit reports on parliamentary expenditure and/or on the remuneration and allowances paid to MPs and staff
- Reports from one or more oversight committees on parliamentary expenditure

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

Assessment criterion 1: Rules and procedures

Parliament has clear and transparent rules and procedures on the expenditure of parliamentary funds, including the remuneration and allowances paid to MPs and their staff, as well as spending related to parliamentary office holders and political parties and groups.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Public reporting

Parliament is required to report regularly to the public on its expenditure.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Independent audits

Parliamentary expenditure is subject to regular, independent audits. Audit reports are made public.

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

Assessment criterion 4: Oversight

A parliamentary committee provides oversight, including by scrutinizing the reports of the parliamentary administration and the audits of expenditure. Committee findings and reports are made public.

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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.

Sources and further reading

- David Beetham, _Parliament and democracy in the twenty-first century: A guide to good practice_ (2006).

- Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), _Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislators_, revised edition (2018).

- National Democratic Institute (NDI), _Toward the Development of International Standards for Democratic Legislatures_ (2007).

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Dimension 2.2.2: Public procurement

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 2.2: Institutional integrity
- Target 2: Accountable parliament

About this dimension

This dimension covers public procurement by parliament, which should follow a proper process that is transparent and competitive.

In some cases, this procurement process may be governed by a legal framework applicable to all publicly funded agencies. However, some parliaments have enacted a separate legal framework for parliamentary procurement, which meets the institution's specific needs. In either case, these provisions should mandate clear and comprehensive procurement guidelines, based on the following key principles:

- Value for money
- Fairness, transparency, openness and clarity
- Ethical conduct
- Competition and efficiency

Procurement is a specialized task requiring particular knowledge and skills. Parliament should therefore have staff with expertise in undertaking procurement, managing contracts, achieving value for money and communicating about complex procurement procedures. Mandatory training for all staff involved in the public procurement process should be provided regularly.

Parliament's public procurement process and decisions should be subject to internal and/or external audits or other reviews to provide assurances regarding compliance with the legal framework and procurement guidelines. In some countries, this task is entrusted to an independent body.

Aspiring goal

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

Parliament's procurement process is governed by a legal framework. Parliament has clear and comprehensive procurement guidelines that are in line with national and international obligations and best practice.

Parliament has staff with expertise in undertaking procurement, managing contracts, achieving value for money and communicating about complex procurement procedures.

All stages of the procurement process are completely transparent and open. All information on procurement is made publicly available.

Internal and/or external audits or other reviews provide assurances regarding compliance with the legal framework and procurement guidelines. The reports and findings of such audits or reviews are made publicly available.

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:

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- Provisions of the legal framework relating to public procurement by parliament

- Guidelines on the public procurement process in parliament

- Public information about all stages of the procurement process

- Reports of internal and/or external audits or other reviews of particular procurement exercises or the procurement process as a whole

- Data on possible non-compliance of public procurement with the law

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

Assessment criterion 1: Legal framework

Parliament's procurement process is governed by a legal framework. Parliament has clear and comprehensive procurement guidelines that are in line with national and international obligations and best practice.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Expertise

Parliament has staff with expertise in undertaking procurement, managing contracts, achieving value for money and communicating about complex procurement procedures.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Transparency

All stages of the procurement process are completely transparent and open. All information on procurement is made publicly available in a timely manner.

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

_____

Assessment criterion 4: Audits

Internal and/or external audits or other reviews provide assurances regarding compliance with the legal framework and procurement guidelines. The reports and findings of such audits or reviews are made publicly available.

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.

Sources and further reading

● Australian Government, *Commonwealth Procurement Rules* (2023).

● David Beetham, *Parliament and democracy in the twenty-first century: A guide to good practice* (2006).

● Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), *Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislators*, revised edition (2018).

● Government of Belize, *Public Procurement Procedures Handbook. Volume 1: Standardised Procurement Procedures* (2013).

● National Democratic Institute (NDI), *Toward the Development of International Standards for Democratic Legislatures* (2007).

● Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD*), OECD Recommendation of the Council on Public Procurement* (2015).

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Dimension 2.2.3: Freedom of information

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 2.2: Institutional integrity
- Target 2: Accountable parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns legislation on the right to information as it applies to parliament. Commonly known as freedom of information (FOI) legislation, this type of legislation has been enacted in many countries. FOI legislation recognizes that, since public-sector agencies receive public funds, citizens and organizations should expect to be able to request access to specific information regarding their activities and operations.

This same expectation applies to parliament, which should proactively publish information about its work and should also be required to provide specific information on request. This can be achieved either by making parliament part of a general FOI regime, or by establishing specific provisions for parliament, on the basis that parliament is different and separate from executive agencies.

FOI provisions, including those applicable to parliament, should following a number of general principles. These include the following:

- Proactive publishing of predetermined categories of information
- Publishing of open data
- Maximum disclosure
- Limited exceptions
- Facilitated access to information
- A right to appeal to an independent body

Parliamentary FOI provisions should mandate maximum disclosure of information, including on parliament's procedures and processes and on the parliamentary administration. Any exceptions should be narrowly defined. Parliamentary FOI requirements should take account of the parliamentary privilege enjoyed by individual MPs, particularly in their relationship with constituents, which may limit access to information in very specific circumstances that are defined by law or in other regulations.

Parliament should follow detailed FOI guidelines covering, among other things, the following aspects:

- Who can request access and how they can do so

- The deadlines for providing information

- The possibility of choosing the information format (hard copy, digital, etc.)

- The fact that access is free of charge by default, including access to information in an online, machine-readable format (if fees are applied, they should not be higher than the actual cost of retrieving and providing the information)

- The right to complain, and the appeal procedure if information is not provided, only partially provided or not provided in a timely manner

- The storing of data on the requests received and responses provided

See also _Indicator 3.1: Transparency of parliamentary processes._

Aspiring goal

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

The legal framework establishes a parliamentary FOI regime, which is in line with national and international obligations and best practice. Any citizen or organization can request information under the parliamentary FOI regime.

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> Parliament follows detailed FOI guidelines, which require maximum disclosure of information, including information relating to parliament's procedures and processes and to the parliamentary administration.
>
> Any exceptions are clearly and narrowly defined by law, with a strong "public interest" test for disclosure. Parliamentary privilege may limit access to information in very specific and clearly defined circumstances.
>
> The parliamentary FOI regime sets standards for the proactive publishing of predetermined categories of information, including in open and machine-readable formats.
>
> Information is provided in response to parliamentary FOI requests in a consistent and timely manner. Refusals to disclose information, or failures to disclose full information, are reviewed by an independent external body, whose decisions are binding.

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 relating to parliamentary FOI

● Parliamentary FOI guidelines

● Categories of proactively published information

● Statistics about FOI requests, including the number of requests received and approved, timeliness, cost, and any appeals and their outcomes

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

Assessment criterion 1: Parliamentary FOI regime

The legal framework establishes a parliamentary FOI regime, which is in line with national and international obligations and best practice. Any citizen or organization can request information under the parliamentary FOI regime.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Guidelines

Parliament follows detailed FOI guidelines, which require maximum disclosure of information, including information relating to parliament's procedures and processes and to the parliamentary administration.

Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good	Excellent
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Evidence for this assessment criterion:

Assessment criterion 3: Exceptions

Any exceptions are clearly and narrowly defined by law, with a strong "public interest" test for disclosure. Parliamentary privilege may limit access to information in very specific and clearly defined circumstances.

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

Assessment criterion 4: Proactive publishing

The parliamentary FOI regime sets standards for the proactive publishing of predetermined categories of information, including in open and machine-readable formats.

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

Assessment criterion 5: Compliance

Information is provided in response to parliamentary FOI requests in a consistent and timely manner. Refusals to disclose information, or failures to disclose full information, are reviewed by an independent external body, whose decisions are binding.

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

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Recommendations for change

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

Sources and further reading

● ARTICLE 19, *The Public's Right to Know: Principles on Freedom of Information Legislation* (1999).

● David Beetham, *Parliament and democracy in the twenty-first century: A guide to good practice* (2006).

● Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), *Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislators*, revised edition (2018).

● National Democratic Institute (NDI), *Toward the Development of International Standards for Democratic Legislatures* (2007).

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Dimension 2.2.4: Professionalism of the parliamentary administration

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 2.2: Institutional integrity
- Target 2: Accountable parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns various aspects of the professionalism of the parliamentary administration, including professional and ethical standards of conduct, complaints procedures and career management of parliamentary staff.

Parliaments generally either follow the code(s) of ethics, standards and conduct applicable to the civil service in general, or have developed separate code(s) specifically for parliamentary staff. In either case, the code(s) should set out clear expectations on professionalism and ethical conduct, on respect for parliament, its staff and the people they serve, and on integrity, accountability and impartiality.

The code(s) may cover a number of matters, including those listed below:

- Providing neutral and non-partisan support to parliament and MPs
- Behaving honestly, lawfully and with integrity
- Treating everyone with respect and courtesy, and without harassment (especially women and minority groups)
- Avoiding conflicts of interest or the improper use of a position for personal gain
- Upholding the good reputation of parliament and of the nation as a whole

There should be a clearly defined and robust process for the filing and independent investigation of complaints concerning alleged breaches of the code(s), with sanctions applied where such complaints are upheld.

The parliamentary administration has an important responsibility for the training and professional development of parliamentary staff, and for the development of an ethos of parliamentary service. Through its human-resources policies and practices, the parliamentary administration should ensure that staff have the skills and knowledge to support the institutional continuity of parliament.

See also _Dimension 2.1.4: Parliamentary income and use of parliamentary resources_ and

Dimension 5.2.3: Combating sexism, harassment and violence.

Aspiring goal

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

The legal framework requires the development of code(s) of ethics, standards and conduct for parliamentary staff.

Such code(s) exist in practice, apply to all parliamentary staff, and set out clear expectations on professionalism and ethical conduct, on respect for parliament, its staff and the people they serve, and on integrity, accountability and impartiality.

There is a clearly defined and robust process for the filing and independent investigation of complaints concerning alleged breaches of the code(s), with sanctions applied where such complaints are upheld.

The parliamentary administration has a professional development framework that promotes an ethos of parliamentary service and ensures that staff have the skills and knowledge to support the institutional continuity of parliament.

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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 relating to code(s) of ethics, standards and conduct for parliamentary staff

●　　Code(s) of ethics, standards and conduct for parliamentary staff

●　　Statistics relating to complaints concerning alleged breaches of the code(s) and the outcomes of the related investigations

●　　Human-resources policies and practices relating to professional development and the development of an ethos of parliamentary service

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

Assessment criterion 1: Code(s) of ethics, standards and conduct

The legal framework requires the development of code(s) of ethics, standards and conduct for parliamentary staff.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Scope

Code(s) of ethics, standards and conduct for parliamentary staff exist in practice, apply to all parliamentary staff, and set out clear expectations on professionalism and ethical conduct, on respect for parliament, its staff and the people they serve, and on integrity, accountability and impartiality.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Complaints

There is a clearly defined and robust process for the filing and independent investigation of complaints concerning alleged breaches of the code(s), with sanctions applied where such complaints are upheld.

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

Assessment criterion 4: Professional development

The parliamentary administration has a professional development framework that promotes an ethos of parliamentary service and ensures that staff have the skills and knowledge to support the institutional continuity of parliament.

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.

Sources and further reading

- Association of Secretaries General of Parliaments (ASGP) *Principles for recruitment and career management of staff of the parliamentary administration* (2014).

- David Beetham, *Parliament and democracy in the twenty-first century: A guide to good practice* (2006).

- Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), *Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislators*, revised edition (2018).

- Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), *Guidelines for the elimination of sexism, harassment and violence against women in parliament* (2019).

- IPU, *Comparative research paper on parliamentary administration* (2020).

- National Democratic Institute (NDI), *Toward the Development of International Standards for Democratic Legislatures* (2007).

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Dimension 2.2.5: Institutional development of parliament

This dimension is part of: • Indicator 2.2: Institutional integrity • Target 2: Accountable parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns processes for the institutional development of parliament, including strategic planning, and the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of parliamentary performance.

Like many other institutions, parliaments have increasingly started to take a strategic approach to planning their development, which involves setting long-term goals for the organization, diagnosing gaps in capacity or processes, and deciding on actions to achieve the goals. M&E systems, meanwhile, help to track progress and identify where adjustments are needed.

Practices vary as to who is responsible for institutional development within parliament. Many parliaments have a modernization or similar committee entrusted with this role, while in others, this may be part of the responsibilities of the parliamentary leadership. Within the parliamentary administration, there may be dedicated units for strategic planning, M&E and/or innovation.

Many parliaments benefit from external support for their institutional development from sources such as the United Nations system, specialized parliamentary development organizations, twinning arrangements with other parliaments, and national partnerships with civil society organizations and academia. Institutional development is often backed by funding from multilateral or bilateral partners. Whatever the particular arrangements, the _Common Principles for Support to Parliaments_ firmly establish the need for parliament to be in the driving seat of its own institutional development.

Aspiring goal

Based on a global comparative analysis, an aspiring goal for parliaments in the area of "institutional development of parliament" is as follows: Parliament has a strategic plan for its institutional development, which sets out a long-term vision and goals and actions to achieve them. Strategic planning is an inclusive process and the plan is regularly reviewed and updated. Responsibility for institutional development is clearly allocated within parliament, and the parliamentary administration has established teams to support institutional development. Parliament has endorsed the _Common Principles for Support to Parliaments_, which are used in practice by parliament and its partners. Parliament has an M&E system to track progress and identify where adjustments are needed. Parliament encourages a culture of innovation that allows new processes to be tested and, where appropriate, incorporated into its work.

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:

● Strategies and plans relating to institutional development

● Reports on the implementation of such strategies and plans

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- Evidence of an established M&E system

- Reports of self-assessment exercises, including findings and results

- Terms of reference, minutes and reports of the parliamentary body (or bodies) responsible for institutional development

- Evidence of innovative practices

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

Assessment criterion 1: Strategic planning

Parliament has a strategic plan for its institutional development, which sets out a long-term vision and goals and actions to achieve them. Strategic planning is an inclusive process and the plan is regularly reviewed and updated.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Responsibility for institutional development

Responsibility for institutional development is clearly allocated within parliament, and the parliamentary administration has established teams to support institutional development.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Common Principles for Support to Parliaments

Parliament has endorsed the _Common Principles for Support to Parliaments_, which are used in practice by parliament and its partners.

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

Assessment criterion 4: M&E

Parliament has an M&E system to track progress and identify where adjustments are needed.

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

Assessment criterion 5: Innovation

Parliament encourages a culture of innovation that allows new processes to be tested and, where appropriate, incorporated into its work.

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.

Sources and further reading

- Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), National Democratic Institute (NDI), European Parliament and National Assembly of France, *Common Principles for Support to Parliaments* (2014).

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Indicator 3.1: Transparency of parliamentary processes

About this indicator

This indicator, which concerns parliamentary transparency, is based on the premise that the public should be able to understand and engage with parliament, and be informed about, observe or participate in parliamentary processes. Parliament should therefore provide information about its decisions and procedures in a timely manner, and in a form that can be accessed and understood by the public.

This indicator covers transparency in the full range of parliamentary processes, including plenary and committee work, MPs and political groups, as well as international parliamentary cooperation. It also covers the legislative process, as well as all aspects of the budget cycle.

This indicator comprises the following dimensions:

●   Dimension 3.1.1: Transparency of parliamentary work

●   Dimension 3.1.2: Transparency of the legislative process

●   Dimension 3.1.3: Transparency of the budget cycle and the parliamentary budget

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Dimension 3.1.1: Transparency of parliamentary work

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 3.1: Transparency of parliamentary processes
- Target 3: Transparent parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the general principles, policies and practices relating to the transparency of parliamentary work.

In order for citizens to be able to be fully informed about its decisions and activities, parliament needs to have clearly defined policies and practices on transparency in relation to all aspects of its work. This includes plenary and committee work, international parliamentary cooperation, and information about MPs' work, remuneration and allowances. The information provided should be comprehensive, timely, and available in formats that are accessible and usable for all groups in society.

Transparency also involves explaining parliamentary processes, so that citizens can learn about, and better understand, how parliament works and, consequently, how to use and put into context the information available to them.

In order to achieve desirable levels of transparency, parliament requires a sufficient number of capable staff, digital systems for storing and providing access to information, as well as other resources.

See also _Indicator 2.2: Institutional integrity_ and _Indicator 6.2: Public participation in parliamentary processes_.

Aspiring goal

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

Parliament's rules of procedure establish principles and policies on transparency in all aspects of parliamentary work, and set out how these are translated into practice.

Information about all aspects of parliamentary work is made available in a timely manner, in formats that can be easily accessed and understood by all groups in society.

Parliament regularly publishes explanatory and educational materials on the role of parliament, committees and MPs, and on parliamentary processes, procedures and activities.

Parliament has a sufficient number of staff, digital systems and other resources to fulfil its transparency responsibilities.

Parliament constantly monitors trends and experiences in other parliaments, gathers feedback from the public and seeks to improve its practices on transparency.

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 parliament's rules of procedure relating to the transparency of parliamentary work

- Information made available or accessible from parliamentary website concerning parliamentary work

- Statistics on the number of visits to the parliamentary website

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● Any commentary on the accessibility or usability of information about parliamentary work made available on the website

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

Assessment criterion 1: Principles, policies and practices

Parliament's rules of procedure establish principles and policies on transparency in all aspects of parliamentary work . The rules of procedure also set out how these principles and policies are translated into practice.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Information about parliamentary work

Comprehensive information about all aspects of parliamentary work is made available in a timely manner, and in formats that can be easily accessed and understood by all groups in society.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Explanatory and educational materials

Parliament regularly publishes explanatory and educational materials on the role of parliament, committees and MPs, and on parliamentary processes, procedures and activities.

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

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Assessment criterion 4: Resources

Parliament has a sufficient number of staff, digital systems and other resources to fulfil its transparency responsibilities.

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

Assessment criterion 5: Continual improvement

Parliament regularly evaluates its level of transparency, solicits feedback from the public and looks for ways to further improve transparency.

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.

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Dimension 3.1.2: Transparency of the legislative process

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 3.1: Transparency of parliamentary processes
- Target 3: Transparent parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the transparency of the legislative process, from the introduction of a proposal for a law to its adoption law by parliament. It also relates to how information about legislation is made available to the public, including the scope, channels, forms and timing of such information.

Aspiring goal

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

Parliament makes available to the public all relevant information and documents generated throughout the legislative process. This includes:

- the full text and status of proposals for laws and revisions to existing legislation
- all proposed amendments
- the parliamentary agenda and schedule
- records and minutes of plenary and committee discussions and votes
- public and expert opinions submitted to or prepared for parliament
- other reports and background information that form part of the record on a given piece of legislation.

Information on draft legislation is made available on the parliamentary website in real time or as soon as it is available internally, and in formats that can easily be searched, downloaded, used and shared.

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 parliament's rules of procedure relating to the transparency of the legislative process

- Other parliamentary and/or committee rules of procedure establishing obligations relating to legislative information

- Links to website pages containing information about the legislative process

- Parliamentary records including data such as the number of visits to legislation-related pages and the number of downloads

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

Assessment criterion 1: Information about proposals for laws

Parliament publishes information about all proposals for laws in a timely manner, including the full text and status of proposals for laws or revisions to existing legislation.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Information generated during the legislative process

Parliament publishes all information generated during the legislative process in a timely manner. This includes the parliamentary agenda and schedules, the texts of all amendments, records of plenary and committee discussions and votes, and all other reports and background information created for or by parliament that form part of the record on a given piece of legislation, including public and expert opinions submitted to or prepared for parliament.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Accessibility of information

Information generated during the legislative process is made available on the parliamentary website in real time or as soon as it is available internally, in formats that can be easily accessed and understood by all groups in society.

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.

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Dimension 3.1.3: Transparency of the budget cycle and the parliamentary budget

> This dimension is part of:
>
> - Indicator 3.1: Transparency of parliamentary processes
> - Target 3: Transparent parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the transparency of the budget cycle, including budget development, adoption and execution. This includes transparency and clarity over parliament's role in the budget cycle, as well as transparency over parliament's own budget.

The national budget is the most important piece of legislation parliament considers on an annual basis. For this reason, the transparency of the budget cycle is vital for public understanding and parliamentary scrutiny of the executive's spending priorities, planned revenues, capital investments and public debt.

Since the executive usually develops the draft budget, it is also responsible, to a large extent, for the transparency of the budget. Parliament can play its part by ensuring that the draft budget is published in accordance with the budget calendar, by ensuring full transparency of parliamentary proceedings related to the approval of the budget, oversight of in-year budget execution and _ex-post_ review of the budget.

Similar standards should be extended to parliament's own budget, which should be subject to the same level of transparency and scrutiny as the national budget.

See also _Dimension 1.1.3: Budgetary autonomy_, _Indicator 1.8: Budget_, _Dimension 2.2.1: Parliamentary expenditure_, and _Dimension 6.2.3: Participation in the budget cycle_.

Aspiring goal

> _Based on a global comparative analysis, an aspiring goal for parliaments in the area of "transparency of the budget cycle and the parliamentary budget" is as follows:_
>
> The legal framework provides for the transparency of the entire budget cycle, including the development, consideration, approval and execution of the national budget, as well as _ex-post_ review.
>
> Information is made available, in a timely manner, about parliamentary actions at all stages of the budget cycle. This information is accessible and usable by all groups in society.
>
> Parliament publishes explanatory materials outlining the parliamentary process related to the entire budget cycle.
>
> Parliament is required to publish comprehensive information about all aspects of the parliamentary budget, including on the parliamentary website.

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 and/or parliament's rules of procedure relating to the transparency of all aspects of the national budget and the parliamentary budget

- Available or accessible information about all aspects of the national budget, the parliamentary budget and the process for parliamentary consideration of the budget

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- Statistics on the number of visits to websites containing information about the national budget and the parliamentary budget

- Any commentary on the accessibility or usability of the information available on these websites

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

Assessment criterion 1: Legal framework

The legal framework provides for the transparency of the budget cycle, including the development, consideration, approval and execution of the national budget, as well as *ex post* review.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Information about parliamentary actions

Information is made available about parliamentary actions at all stages of the budget cycle, in a timely manner and in formats that can be easily accessed and understood by all groups in society.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Explanatory materials

Parliament makes available explanatory materials outlining the parliamentary process related to budget consideration and approval, oversight of budget execution, and *ex-post* review.

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

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Assessment criterion 4: Parliamentary budget

The legal framework and/or parliament's rules of procedure require the publication of comprehensive information about all aspects of the parliamentary budget, including on the parliamentary website.

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.

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Indicator 3.2: Parliamentary communication and outreach

About this indicator

This indicator concerns the approach that parliament takes to institutional communication and outreach. Communicating with the public about what parliament does is a basic condition for people to be able to understand and even participate in parliamentary work.

Parliaments use a range of channels to inform and communicate with the public, including broadcasting, websites, social media and educational materials. They seek to ensure that parliamentary information is accessible to all groups in society, including rural communities and people without access to the internet.

Outreach to the public involves a mix of in-person and online activities. It implies creating opportunities for people to interact with parliament on the parliamentary premises, as well as where they live, in their time, on issues which they care about.

See also *Indicator 6.1: Parliamentary environment for public participation*.

This indicator comprises the following dimensions:

● Dimension 3.2.1: Institutional communication

● Dimension 3.2.2: Parliamentary website

● Dimension 3.2.3: Outreach activities

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Dimension 3.2.1: Institutional communication

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 3.2: Parliamentary communication and outreach

- Target 3: Transparent parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the various means of communication that parliament uses to inform the public about parliament and its activities. Many parliaments have adopted an institutional communication policy or strategy and created specialized communications units to support this work.

Parliaments typically use a mix of channels as part of their efforts to reach all groups in society, including children and young people, people without access to the internet, and disadvantaged groups. This requires sufficient resources and tools to support the communication strategy.

Some of the most common channels of communication include written publications, print media, radio and television broadcasting, the internet, social media, and mobile platforms. Parliamentary proceedings are often broadcast live in formats that include public television, radio channels, dedicated parliamentary channels, and live-streaming on the parliamentary website.

Aspiring goal

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

Parliament has adopted an institutional communication policy or strategy that sets out how it aims to keep all groups in society informed about its work.

Parliament has sufficient human and financial resources to support effective communication and to enable all groups in society to access parliamentary information.

The public has access to live broadcasts of parliamentary proceedings, particularly plenary sessions, as well as to archives of recordings of the proceedings.

Parliament uses social media to inform and interact with the public about the work of parliament.

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 relating to media access to parliamentary proceedings

- Provisions of parliament's rules of procedure relating to the broadcasting of parliamentary proceedings

- Strategies, procedures, reports or other documents describing parliamentary communication

- Staff structure, and financial and other documents describing parliamentary resources dedicated to communication

- Details and periodic updates of parliament's communication policy or strategy, including its outreach and social media strategies, if relevant

- Activity on parliamentary social media accounts and handles, as well as statistics on traffic and interaction with the content posted on these accounts

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

Assessment criterion 1: Communication policy or strategy

Parliament has adopted an institutional communication policy or strategy that sets out how parliament aims to inform all groups in society about its work using a range of means of communication.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Resources

Parliament has sufficient human and financial resources to support effective communication and to enable all groups in society to access parliamentary information.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Broadcasting

Parliamentary proceedings, particularly plenary sessions, are broadcast live other than in exceptional cases, which are limited and clearly defined. Live and archived broadcasts are widely accessible at no extra cost to the public.

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

Assessment criterion 4: Social media

Parliament has accounts on the main social media channels, and actively posts content and interacts with the public on these channels.

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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.

Sources and further reading

- David Beetham, *Parliament and democracy in the twenty-first century: A guide to good practice* (2006).

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Dimension 3.2.2: Parliamentary website

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 3.2: Parliamentary communication and outreach

- Target 3: Transparent parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the parliamentary website, which should provide comprehensive, timely and accurate information about parliament. The parliamentary website should also enable citizens to participate in parliamentary processes, for example by submitting comments and questions, and contacting MPs, committees and parliamentary officials.

Website content typically includes the following:

- The agenda, calendars and records of plenary sessions and committee meetings
- The profiles of MPs and their activities and votes
- Internal rules, administrative procedures and workflows
- The text and status of proposals for laws, as well as documentation generated during the legislative process
- Live-streams and recordings of parliamentary proceedings, particularly plenary sessions
- Datasets in machine-readable formats
- Information about international parliamentary activities
- Any other relevant documentation generated in parliamentary processes

The parliamentary website should be easy to use and understand and should be accessible to all groups in society, including persons with disabilities. Website content should be made available in all applicable languages.

See also *Dimension 1.5.5: Digital technologies*, *Dimension 3.3.2: Access for persons with disabilities* and *Dimension 5.2.4: Multilingual service delivery*.

Aspiring goal

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

Parliament has established appropriate goals and governance structures for its website and allocated sufficient resources to ensure that the website is accurate and up to date.

The parliamentary website provides comprehensive, timely and accurate information about the work of parliament.

The parliamentary website is designed to meet the needs of target audiences and to be easy to use, and meets accessibility standards, including for people with disabilities.

The parliamentary website includes datasets in open, machine-readable formats.

Parliament uses its website to foster dialogue with the public and to facilitate contact between citizens and MPs, committees and parliamentary officials.

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:

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- Links to various sections of the parliamentary website

- Details of a dedicated budget and staff for the website

- Details of security infrastructure and related reports

- Strategic vision and planning

- Evidence that the parliamentary website is periodically reviewed/evaluated

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

Assessment criterion 1: Website governance

Governance structures exist that set the goals for the parliamentary website, allocate sufficient human and technical resources, and periodically evaluate progress towards these goals.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Website content

The parliamentary website provides comprehensive, timely and accurate information about parliament and parliamentary proceedings.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Usability

Information on the parliamentary website is well-organized, including for non-expert users, and is written in plain language. Datasets are available in open, machine-readable formats.

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

Assessment criterion 4: Accessibility

The parliamentary website meets recognized accessibility standards, including for persons with disabilities.

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

Assessment criterion 5: Dialogue with the public

The parliamentary website provides a range of means for the public to participate in the work of parliament, and to contact MPs, committees and parliamentary officials.

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.

Sources and further reading

- Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), "Centre for Innovation in Parliament".
- IPU, _Guidelines for Parliamentary Websites_ (2009).
- IPU, _World e-Parliament Report 2018_ (2018).
- IPU, _World e-Parliament Report 2020_ (2021).
- IPU, _World e-Parliament Report 2022_ (2022).
- United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) and IPU, _Technological Options for Capturing and Reporting Parliamentary Proceedings_ (2014).

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Dimension 3.2.3: Outreach activities

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 3.2: Parliamentary communication and outreach
- Target 3: Transparent parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns parliamentary outreach, which typically focuses on creating direct contact between parliament and citizens through activities either on or off the parliamentary premises, such as school visits, open days, parliamentary weeks and mobile parliament events.

Many parliaments have adopted a dedicated outreach policy or strategy and annual plans, or have made outreach a part of their overall communication strategy. Effective outreach requires sufficient human and financial resources, including dedicated parliamentary staff to plan and organize activities.

Parliaments should seek to ensure that outreach activities are targeted at all groups in society. Participants in these events typically might include people from civil society organizations, universities, schools, think tanks, professional organizations and similar.

Parliaments support their outreach activities by producing explanatory and educational materials such as bulletins, guides, leaflets, videos, animations, journals and other publications that provide insights into the work of parliament.

Aspiring goal

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

Parliament has an outreach policy or strategy or has made outreach a part of its overall communication strategy and has annual plans for outreach activities.

Parliament has sufficient human and financial resources to support effective outreach to all groups in society.

Parliament regularly opens its doors to the public and organizes outreach activities throughout the country.

Parliament produces explanatory and educational materials to facilitate public understanding of its work and functions.

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:

- Strategies, policies, annual plans, procedures, reports or other documents describing parliamentary outreach
- Staff structure, and financial and other documents describing parliamentary resources dedicated to outreach

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- Statistics on the number of events held, the number of participants, the number of publications produced and distributed, and the number of visits to the parliamentary premises, as well as statistics on visitors, and similar

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

Assessment criterion 1: Outreach policy or strategy

Parliament has an outreach policy or strategy, as either a stand-alone document or a part of an overall communication strategy. Parliamentary staff create and implement an annual plan of activities based on this policy or strategy.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Outreach activities

Parliament organizes various outreach activities on and off the parliamentary premises, with the participation of the Speaker(s), MPs and a wide range of members of the public.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Explanatory and educational materials

Parliament produces explanatory and educational materials that support its outreach strategy.

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

_____

Assessment criterion 4: Resources

Parliament has sufficient human and financial resources to support effective outreach to all groups in society.

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.

Sources and further reading

● Global Partners Governance, *Parliaments and Public Engagement* (2017).

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Indicator 3.3: Access to parliament

About this indicator

This indicator concerns physical access for the public, persons with disabilities and the media to the proceedings of parliament, wherever they take place. It covers access to all parliamentary venues, such as the parliamentary building, the plenary chamber(s) and committee meeting rooms, including for persons with disabilities, as well as to events organized on or off the parliamentary premises.

Physical access to parliament is an important democratic principle. Nevertheless, parliament sometimes has to carefully balance the principle of access with other legitimate concerns, such as security and public health.

This indicator comprises the following dimensions:

●   Dimension 3.3.1: Physical access to parliament

●   Dimension 3.3.2: Access for persons with disabilities

●   Dimension 3.3.3: Media access to parliament

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Dimension 3.3.1: Physical access to parliament

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 3.3: Access to parliament

- Target 3: Transparent parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the possibility for members of the public to have access to the parliamentary premises and to observe parliamentary proceedings. The openness of parliament to the public is of both symbolic and practical importance. It shapes the way in which citizens think of their parliament and interact with it.

Members of the public should be allowed and encouraged to access all parliamentary venues, including the parliamentary building, the plenary chamber(s) and committee meeting rooms, as well as events organized on or off the parliamentary premises.

It is important for parliament to carefully balance the principle of access with other legitimate concerns. Any restrictions on physical access should be limited, proportional and imposed on reasonable grounds, such as security and public health.

Parliamentary staff should have clear guidelines on managing all aspects of public access, covering the entire process from visitor registration to the point at which visitors leave the premises. Parliament should dedicate sufficient resources to informing the public about opportunities to visit parliament, and about practical arrangements for visitors. Some parliaments have dedicated visitor centres or visitor services to encourage and facilitate public access.

Aspiring goal

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

The legal framework provides for public access to all venues where parliamentary proceedings take place, and to all parliamentary activities that are not explicitly closed to the public.

Any restrictions on public access to parliament are established in the legal framework, and are limited, proportional and imposed on reasonable grounds.

Clear guidelines for parliamentary staff outline the management of all aspects of public access, and are applied consistently.

In practice, parliament encourages people to visit parliament and dedicates sufficient resources to welcoming visitors to parliament.

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 and/or parliament's rules of procedure relating to physical access to the parliamentary building and all other venues where parliamentary proceedings take place

- Guidelines for parliamentary staff on physical access to parliament

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- Statistics on visitor numbers

- Reports from parliament's visitor centre or services

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

Assessment criterion 1: Legal framework

The legal framework provides for public access to all venues where parliamentary proceedings take place.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Restrictions on access

Any restrictions on public access to parliament are established in the legal framework, and are limited, proportional and imposed on reasonable grounds. Information about any such restrictions is made widely available.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Guidelines for parliamentary staff

Parliament has clear guidelines for parliamentary staff outlining the management of all aspects of public access. These guidelines are applied consistently.

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

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Assessment criterion 4: Resources

Parliament dedicates sufficient resources to informing the public about visiting opportunities and arrangements.

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.

Sources and further reading

● David Beetham, *Parliament and democracy in the twenty-first century: A guide to good practice* (2006).

● Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), *Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislators*, revised edition (2018).

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Dimension 3.3.2: Access for persons with disabilities

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 3.3: Access to parliament
- Target 3: Transparent parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns ensuring that persons with disabilities are able to access both the parliamentary premises and information about parliament. Parliament needs to ensure that it is accessible to all groups in society.

The physical structure of a building – especially an older or heritage building – can create barriers for persons with disabilities, making it difficult for them to access the parliamentary chamber(s) and/or committee rooms. The parliamentary building may need to be retrofitted to meet accessibility standards, such as by removing all physical barriers to entering and moving around the premises, installing accessible bathrooms, or installing signage for persons with hearing and visual impairments.

The same principle applies to access to information about parliament. Parliamentary proceedings may be accompanied by sign-language interpretation, or be made available on the parliamentary website in formats that are compatible with assistive technologies. Publications may, for example, be produced in Braille or in other ways that enhance accessibility.

Parliament should consult regularly with civil society organizations representing the interests of persons with disabilities, and should solicit their input and assistance in ensuring that parliament is accessible to all.

Aspiring goal

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

The legal framework requires parliament to ensure access for persons with disabilities to the parliamentary premises and to parliamentary proceedings.

Parliament ensures that, in practice, there are no barriers to access the parliamentary premises for persons with disabilities.

Parliament makes information about parliamentary proceedings, as well as parliamentary publications, available in formats that facilitate access for persons with disabilities.

Parliament consults regularly with civil society organizations to seek input and advice about ensuring that parliament is accessible to all people, regardless of disability.

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 and/or parliament's rules of procedure relating to access for persons with disabilities to the parliamentary building, to parliament's processes and proceedings, and to information about the work of parliament

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- Statistics on access by persons with disabilities to the parliamentary building, to parliament's processes and proceedings, and to information about the work of parliament

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

Assessment criterion 1: Legal framework

The legal framework and/or parliament's rules of procedure require parliament to ensure equal access for persons with disabilities to the parliamentary building, to parliament's processes and proceedings, and to information about the work of parliament.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Physical access to parliament

In practice, there are no obstacles to equal access for persons with disabilities to the parliamentary premises and to its proceedings.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Access to information about parliament

Parliament makes information about parliamentary proceedings, as well as parliamentary publications, available in formats that facilitate access for persons with disabilities.

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

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Assessment criterion 4: Consultation

Parliament consults regularly with civil society organizations to seek input and advice about ensuring that parliament is accessible to all people, regardless of disability.

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.

Sources and further reading

●   David Beetham, *Parliament and democracy in the twenty-first century: A guide to good practice* (2006).

●   Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), *Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislators*, revised edition (2018).

●   National Democratic Institute (NDI), *Toward the Development of International Standards for Democratic Legislatures* (2007).

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Dimension 3.3.3: Media access to parliament

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 3.3: Access to parliament
- Target 3: Transparent parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns provisions and arrangements for media access to the parliamentary premises. The media has a special role in democratic societies in reporting on parliament's activities. Parliament needs to guarantee free and unfettered access to its proceedings to the media, and to provide adequate space and conditions for journalists and technicians to work.

Where parliament applies a media credentialling system, it should provide for permanent registration of media outlets and facilitate access to parliament. Credentialling should not be used to limit the diversity of media outlets reporting on parliament, or to exercise political control.

It is also important that media outlets have reasonable space, infrastructure and technical support to carry out their work, including Wi-Fi, cables, plugs, monitors and microphones.

Relations between parliament and the media may be facilitated by parliament's media relations unit, or by dedicated staff tasked with liaising with the media. Such units and/or staff should work in a non-partisan manner. Parliaments sometimes provide training or informational material to journalists to familiarize them with parliamentary procedures.

Aspiring goal

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

Parliament's rules of procedure guarantee access for the media to the parliamentary building and to all venues where parliamentary proceedings take place, regardless of media type, ownership, political leaning or similar. Any restrictions on media access are limited, proportional and imposed on reasonable grounds.

Parliament has a credentialling system in place to facilitate media access to parliament.

Parliament provides media outlets with appropriate space, infrastructure and technical support to carry out their work.

In practice, media outlets have access to the parliamentary premises, and can report freely on parliamentary activities.

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 parliament's rules of procedure relating to the relationship between parliament and the media
- Statistics on media credentialling and access to parliament for media representatives

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

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Assessment criterion 1: Rules of procedure

Parliament's rules of procedure guarantee access for the media to the parliamentary building and to all venues where parliamentary proceedings take place.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Restrictions on access

Any restrictions on media access are limited, proportional and imposed on reasonable grounds. There are no unwarranted obstacles preventing the media from reporting on plenary sessions or committee meetings.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Credentialling system

Parliament's credentialling system allows a wide diversity of media outlets to access parliament and report freely on parliamentary activities.

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

Assessment criterion 4: Space, infrastructure and technical support

Parliament provides media outlets with appropriate space, infrastructure and technical support to carry out their work.

_____

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

Assessment criterion 5: Practice

In practice, diverse media outlets have equal access to the parliamentary building and to all venues where parliamentary proceedings take place, and are able to report freely on parliamentary activities.

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.

Sources and further reading

- David Beetham, *Parliament and democracy in the twenty-first century: A guide to good practice* (2006).

- Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), *Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislators*, revised edition (2018).

- National Democratic Institute (NDI), *Towards the Development of International Standards for Democratic Legislatures* (2007).

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Indicator 4.1: Valuing public concerns

About this indicator

This indicator concerns parliament's openness and responsiveness to public concerns, which is key to building trust in the institution. Parliaments are expected to be receptive to concerns raised by the public and to address these issues in a timely and effective manner.

The challenge for parliament and MPs is that people are not a homogeneous block: they have multiple and often conflicting interests and diverse perspectives. Parliament therefore needs to apply nuanced approaches, and to understand and take into account diverse audiences, including both groups that raise their voices and those that often remain silent.

Fast-paced technological and social developments also require all political institutions, including parliament, to constantly evolve, adapt their approaches, acquire the ability to change, and respond to the public's changing needs. This implies a suitably flexible institutional framework and often changing working methods and processes.

This indicator also covers how parliament responds to policy issues that emerge outside of medium- or long-term planning.

This indicator comprises the following dimensions:

● 	Dimension 4.1.1: Responding to public concerns

● 	Dimension 4.1.2: Responding to emerging policy issues

● 	Dimension 4.1.3: Leaving no one behind and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

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Dimension 4.1.1: Responding to public concerns

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 4.1: Valuing public concerns
- Target 4: Responsive parliament

About this dimension

This dimension is about the ways in which parliament and MPs listen to and respond to concerns raised by members of the public. The public – whether individually or as groups of citizens – should be able to bring matters of concern to parliament and feel confident that their input will be given appropriate consideration. Being responsive to public concerns is a key element of the representative function.

It is difficult to establish a clear distinction between when a member of the public raises an issue with their MP, and when a member of public raises an issue directly with parliament as an institution or with a parliamentary committee. Part of the role of MPs is to make the connection between issues that are brought directly to them and the parliamentary processes where they can be addressed.

It is important that parliament has a range of mechanisms that the public can use to raise issues of concern. One of the most widely used mechanisms is petitions. Many parliaments have processes for submitting and signing petitions, and committees that receive them and determine what action should be taken. Increasingly, parliament's rules of procedure require certain actions, such as a debate to be held, once the petition has been signed by a certain number of people.

Parliamentary staff play a key role in collecting, organizing and analysing questions and requests received from the public, and in communicating this information to MPs in appropriate formats. MPs themselves have to determine what action should be taken. MPs may, for example, assist citizens in bringing their concern to the relevant part of the administration, or raise the issue in parliament themselves. Members of the public who bring issues to parliament should receive feedback on how that input has been handled. This feedback loop helps to build trust in parliament.

While fully respecting laws concerning data privacy, parliament should consider gathering data on the profile of who is bringing issues to the attention of parliament. Such data can help parliament to understand, for example, whether men and women are using these mechanisms equally, or whether some groups in society are not being heard adequately, and to take appropriate action to make mechanisms available to the whole of society.

See also _Dimension 1.9.1: Interaction with the electorate_ and _Indicator 6.1: Parliamentary environment for public participation_.

Aspiring goal

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

Parliament's rules of procedure establish a range of mechanisms for the public to bring issues of concern to the attention of parliament, such as petitions.

The parliamentary administration processes input received from the public in a timely manner and makes it available in appropriate formats for MPs' consideration.

Issues brought to the attention of parliament are given due consideration. The members of the public who raised the issue receive feedback on how their input was handled.

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

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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 parliament's rules of procedure, as well as practices, processes and mechanisms, supporting responsive decision-making
- Evidence of public concerns being raised and responded to by parliament
- Evidence of information collected and analysed by parliamentary staff
- Records of timely and meaningful communication with members of the public

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

Assessment criterion 1: Mechanisms for the public to raise issues

Parliament's rules of procedure establish mechanisms for the public to raise issues of concern with parliament, and set out how issues raised through these mechanisms will be dealt with.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Processing issues raised by the public

The parliamentary administration processes issues raised by the public in a timely manner and makes information about this public input available to MPs in appropriate formats.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Feedback to the public

Issues brought to the attention of parliament are given due consideration and the person(s) who raised the issue receive(s) feedback on how it was handled.

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

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Recommendations for change

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

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Dimension 4.1.2: Responding to emerging policy issues

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 4.1: Valuing public concerns
- Target 4: Responsive parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the manner in which parliament responds to policy issues emerging outside of medium- or long-term planning. These are typically unforeseen issues or developments that can attract massive public attention and become matters of common concern. An emerging policy issue can be a critical event or situation, such as a natural disaster, a threat to democracy or a communicable disease outbreak. It can also be an issue that is less critical but still emerges in an unforeseen way and requires an urgent parliamentary response.

Parliament's procedures and agenda are usually pre-defined and planned well in advance. Yet when new policy issues emerge, parliament's rules of procedure should allow for flexibility for the issue to be taken up within the appropriate parliamentary body.

Parliament, through the plenary, parliamentary committees, political groups and other parliamentary bodies, typically exercises oversight by calling urgent debates or summoning relevant officials, by requesting information, by determining how the executive as a whole, or individual ministries or public bodies, are dealing with the issue, and by determining whether adjustments are needed.

The public needs to be able to see how parliament is acting on the emerging policy issue and to understand the decisions that are being taken.

See also _Dimension 1.3.2: Emergency or crisis procedures_.

Aspiring goal

Based on a global comparative analysis, an aspiring goal for parliaments in the area of "responding to emerging policy issues" is as follows:

Parliament's rules of procedure allow for flexibility when new policy issues emerge, enabling issues to be raised with the appropriate parliamentary body at short notice.

Parliament uses its oversight powers to hold the executive to account for the response to emerging policy issues.

Parliament effectively communicates with the public about the actions taken in response to emerging policy issues.

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 parliament's rules of procedure concerning ways in which emerging policy issues can be taken up in parliament

- Examples of parliamentary engagement in responding to emerging policy issues, including meetings held by parliamentary committees, and other parliamentary bodies, with relevant bodies and organizations

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

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Assessment criterion 1: Rules of procedure

Parliament's rules of procedure establish mechanisms that allow for emerging policy issues to be addressed in parliament, such as through urgent debates or questions.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Oversight of the executive's response

Parliament uses its oversight powers to oversee the executive's response to emerging policy issues and holds the executive to account.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Communication with the public

Parliament communicates effectively with the public about emerging policy issues, including by providing regular updates on actions and decisions taken.

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.

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Sources and further reading

- Alex Brazier, "Parliamentary Response to Crisis: Committees and Coronavirus", Global Partners Governance (GPG) (2020).

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Dimension 4.1.3: Leaving no one behind and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

> This dimension is part of:
>
> - Indicator 4.1: Valuing public concerns
> - Target 4: Responsive parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns parliament's role in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. By engaging with the SDGs, parliaments help to respond to the needs of their country's citizens and of the planet as a whole.

This ground-breaking global commitment to end poverty and set the world on a sustainable path to inclusive development was endorsed by government leaders at a United Nations summit in September 2015. A set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 actionable targets

lie at the core of this ambitious agenda, along with the key idea of "leaving no one behind". United Nations General Assembly resolution 77/159 recognizes the essential role of parliaments in bringing the SDGs to life through their law-making, budgeting and oversight powers.

Some parliaments have established dedicated mechanisms and structures, such as a sustainable development committee or subcommittee and/or a dedicated unit of the parliamentary secretariat, to support SDG mainstreaming across parliamentary work. Such bodies can act as a focal point for the type of partnership-building across society that is necessary to implement the SDGs, including with civil society, the media, the private sector, independent oversight bodies and academia.

Parliaments also engage with the SDGs by participating in the preparation of voluntary national reviews, a UN process through which countries assess and present progress towards the attainment of the SDGs.

Aspiring goal

> *Based on a global comparative analysis, an aspiring goal for parliaments in the area of "leaving no one behind and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" is as follows:*
>
> Parliament debates and scrutinizes national development plans and government reports to ensure alignment with, and localization of, the SDGs.
>
> Parliament incorporates an SDG lens into its legislative work and at all stages of the budget cycle. Mechanisms exist to oversee SDG progress and support SDG mainstreaming in parliament.
>
> Parliament is represented in national SDG coordination mechanisms and participates in the preparation of, and follow-up to, the voluntary national reviews.

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:

- Resolutions or motions in Hansard or other parliamentary records indicating actions related to the attainment of the SDGs
- Sections of parliament's strategic plan relating to the SDGs, or a parliamentary action plan on the SDGs

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- Explanatory memorandums, introductory statements and/or impact assessments relating to proposals for laws and enacted legislation, outlining how they address the SDGs
- Committee reports incorporating evidence from a range of bodies and organizations, including those representing hard-to-reach groups, on the attainment of the SDGs
- Training or capacity-building materials for MPs on the SDGs
- Briefings and analysis on the SDGs from the parliamentary library

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

Assessment criterion 1: Oversight of executive action

Parliament debates and scrutinizes national development plans and government reports to ensure alignment with, and localization of, the SDGs.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Mainstreaming the SDGs in parliament

Mechanisms exist to support SDG mainstreaming in parliament. Parliamentary committees assess policy and legislation in their respective area of responsibility against SDG objectives.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Participation in national SDG coordination mechanisms

Parliament participates in national SDG coordination mechanisms and is involved in the preparation of, and follow-up to, national reports on SDG progress to international bodies.

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

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Recommendations for change

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

Sources and further reading

- Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Islamic Development Bank (IDB), *Parliament's Role in Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals; A Parliamentary Handbook* (2017).
- Inter-Parliamentary Union, *Parliaments and the Sustainable Development Goals: A self-assessment toolkit* (2016).
- United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), *Compendium of National Institutional Arrangements for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2019).
- United Nations General Assembly resolution 77/159, "Enhancing the role of parliaments in accelerating the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals" (2022).

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Indicator 5.1: Inclusive law-making, oversight and budgeting

About this indicator

In its law-making, oversight and budgeting functions, parliament should reflect the diverse interests of the people it serves. Inclusive parliamentary practices strengthen democracy, promote integration and prevent conflicts.

Parliament can ensure its working practices are inclusive through a range of mechanisms, including protecting and promoting human rights in the law-making process and in society, considering the effects of parliamentary work on men and women, and bringing the perspectives of young people into parliament.

This indicator comprises the following dimensions:

● Dimension 5.1.1: Human rights
● Dimension 5.1.2: Impact assessments
● Dimension 5.1.3: Gender mainstreaming
● Dimension 5.1.4: Gender-responsive budgeting
● Dimension 5.1.5: Youth inclusion

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Dimension 5.1.1: Human rights

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 5.1: Inclusive law-making, oversight and budgeting
- Target 5: Inclusive parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns parliament's role in protecting and promoting human rights, and in helping to realize the entire spectrum of political, civil, economic, social and cultural rights. Parliament fulfils this role by:

- ensuring the right of everyone to participate in the conduct of public affairs
- upholding the rule of law
- scrutinizing legislation and budgets
- overseeing executive action across sectors
- ensuring that the judiciary is independent, effective and accessible
- ensuring that national human rights institutions (NHRIs) can effectively fulfil their mandate; in many countries, the composition of the NHRI is approved by parliament and the NHRI has a duty to report to parliament
- ensuring that a free, independent and pluralistic media exists
- ensuring that civil society organizations (CSOs) can work effectively and without fear of reprisals.

The existence of a specialized parliamentary committee with a strong human rights mandate can send a strong political message, help to mainstream human rights across parliamentary work and facilitate interaction between parliament and other human rights stakeholders. Caucuses or informal groups of MPs active in the area of human rights are other common parliamentary mechanisms.

Parliament contributes to the monitoring of the implementation of international human rights obligations. Parliament should be actively engaged with United Nations human rights mechanisms, such as the UN Human Rights Council and its universal periodic review (UPR), and UN human rights treaty bodies, including by contributing to the drafting or discussion of national reports, by taking part in the official delegation that presents the report (in either an active or an observer capacity) and by helping to implement the subsequent recommendations.

Aspiring goal

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

Parliament has a mandate to debate and ratify international human rights treaties, and to ensure that the national legal framework is consistent with international human rights obligations.

Parliament has one or more specialized committees responsible for human rights, with powers to assess legislation and government policy and action, and to ensure their compatibility with human rights obligations.

The NHRI is established in law and has the necessary mandate and resources to carry out its work. Its relationship with parliament is in line with the *Belgrade principles on the relationship between national human rights institutions and parliaments*.

Parliament has a clear role in the different stages of the reporting procedures to the UN Human Rights Council under its universal periodic review and to the UN human rights treaty bodies. It contributes to the preparation and presentation of national reports and the implementation of subsequent recommendations.

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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 constitution and/or other aspects of the legal framework referencing international human rights obligations
- Terms of reference for one or more parliamentary committees with responsibility for human rights
- Memorandums of understanding or other forms of cooperation between the NHRI and parliament
- Parliamentary committee reports indicating the evidence from, and routine engagement with, national human rights bodies and CSOs
- Details of the composition of national delegations to UN human rights mechanisms showing the participation of MPs in such delegations

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

Assessment criterion 1: International human rights obligations

Parliament has a mandate to debate and ratify international human rights treaties, and to ensure that the national legal framework is consistent with international human rights obligations.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Specialized committees

Parliament has one or more specialized committees responsible for human rights, with powers to assess legislation and government policy and action, and to ensure their compatibility with human rights obligations.

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

Assessment criterion 3: NHRI

The NHRI is established in law and has the necessary mandate and resources to carry out its work. Its relationship with parliament is in line with the *Belgrade principles on the relationship between national human rights institutions and parliaments*.

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Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good	Excellent
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Evidence for this assessment criterion:

Assessment criterion 4: Engagement with UN human rights mechanisms

Parliament has a clear role in the different stages of the reporting procedures to the UN Human Rights Council under its universal periodic review and to the UN human rights treaty bodies. It contributes to the preparation and presentation of national reports and the implementation of subsequent recommendations.

Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good	Excellent
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Evidence for this assessment criterion:

Assessment criterion 5: Practice

In practice, human rights are mainstreamed throughout parliamentary work. Parliament interacts on a regular basis with NHRIs, CSOs and UN human rights mechanisms.

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.

Sources and further reading

● Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), *Human Rights: Handbook for Parliamentarians No. 26*, revised edition (2016).

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- United Nations, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948).

- United Nations, *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* (1966).

- United Nations, *Belgrade principles on the relationship between national human rights institutions and parliaments* (2012).

- United Nations, *Contribution of parliaments to the work of the Human Rights Council and its universal periodic review* (2018).

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Dimension 5.1.2: Impact assessments

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 5.1: Inclusive law-making, oversight and budgeting
- Target 5: Inclusive parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns parliament's practices relating to impact assessments, which are a process of identifying the future consequences of a current or proposed action. Impact assessments are an important element of evidence-based law-making, providing for a systematic and critical analysis of the positive and negative effects of proposals for laws.

Impact assessments can be broad and determine the consequences or a law or policy from an economic, social, environmental, climate or other perspective, or they can be targeted and focused on the impact on specific groups, such as women, young people, persons with disabilities, and vulnerable and marginalized groups.

Parliament can mandate the executive to accompany proposals for laws with assessments of the impact of these laws. Some parliaments also conduct or commission their own impact assessments. The findings of impact assessments should be publicly available and considered by parliament during the legislative process.

Since impact assessments require expertise that is generally not part of legal training, they are typically conducted by administrative staff, parliamentary advisory bodies or external experts. In any event, impact assessments should be an inclusive and transparent process.

Aspiring goal

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

Impact assessments of the positive and negative effects of proposals for laws on different groups in society are an established part of the law-making process.

Parliament has the necessary expertise, among parliamentary staff, advisory bodies or external experts, to analyse impact assessments reports or to conduct or commission its own impact assessments.

The findings and reports of impact assessments, whether carried out by parliament or by the executive, are made available to MPs and the public.

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:

- Parliamentary impact assessment guidelines
- Impact assessment findings and reports
- Number of impact assessment exercises conducted by parliament during the year

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- Examples of proposals for laws or proposed policies modified as a result of an impact assessment
- Details of a special unit or staff responsible for conducting impact assessments
- Impact assessment reports published on the parliamentary website

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

Assessment criterion 1: Use of impact assessments

Impact assessments of the positive and negative effects of proposals for laws on different groups in society are an established part of the law-making process.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Expertise

Parliament has the necessary expertise, among parliamentary staff, advisory bodies or external experts, to analyse impact assessments reports or to conduct or commission its own impact assessments.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Publication

The findings and reports of impact assessments, whether carried out by parliament or by the executive, are made available to MPs and the public.

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

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Assessment criterion 4: Practice

In practice, parliament routinely analyses impact assessments provided by the executive, conducts or commissions its own impact assessments, and uses the related findings and reports to inform its work.

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.

Sources and further reading

- Patricia Popelier, *A legal perspective on Regulatory Impact Assessments* (2017).

- Irish Vocational Education Association (IVEA) and The Equality Authority, *Guidelines for conducting equality impact assessments on IVEA and VEC plans, policies and programmes* (2007).

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Dimension 5.1.3: Gender mainstreaming

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 5.1: Inclusive law-making, oversight and budgeting
- Target 5: Inclusive parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the mechanisms by which gender concerns are mainstreamed across parliamentary processes and outputs, with the aim of achieving gender equality and preventing discrimination on the basis of gender.

MPs have a duty and power to ensure that the national legal framework is consistent with international agreements on gender equality, notably the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). They also have a responsibility to hold the executive to account for progress in gender mainstreaming across all policy sectors. All MPs – men and women – should have the understanding, skills and information necessary to use parliamentary mechanisms effectively to address gender equality issues.

Many parliaments have established a gender equality committee or other dedicated body to review legislation from a gender perspective. Notwithstanding, gender mainstreaming implies that responsibilities are shared across all parliamentary committees, as well as in cross-party groups. Other mechanisms for gender mainstreaming include caucuses of women parliamentarians, networks of parliamentary leaders, internal gender audits, and specialist research units.

A gender-sensitive parliament takes a strategic approach to gender mainstreaming and has strong institutional capacity to incorporate a gender perspective throughout its work. Parliament should aim to prevent gender-based discrimination in all its forms, including on the basis of sexual orientation and gender expression or identity.

To achieve these goals, parliament needs institutional connections with a broad range of groups, including CSOs, the private sector and academia, and an evidence-informed approach, including systematic use of gender statistics and sex-disaggregated data. Increasingly, gender-sensitive language is employed as standard in law-making and other parliamentary practices.

Aspiring goal

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

A commitment to gender mainstreaming is publicly manifested in parliamentary rules, strategic planning documents and practices. Parliament regularly monitors and reports on its performance on gender mainstreaming.

Parliament has established a gender equality committee or other dedicated body with a mandate to scrutinize legislation and oversee the executive from a gender perspective. Mechanisms exist to support the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in the work of all parliamentary committees.

National women's groups, gender rights advocates, CSOs, the private sector, academia and other outside sources of expertise are routinely consulted in the work of parliament and its committees.

Parliament participates in the preparation and presentation of national reports to international bodies including the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW Committee) and holds debates on the resulting recommendations.

Training on gender issues is provided for all MPs. Parliamentary research and committee staff have the capacity to provide expert analysis and briefings on gender issues, including gender statistics and sex-disaggregated data.

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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:

● A parliamentary strategic plan, gender equality plan, gender audit, or other plans and/or policy documents

● Provisions of parliament's rules of procedure on gender mainstreaming

● Terms of reference, statutes or other documents establishing a parliamentary gender equality committee, women's caucus or other body dedicated to gender mainstreaming

● Training materials for MPs and staff on gender equality

● Parliamentary research papers or briefings on gender-related issues

● Laws relating to gender equality passed by parliament in the past five years or more

● Reports to the CEDAW Committee and other bodies demonstrating parliamentary scrutiny and inputs

● Parliamentary toolkits and/or checklists for gender-sensitive analysis of legislation

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

Assessment criterion 1: Commitment to gender mainstreaming

A commitment to gender mainstreaming is publicly manifested in parliamentary rules, strategic planning documents and practices. Parliament regularly monitors and reports on its performance on gender mainstreaming.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Law-making and oversight

Parliament has established a gender equality committee or other dedicated body with a mandate to scrutinize legislation and oversee the executive from a gender perspective. Mechanisms exist to support the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in the work of all parliamentary committees.

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

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Assessment criterion 3: Consultation

National women's groups, gender rights advocates, CSOs, the private sector, academia and other outside sources of expertise are routinely consulted in the work of parliament and its committees.

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

Assessment criterion 4: CEDAW Committee

Parliament participates in the preparation and presentation of national reports to international bodies including the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW Committee) and holds debates on the resulting recommendations.

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

Assessment criterion 5: Resources

Training on gender issues is provided for all MPs. Parliamentary research and committee staff have the capacity to provide expert analysis and briefings on gender issues, including gender statistics and sex-disaggregated data.

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

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Recommendations for change

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

Sources and further reading

● Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), *Gender-Sensitive Parliaments: A Global Review of Good Practice*, (2011).

● IPU, *Evaluating the gender-sensitivity of parliaments: A self-assessment toolkit* (2016).

● Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), *Making Laws Work for Women and Men: A Practical Guide to Gender-Sensitive Legislation* (2017).

● United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Parliament of the Republic of Fiji, *Scrutinising Legislation from a Gender Perspective: A Practical Toolkit* (2017).

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Dimension 5.1.4: Gender-responsive budgeting

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 5.1: Inclusive law-making, oversight and budgeting
- Target 5: Inclusive parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns gender-responsive budgeting, which involves the integration of a gender perspective into parliament's scrutiny and adoption of the national budget.

Gender-responsive budgeting is a practice adopted by many parliaments around the world, allowing for an understanding of how and to what extent a given policy affects men and women. In many countries, the executive includes this type of analysis in the draft budget in the form of a gender budget statement. In this way, parliament can question budget priorities and scrutinize the extent to which the executive is developing policies that promote gender equality, and can influence policymaking from the outset in the planning phase.

Many parliaments have a dedicated body or bodies responsible for supporting and monitoring gender-responsive budgeting across parliament, such as a parliamentary committee or subcommittee, caucus or network. Portfolio committees may also conduct a sectoral review of the budget from a gender perspective.

The extent to which parliaments can adopt gender-responsive budgeting practices depends on a number of contextual factors, such as the legal framework, parliament's mandate with respect to the budget process, and the available time, capacity and resources.

Aspiring goal

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

The legal framework requires the executive to produce a gender budget statement to accompany the draft budget.

Parliament has a dedicated body or bodies responsible for supporting gender-responsive budgeting, which have established procedures and authority to obtain supplementary information from the executive.

Parliament has sufficient research and analysis capacity to support gender-responsive budgeting. MPs have access to training on gender-responsive budgeting and to information needed to support their work.

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 parliament's rules of procedure establishing bodies to support gender-responsive budgeting, such as a gender equality committee or subcommittee

- Provisions of parliament's rules of procedure providing opportunities for members of the public and other groups and organizations to engage in the budget process

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- Terms of reference of parliamentary committees or subcommittees indicating their responsibilities for gender-responsive budgeting

- Sex-disaggregated data from the parliamentary administration and/or from national statistical institutes

- Details of training provided for MPs on gender-responsive budgeting, including training materials or reports from the parliamentary administration or external sources of expertise

- Formal records of standard operating procedures for gender-responsive budgeting in parliament

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

Assessment criterion 1: Gender budget statement

The legal framework requires the executive to produce a gender budget statement to accompany the draft budget.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Dedicated body

Parliament has a dedicated body or bodies responsible for supporting gender-responsive budgeting, which have established procedures and authority to obtain supplementary information from the executive.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Resources

Parliament has sufficient research and analysis capacity to support gender-responsive budgeting. MPs have access to training on gender-responsive budgeting and to information needed to support their work.

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

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Recommendations for change

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┌────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│ Use this space to note down recommendations and ideas for strengthening │
│ rules and practice in this area.                                         │
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Sources and further reading

- Elisabete Azevedo-Harman and Ricardo Godinho Gomes, *Post-Legislative Scrutiny of the Law against Gender-Based Violence: The Successful Story of the Cabo Verde Parliament* (2019).

- Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), *Manual for Training on Gender Responsive Budgeting* (2006).

- International Monetary Fund (IMF), *Europe: A Survey of Gender Budgeting Efforts* (2016).

- Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and others, *Parliament, the Budget and Gender: Handbook for Parliamentarians No. 6* (2004).

- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), *Gender Budgeting in OECD countries* (2017).

- UN Women, *Gender-Responsive Budgeting: Analysis of Budget Programmes from Gender Perspective* (2016).

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Dimension 5.1.5: Youth inclusion

> This dimension is part of:
>
> - Indicator 5.1: Inclusive law-making, oversight and budgeting
> - Target 5: Inclusive parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the inclusion of young people and youth issues in parliament's formal and informal political processes.

Parliament can play an important role in the development of youth-sensitive policies and the promotion of youth inclusion by engaging young people in its work, by supporting and partnering with youth organizations, and by creating youth education and empowerment programmes. Some parliaments have a parliamentary body specialized in youth matters. It is especially important for parliament to include young people from vulnerable groups in society.

Examples of youth engagement and education activities can include the following:

- Establishing civic education programmes, possibly in conjunction with schools and universities
- Inviting young people to visit parliament
- Providing specially designed programmes for children and young people
- Setting up internship programmes for students in parliament
- Encouraging MPs to engage with young people through different channels, including online
- Supporting youth parliaments
- Organizing youth forums

Youth engagement in parliamentary activities, particularly on topics that specifically affect this age group, should be promoted through the use of digital and other tools and channels that are adapted to young people. The content of proceedings, debates and decisions on issues affecting young people should be communicated in a way that is accessible to young men and women.

See also _Dimension 7.2.3: Representation of youth_ and _Dimension 7.3.3: Gender and age balance in parliamentary bodies_.

Aspiring goal

> _Based on a global comparative analysis, an aspiring goal for parliaments in the area of "youth inclusion" is as follows:_
>
> Parliament regularly consults with youth organizations with a view to developing effective mechanisms for including young people in formal and informal political processes.
>
> Parliament provides young people with meaningful opportunities to engage in core aspects of parliamentary work, including the work of its committees. Such forms of engagement are substantive and influence parliamentary decision-making.
>
> Parliament has developed diverse, meaningful and youth-friendly programmes for youth inclusion and education, including programmes developed in conjunction with schools, universities and youth organizations.
>
> Parliament gathers data and participant feedback on its youth inclusion and education programmes for the purpose of continuous improvement.

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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:

● Parliament's strategies, action plans, programmes or other documents involving or addressing youth inclusion and education

● Meeting records and reports describing youth engagement

● Feedback from participants in youth programmes

● Digital and other tools tailored to young people

● Monitoring and evaluation documents on youth inclusion and education

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

Assessment criterion 1: Consultation

Parliament regularly consults with youth organizations with a view to developing effective mechanisms for including young people in formal and informal political processes.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Youth engagement opportunities

Parliament provides young people with meaningful opportunities to engage in core aspects of parliamentary work, including the work of its committees. Such forms of engagement are substantive and influence parliamentary decision-making.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Youth inclusion and education programmes

Parliament has developed diverse, meaningful and youth-friendly programmes for youth inclusion and education, including programmes developed in conjunction with schools, universities and youth organizations.

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

Assessment criterion 4: Continuous improvement

Parliament gathers data and participant feedback on its youth inclusion and education programmes for the purpose of continuous improvement.

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.

Sources and further reading

- Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), *Youth participation in the democratic process*, resolution adopted by consensus by the 122nd IPU Assembly (2010).

- IPU, *Handbook on Child Participation in Parliament* (2011).

- IPU, *Conference Report: Stepping up youth participation in politics and parliaments: From words to action* (2021).

- IPU, *Youth participation in national* parliaments (2021).

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Indicator 5.2: Inclusive institutional practices

About this indicator

This indicator concerns the inclusiveness of parliament in terms of its institutional practices. It recognizes that, if parliament is to be effective in representing the community and holding the executive to account on behalf of citizens, it must itself be inclusive as an institution.

The indicator covers the diversity of the parliamentary workforce. It specifically addresses issues of gender balance in the composition of the parliamentary administration, including key personnel. The ability of parliament to make its work inclusive for a diverse community, particularly where there are multiple official languages spoken, is also important for the inclusiveness of the parliament.

The indicator recognizes the importance of a positive workplace environment. Parliament must ensure the health, safety and well-being of MPs and staff, as well as visitors. In particular, parliament is expected to take action to prevent and combat sexism, harassment and violence against MPs and staff, especially gender-based violence.

This indicator comprises the following dimensions:

- Dimension 5.2.1: Workforce diversity
- Dimension 5.2.2: Workplace environment
- Dimension 5.2.3: Combating sexism, harassment and violence
- Dimension 5.2.4: Multilingual service delivery

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Dimension 5.2.1: Workforce diversity

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 5.2: Inclusive institutional practices
- Target 5: Inclusive parliament

About this dimension

If parliament is to be a truly inclusive institution and to perform its representative and accountability roles effectively, it needs to ensure that its workforce reflects the diversity of the community.

To this end, the legal framework should require non-discrimination in recruitment, employment and advancement for all groups in society. It should also be clearly established that parliament is an equal-opportunity employer, based on the principle that every person has equal employment opportunities, regardless of attributes such as race, sex, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression.

Having a gender-balanced parliamentary administration helps to bring varied perspectives into the work of parliament and is an important part of parliament's workplace diversity and gender mainstreaming approach. Institutional strategic plans or gender equality policies should provide for gender balance in the workforce, including an equitable distribution of work across the parliamentary administration's departments and seniority levels. Different duties should not be assigned based on gender stereotypes.

Gender-sensitive and non-discriminatory human resources policies should be in place and be applied to staff recruitment and career development. Parliament should ensure that there is no gender pay gap and should take care to ensure gender-sensitive language is used in its institutional practices.

Beyond the legal framework, it is also important for parliament to provide real opportunities for underrepresented groups to be included in the parliamentary workforce. These approaches can include targeted recruitment, specialized training for staff from underrepresented groups who have already been recruited, measures to retain and advance staff from such groups, and awareness training for all staff.

See also *Dimension 2.2.4: Professionalism of the parliamentary administration, Dimension 5.1.3: Gender mainstreaming* and *Dimension 5.2.2: Workplace environment.*

Aspiring goal

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

The legal framework establishes that parliament is an equal-opportunity employer and provides for non-discrimination in the recruitment, employment and advancement of parliamentary staff.

Parliament has a gender equality policy or plan that includes a clear and detailed set of objectives and processes for achieving gender balance within the parliamentary administration, including at senior levels.

Parliament adopts positive approaches that provide real opportunities for all groups in society, including underrepresented groups, to be included in the parliamentary workforce. Human resources policies place a special emphasis on the recruitment, retention and promotion of underrepresented groups.

Workforce diversity, including gender balance, is regularly monitored. Data on the composition of the parliamentary administration is publicly available. The effectiveness of diversity and gender equality policies is regularly reviewed.

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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 and/or parliament's rules of procedure relating to non-discrimination in the employment of staff
- Parliament's human resources policies
- Parliament's strategic plan and/or gender policy or plans indicating a commitment to gender balance in the parliamentary administration
- List of holders of senior roles in the parliamentary administration (Secretary General and Deputy Secretary General, as well as department managers, deputies and assistants), both currently and in the recent past
- Job descriptions and advertisements on the parliamentary website and other recruitment sites
- Statistics showing staff diversity relative to the diversity of the community

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

Assessment criterion 1: Equal-opportunity employer

The legal framework establishes that parliament is an equal-opportunity employer and provides for non-discrimination in the recruitment, employment and advancement of parliamentary staff.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Gender equality policy or plan

Parliament has a gender equality policy or plan that includes a clear and detailed set of objectives and processes for achieving gender balance within the parliamentary administration, including at senior levels.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Positive approaches to workforce diversity

Parliament adopts positive approaches that provide real opportunities for all groups in society, including underrepresented groups, to be included in the parliamentary workforce. Human resources

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policies place a special emphasis on the recruitment, retention and promotion of underrepresented groups.

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

Assessment criterion 4: Monitoring

Workforce diversity, including gender balance, is regularly monitored. Data on the composition of the parliamentary administration is publicly available. The effectiveness of diversity and gender equality policies is regularly reviewed.

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.

Sources and further reading

- Association of Secretaries General of Parliaments (ASPG), *Principles for recruitment and career management of staff of the parliamentary administration* (2014).
- Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), *Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures* (2018).
- European Parliament, *Gender equality: What do the parliaments of the European Union do?* (2012).
- Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), *Gender-Sensitive Parliaments: A Global Review of Good Practice* (2011).
- IPU, *Evaluating the gender-sensitivity of parliaments: A self-assessment toolkit* (2016).
- IPU, *Guidelines for the elimination of sexism, harassment and violence against women in parliament* (2019).

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Dimension 5.2.2: Workplace environment

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 5.2: Inclusive institutional practices
- Target 5: Inclusive parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns parliament's practices and arrangements for creating an inclusive workplace environment. A positive and inclusive workplace can contribute to more effective performance by MPs, parliamentary staff and parliament as a whole.

Parliament has an obligation to ensure the health and safety of MPs and staff, as well as of visitors. It is also required to provide a safe and functional workplace for MPs and staff with disabilities that is well-adapted to their needs. This includes accessible parliamentary facilities and access to information.

Many MPs and staff have significant family-related responsibilities that they need to balance with their work commitments, such as caring for infants, children, elderly relatives or others. It is therefore essential for parliament to provide a family-friendly environment, with supporting institutional procedures and practices. These can include the following:

- Setting family-friendly sitting hours and session periods
- Supporting remote work, including provisions on attendance and voting
- Allowing MPs to take infants into the chamber during votes
- Pairing MPs in votes or allowing them to cast proxy votes
- Providing family-friendly facilities and services, such as breastfeeding spaces, spaces for family members, and childcare facilities

See also _Dimension 3.3.2: Access for persons with disabilities_.

Aspiring goal

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

The legal framework requires parliament to ensure the health and safety of MPs, staff and visitors to parliament. Health and safety policies and regulations are subject to regular monitoring and evaluation.

Parliament provides a safe and functional workplace for MPs and staff with disabilities.

Parliament's rules of procedure enable MPs who are breastfeeding or caring for young children to fulfil their parliamentary duties, including voting.

Parliament provides family-friendly facilities and services for MPs and staff, such as breastfeeding spaces, spaces for family members, and childcare facilities.

Parliament takes measures to facilitate work-life balance for MPs and staff, including predictable sitting hours and session periods, flexible working hours, and opportunities for virtual participation and remote working.

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.

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

- Provisions of policies, regulations and/or other measures addressing health, safety and well-being at work
- Provisions of policies, regulations, rules of procedure and/or a code of conduct aimed at preventing and combating sexism, harassment and violence against MPs and staff
- Reports or other information showing evidence that such policies and/or regulations are implemented in practice and subject to regular monitoring and evaluation
- Provisions of parliament's rules of procedure that have been adapted to allow MPs with family responsibilities to fulfil their parliamentary duties
- Information about family-friendly facilities and services provided by parliament
- Provisions of human resources policies relating to work-life balance

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

Assessment criterion 1: Health and safety

The legal framework requires parliament to ensure the health and safety of MPs, staff and visitors to parliament. Health and safety policies and regulations are subject to regular monitoring and evaluation.

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

Assessment criterion 2: MPs and staff with disabilities

Parliament provides a safe and functional workplace for MPs and staff with disabilities.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Breastfeeding or caring for young children

Parliament's rules of procedure enable MPs who are breastfeeding or caring for young children to fulfil their parliamentary duties, including voting.

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

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Assessment criterion 4: Family-friendly facilities and services

Parliament provides family-friendly facilities and services for MPs and staff, such as breastfeeding spaces, spaces for family members, and childcare facilities.

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

Assessment criterion 5: Work-life balance

Parliament takes measures to facilitate work-life balance for MPs and staff, including predictable sitting hours and session periods, flexible working hours, and opportunities for virtual participation and remote working.

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.

Sources and further reading

- Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), _Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures_ (2018).
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), _Toolkit for Mainstreaming and Implementing Gender Equality_ (2018).
- Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), _Guidelines for the elimination of sexism, harassment and violence against women in parliament_ (2019).
- UK Parliament, _Using the Independent Complaints and Grievance Scheme (ICGS): guide for complainants_.

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Dimension 5.2.3: Combating sexism, harassment and violence

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 5.2: Inclusive institutional practices
- Target 5: Inclusive parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns parliament's role in preventing and combating sexism, harassment and violence towards MPs and parliamentary staff. Sexism, harassment and violence, particularly against women, plague workplaces throughout the world. No workplace or environment is immune from such unacceptable behaviour.

Parliaments are no exception. A work environment free of sexist behaviour and violence is in everyone's interest. This applies to men and women and to all personnel categories in parliament (MPs, staff, assistants, etc.), and to all forms of harassment, notably gender-based violence.

Parliament should adopt a workplace policy for combating sexism, harassment and violence in parliament that is in line with national and international obligations and best practice. The objectives of the policy should be clearly stated, possibly underscoring the intolerable and illegal nature of sexism, harassment and violence in parliament and affirming the commitment of the institution's leaders to prevent and eliminate these problems.

The policy should also protect personnel from acts of harassment and violence perpetrated by third parties. MPs, but also sometimes parliamentary staff, may be the targets of threats, remarks and violence, including of a sexist and/or sexual nature, at meetings or social events, by post, email or mobile messaging, or through the media or social networks.

The bodies that can receive and process complaints must be clearly identified. The complaints mechanism must in all cases be:

- confidential
- responsive to complainants
- fair to all parties
- based on a thorough, impartial and comprehensive investigation
- timely

Implementation involves establishing initiatives to provide information and training, raise awareness and offer support services for victims of sexist acts, harassment and violence at work. Continuous monitoring and regular evaluation of these initiatives is also required.

See also _Dimension 2.1.3: Code of conduct._

Aspiring goal

Based on a global comparative analysis, an aspiring goal for parliaments in the area of "combating sexism, harassment and violence" is as follows:

Parliament has adopted a workplace policy for combating sexism, harassment and violence in parliament that is in line with national and international obligations and best practice.

Parliament takes specific measures to protect MPs and others working in parliament who are subjected by third parties to threats, assaults, or sexist or sexual violence, including online harassment/cyberbullying.

Parliament has a confidential complaints mechanism to receive and process complaints by MPs and staff. This mechanism is confidential; responsive to complainants; fair to all parties; based on a thorough, impartial and comprehensive investigation; and timely.

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Parliament regularly conducts awareness-raising and training programmes for MPs and staff on combating sexism, harassment and violence.

Parliament monitors the effectiveness and impact over time of policies to combat sexism, harassment and violence in parliament, including by collecting baseline data and the experiences and perceptions of people working in parliament.

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:

- National and international obligations relating to sexism, harassment and violence at work
- Parliamentary policies, regulations and protocols, or provisions in rules of procedure or a code of conduct, aimed at preventing and combating sexism, harassment and violence
- Reports or other information that provide evidence of regular monitoring and implementation of policies and regulations in practice

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

Assessment criterion 1: Policy for combating sexism, harassment and violence in parliament

Parliament has adopted a workplace policy for combating sexism, harassment and violence in parliament that is in line with national and international obligations and best practice.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Protection against abuse by third parties

Parliament takes specific measures to protect MPs and others working there who are subjected by third parties to threats, assaults, or sexist or sexual violence, including online harassment/cyberbullying.

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

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Assessment criterion 3: Complaints mechanism

Parliament has a confidential complaints mechanism to receive and process complaints by MPs and staff. This mechanism is confidential; responsive to complainants; fair to all parties; based on a thorough, impartial and comprehensive investigation; and timely.

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

Assessment criterion 4: Awareness-raising and training

Parliament regularly conducts awareness-raising and training programmes for MPs and staff combating sexism, harassment and violence.

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

Assessment criterion 5: Monitoring

Parliament monitors the effectiveness and impact over time of policies to combat sexism, harassment and violence in parliament, including by collecting baseline data and the experiences and perceptions of people working in parliament.

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.

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Sources and further reading

- Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), _Guidelines for the elimination of sexism, harassment and violence against women in parliament_ (2019).

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Dimension 5.2.4: Multilingual service delivery

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 5.2: Inclusive institutional practices
- Target 5: Inclusive parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the ways in which parliament communicates with and provides information to all the people it represents, regardless of the language(s) they speak. Parliament needs to ensure that it is able to communicate inclusively with all groups in society, with language not acting as a barrier to effective communication.

In countries with more than one official language, parliament should ensure that parliamentary information and services are available in all official languages, and that MPs can use official languages in their work.

In addition to official languages, parliament should seek to communicate at least some key information in languages that are widely used in the country. This may include, for example, languages that do not have official-language status but are spoken by large groups of the population, Indigenous languages, and/or languages used by large groups of migrants and refugees.

Aspiring goal

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

In countries with more than one official language, parliamentary information and services are available in all official languages.

MPs are able to contribute to parliamentary work in any official language. Simultaneous interpretation between official languages is provided in plenary and committees.

In addition to official languages, parliament endeavours to make at least the most important information and services available in languages that are widely used in the country.

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 and/or parliament's rules of procedures relating to multilingual service delivery
- Statistics on the provision of multilingual services and information

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

Assessment criterion 1: Official languages

In countries with more than one official language, parliamentary information and services are available in all official languages.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Languages used by MPs

MPs are able to contribute to parliamentary work in any official language. Simultaneous interpretation between official languages is provided in plenary and committees.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Other widely used languages

In addition to official languages, parliament endeavours to make at least the most important information and services available in languages that are widely used in the country.

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.

Sources and further reading

- Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), _Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures_ (2018).

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Indicator 6.1: Parliamentary environment for public participation

About this indicator

This indicator assesses the legal framework for public participation, as well as parliament's institutional capacity to implement those provisions in practice.

This indicator also focuses on public education about the work of parliament, which aims to increase trust in parliament and broaden opportunities for citizens to communicate their interests. In order to maximize participation, the public should know not just where and when parliamentary processes take place, but also how they can participate in and influence decision-making.

This indicator comprises the following dimensions:

● Dimension 6.1.1: Legal framework for public participation

● Dimension 6.1.2: Institutional capacity for public participation

● Dimension 6.1.3: Public education about the work of parliament

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Dimension 6.1.1: Legal framework for public participation

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 6.1: Parliamentary environment for public participation
- Target 6: Participatory parliament

About this dimension

A sound legal framework is vital for enabling and encouraging public participation in the work of parliament. The constitution and laws, as well as parliament's own rules of procedure, should provide an enabling environment for civil society, academics, experts and the public in general to engage systematically in online and on-site parliamentary work. This framework is designed to encourage rather than hinder public participation.

This concept implies that parliament has a responsibility for shaping the enabling civic space necessary for effective public participation in all areas of public life, not only in parliamentary work. To this end, the instances and mechanisms through which citizens could contribute should be clearly established, and those responsible for managing participation processes should be identified.

The legal framework should also include appropriate protections for the personal information citizens may provide when engaging with parliament. Citizens need to have a clear idea of how their personal information will be used or re-used. The privacy-related rules and procedures should also prohibit the tracking of personal information without the individual's clear consent. At the same time, any requirement for citizens to provide information, such as completing a registration form, should not be an impediment to them engaging with parliament.

Aspiring goal

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

Parliament contributes to the protection of the enabling civic space necessary for effective participation in all areas of public life, including but not limited to parliamentary work.

A clear legal framework provides the right for members of the public to participate in parliamentary business, such as by bringing issues to the attention of parliament, contributing evidence to legislative and oversight processes, and commenting on proposals for laws.

The legal framework for public participation contains provisions that protect the privacy of people who engage with the parliament.

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:

- Specific articles of the constitution, legislation or rules of procedure that shape civic space and regulate public participation

- National, regional or international reports that rate the level of civic-space openness

- Other rules and procedures relating to public participation

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

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Assessment criterion 1: Legal framework enabling civic space

A legal framework is in place, including laws, decrees or regulations, that enables and guarantees the civic space necessary for the functioning of civil society and for effective participation in all areas, including but not limited to parliamentary work. This framework includes laws and regulations relating to freedom of speech and expression, freedom of assembly and association, freedom of information, and ease of registration and funding of civil society organizations.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Legal framework for public participation in the work of parliament

Provisions in the constitution, laws or rules of procedure establish the right of people to participate in parliamentary business, such as by bringing issues to the attention of parliament, contributing evidence to legislative and oversight processes, and commenting on proposals for laws. The related rules and procedures cover all aspects of public participation, both online and on-site.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Protection of privacy

The legal framework for public participation in the work of parliament contains provisions that protect the privacy of members of the public, and includes clear rules and procedures to ensure that the right to privacy is implemented in practice.

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

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Recommendations for change

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

Sources and further reading

●   David Beetham, *Parliament and democracy in the twenty-first century: A guide to good practice* (2006).

●   Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), *Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislators*, revised edition (2018).

●   National Democratic Institute (NDI), *Toward the Development of International Standards for Democratic Legislatures* (2007).

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Dimension 6.1.2: Institutional capacity for public participation

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 6.1: Parliamentary environment for public participation
- Target 6: Participatory parliament

About this dimension

In addition to a sound legal framework for public participation, it is necessary for parliament to develop the practical mechanisms and tools that allow this participation to take place.

The "mechanisms" of public participation refer to systems that, together, provide ways to organize, coordinate and channel public inputs so that they can be taken into account in all aspects of parliamentary processes.

The "tools" of public participation, meanwhile, are specific instruments – online and on-site – that support parliament in successfully operating these mechanisms. They need to be user-friendly and adapted to the needs of different groups within the community.

Parliament is attentive to facilitating participation from all of society, including catering to groups that may face obstacles to engagement, such as women, youth, persons with disabilities, disadvantaged groups, and groups in remote areas or with limited digital access.

Parliament can assess the effectiveness and comprehensiveness of these mechanisms and tools by monitoring public participation and tracking the impact of public input on the outputs of parliamentary work.

Aspiring goal

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

Parliament has a documented strategy or plan for developing public participation, as well as policies and practices for its implementation.

A comprehensive set of mechanisms is in place enabling parliament to organize, coordinate and channel public participation in all aspects of its processes and activities.

Parliament has easy-to-use tools to support public participation. These tools take account of different groups within the community, including women, youth, persons with disabilities, disadvantaged groups, and groups in remote areas or with limited digital access.

Parliament monitors the level and depth of public participation and seeks feedback from participants on their perception of the experience. It uses this information to evaluate and refine the mechanisms and tools for public participation.

Parliament dedicates sufficient resources to public participation activities.

Public participation processes and activities are widely used by members of the public and are taken into account in parliamentary work.

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.

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

● Provisions in parliament's rules, practices and policies describing the mechanisms of public participation

● Specific tools that help the public to participate

● Statistics and other information from the monitoring of public participation

● Changes to public participation mechanisms and tools over time

● Parliament's organization chart and budget

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

Assessment criterion 1: Strategic approach

Parliament has an agreed strategy or plan for the implementation and further development of public participation, as well as established policies and practices, with time-bound and measurable objectives.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Mechanisms

Parliament's rules, practices and policies contain a comprehensive set of mechanisms for the organization, coordination and channelling of public participation. Public participation processes and activities are widely advertised. There are mechanisms by which the public can both receive, and provide feedback on, the outcome of their participation.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Tools

Parliament has easy-to-use tools to support public participation, both online and on-site. These tools take account of different groups within the community, including women, youth, persons with disabilities, disadvantaged groups, and groups in remote areas or with limited digital access.

Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good	Excellent
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

_____

Evidence for this assessment criterion:

Assessment criterion 4: Monitoring and evaluation

Parliament monitors and evaluates the use of its public participation mechanisms and tools and reports on their use on its website. Parliament adapts and changes its engagement mechanisms and tools in light of the results of this evaluation work.

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

Assessment criterion 5: Dedicated resources and staff

Parliament dedicates sufficient resources to public participation activities. Parliament has a dedicated organizational unit for this purpose, such as a public participation office, or has staff members with duties related to public participation.

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.

Sources and further reading

- David Beetham, _Parliament and democracy in the twenty-first century: A guide to good practice_ (2006).

- Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), _Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislators_, revised edition (2018).

- National Democratic Institute (NDI), _Toward the Development of International Standards for Democratic Legislatures_ (2007).

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Dimension 6.1.3: Public education about the work of parliament

> This dimension is part of:
>
> - Indicator 6.1: Parliamentary environment for public participation
> - Target 6: Participatory parliament

About this dimension

This dimension focuses on parliament's efforts to increase public understanding of its role and work. In order to maximize participation, the public should know not just where and when parliamentary processes take place, but also how they can participate in and influence decision-making. These efforts, which aim to ensure an active citizenry, should be non-partisan and should promote the basic principles of democracy.

Public education can take many forms, including direct interaction by MPs with the public through their constituencies, or opportunities to engage or visit parliament and its offices. Different groups within the community can also be targeted.

Aspiring goal

> _Based on a global comparative analysis, an aspiring goal for parliaments in the area of "public education about the work of parliament" is as follows:_
>
> Parliament has infrastructure, policies, programmes and materials in place to educate the public about its work. Public education aims to improve the breadth and depth of public understanding of parliament and includes information about the role of parliament, as well as about the work that takes place in parliament and how to engage in it.
>
> Public education programmes are provided nationwide and are designed to reach a broad range of stakeholders, including hard-to-reach communities. They are non-partisan and focus on promoting the basic principles of democracy.
>
> Public education programmes provide opportunities to access parliamentary premises and observe the work of parliament in person. They are also available remotely.

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:

- Infrastructure, policies and materials for nationwide public education

- Public education programmes promoted by parliament

- The number of individuals taking part in parliamentary public education programmes per year

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

Assessment criterion 1: Education programmes

Parliament has developed policies and materials for nationwide programmes to educate the public about its role and working methods, as well as about how members of the public can engage in its work.

_____

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

Assessment criterion 2: Infrastructure and resources

Parliament has developed infrastructure and has allocated budgetary and human resources to support a range of public education programmes. This infrastructure can accommodate members of the public with special needs, including persons with disabilities.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Accessibility

Public education programmes are easily accessible for all groups within the community. Various online and in-person tools are in place to ensure that education programmes reach all sections of society, including women, children, youth, persons with disabilities, and rural or remote communities.

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

Assessment criterion 4: Non-partisanship

Public education programmes are non-partisan and promote the basic principles of democracy.

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

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Recommendations for change

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

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Indicator 6.2: Public participation in parliamentary processes

About this indicator

This indicator concerns the practical application of policies on public participation in the core work of parliament. It recognizes that participation is an active process that provides members of the public with a genuine opportunity to influence parliamentary work, as well as to be consulted on and informed about it. Providing the public with feedback on the results of their participation contributes to the credibility of these mechanisms and processes.

This indicator comprises the following dimensions:

● Dimension 6.2.1: Participation in law-making

● Dimension 6.2.2: Participation in oversight

● Dimension 6.2.3: Participation in the budget cycle

● Dimension 6.2.4: Managing public input and providing feedback

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Dimension 6.2.1: Participation in law-making

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 6.2: Public participation in parliamentary processes
- Target 6: Participatory parliament

About this dimension

This dimension covers public participation in the law-making process. Public participation does not replace or diminish the role of MPs in law-making. On the contrary, it provides MPs with deeper insight into the potential impact of legislation on people's lives and contributes to more effective laws. Involving the public in law-making helps to build trust in parliament, MPs and the democratic system and strengthens the rule of law.

For this dimension, public participation can be defined as the formal process through which parliament consults the public, whether in groups or as individuals, in order to gather their views and opinions on an existing law, a proposal for a law or a policy decision.

Participation exercises of this type can be either general or targeted at a specific audience, giving both specific social groups affected by legislation, and the general public, an equal opportunity to participate in the law-making process.

Aspiring goal

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

The legal framework establishes the right to participate in the law-making process and the obligation for parliament to consult with people directly affected by proposals for laws.

Mechanisms and processes are in place for public participation in the law-making process, including through public and committee hearings on or off the parliamentary premises, written submissions and the provision of comments on proposals for laws.

Proposals for laws are presented in easy-to-understand language to facilitate participation. Sufficient time is allocated to participation processes, especially when they deal with complex topics. Public input is taken into account during the law-making process.

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:

- Provision(s) from the legal framework covering public participation in the drafting of legislation

- Laws, rules or standing orders setting out the framework for public participation in the law-making process

- Record of processes or mechanisms for public participation, such as minutes of public hearings

- Samples of plain-language legislation, as well as digital copies of proposals for laws at each stage of the participation process

- Samples of proposals for laws in different languages, and the time allocations/considerations made for participation processes

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- Minutes or reports of feedback sessions, or published updates

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

Assessment criterion 1: Legal framework

The legal framework provides for public participation in the law-making process. There are clear standards on consulting the public, as well as on the criteria that constitute adequate participation.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Mechanisms and processes

Mechanisms and processes are in place to facilitate both general and targeted participation in the law-making process. Parliament ensures that members of the public who are directly impacted by a proposal for a law have sufficient opportunity to provide input to the law-making process.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Accessibility

A wide range of groups can participate in the law-making process in a timely manner. Plain, easy-to-understand language is used to explain proposals for laws. Members of the public are consulted at a time and in a place that allows for maximum participation by a wide range of groups, taking into account the complexity of the legislation in question.

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

Assessment criterion 4: Practice

In practice, public participation is a regular feature of the law-making process. A wide range of members of the public regularly contribute to parliamentary consideration of proposals for laws.

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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.

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Dimension 6.2.2: Participation in oversight

> This dimension is part of:
>
> - Indicator 6.2: Public participation in parliamentary processes
> - Target 6: Participatory parliament

About this dimension

This dimension covers public participation in parliamentary oversight, the vital process by which parliament holds the executive to account on behalf of the public. Involving the public directly or indirectly in oversight can greatly enhance the quality of accountability. Oversight activities in the chamber(s), by committees and in electoral districts can provide a platform for informing, consulting and interacting with the public.

Much public participation is likely to occur in through work of parliamentary committees, since processes such as accepting submissions, holding public hearings and meetings, and operating on-the-ground inspections lend themselves to involvement by the public.

Parliaments should have robust procedures and well-developed processes for encouraging public participation in all aspects of committee work. MPs should also engage with, inform and consult their constituents on matters to be dealt with by parliament, including on their work on committees, on debates on matters of significance, and on their oversight responsibilities in relation to the executive.

Aspiring goal

> *Based on a global comparative analysis, an aspiring goal for parliaments in the area of "participation in oversight" is as follows:*
>
> The legal framework provides for opportunities for members of the public participate in parliamentary oversight activities.
>
> Mechanisms and processes are in place for public participation in oversight, with particular attention on participation in the work of parliamentary committees.
>
> Parliament draws upon the evidence provided by the public in its oversight actions.

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:

● Provision(s) from the legal framework establishing parliament's obligation to ensure public participation in oversight

● Laws and/or rules of procedure setting out the framework for public participation in the full range of oversight activities

● Guidance documents detailing how the public can participate in parliamentary oversight processes, such as the work of parliament, committees and MPs

● Information about public participation in oversight activities published on the parliamentary website, in pamphlets (including distribution information) and/or in any other format

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

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Assessment criterion 1: Legal framework

The legal framework establishes parliament's obligation to facilitate public participation in oversight processes and activities.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Mechanisms and processes

Mechanisms and processes are in place for the public to participate in oversight activities, including robust procedures to encourage public participation in all aspects of the work of parliamentary committees. Reference material explaining how the public can contribute to parliamentary oversight is made widely available by parliament.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Accessibility

Plain, easy-to-understand language is used to inform the public about parliamentary oversight activities, and relevant documents are made available to a wide range of groups in a timely manner . Members of the public are consulted at a time and in a place that allows for maximum participation by a wide range of groups, taking into account the complexity of the issue in question.

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

Assessment criterion 4: Practice

In practice, public participation is a regular feature of parliamentary oversight. A wide range of members of the public regularly contribute to parliament's oversight activities.

Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good	Excellent

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☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
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.

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Dimension 6.2.3: Participation in the budget cycle

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 6.2: Public participation in parliamentary processes
- Target 6: Participatory parliament

About this dimension

This dimension covers public participation in the budget cycle. The annual State budget represents public interests and priorities, which makes its preparation, approval and oversight one of parliament's most important and critical responsibilities. While the mechanisms and processes for public participation in the budget cycle are similar to those for participation in law-making and oversight, budget transparency is especially significant because the allocation of public resources is a clear indication of government priorities.

Public participation in the budget cycle helps to increase the transparency of government programmes and can provide insights to help MPs hold the executive to account. It can also ensure better alignment between government priorities and the allocation of resources, thereby improving service delivery and instilling trust in parliament and other public institutions.

The public should be involved in all stages of the budget cycle:

- When parliamentary committees discuss the pre-budget statement from the executive
- When the draft budget is sent for parliamentary committee and plenary debate and approval
- During the in-year oversight of the government's monthly or quarterly budget execution reports, or during thematic reviews of certain budget appropriations
- During the *ex-post* budget oversight process (when parliament discusses the report by the supreme audit institution)

The annual State budget should be presented to the public in plain, easy-to-understand language, enabling citizens to participate and contribute effectively, and allowing parliament to bridge the gap between complex financial jargon and the general public's understanding. This approach promotes transparency, empowering individuals to actively participate in the decision-making process, offer meaningful insights and contribute to shaping the budget according to the needs and priorities of the community.

See also *Indicator 1.8 Budget* and *Dimension 3.1.3: Transparency of the budget cycle and the parliamentary budget*.

Aspiring goal

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

The legal framework provides for members of the public to participate in the budget cycle.

Mechanisms and processes are in place for public participation in all stages of the budget cycle (pre-budget statement, committee and plenary debate and approval, and in-year and *ex-post* budget oversight). There is guidance outlining how the public can participate in these mechanisms and processes.

Participation processes are accessible and inclusive, insofar as they are announced in advance, enough time is allocated for deliberations, and they are arranged at a time and in a place convenient for a wide range of groups.

The annual State budget is communicated to the public in plain, easy-to-understand language, enabling active engagement and effective contribution from citizens.

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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:

●   Provision(s) from the legal framework covering public participation in the budget cycle

●   Laws, rules or standing orders supporting public participation in the budget cycle

●   A guide, model or other document detailing mechanisms and processes for participation

●   Programmes, schedules, information pamphlets and other supporting documents

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

Assessment criterion 1: Legal framework

The legal framework provides for members of the public to participate in the budget cycle.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Mechanisms and processes

Mechanisms and processes are in place to facilitate public participation in all stages of the budget cycle (pre-budget statement, committee and plenary debate and approval, and in-year and *ex-post* budget oversight), with a particular emphasis on participation in parliamentary committees or other bodies responsible for the budget.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Accessibility of the process

Opportunities for public participation in the budget cycle are announced well in advance, sufficient time is allocated for effective participation, and participation takes place at a time and in a place convenient for a wide range of groups.

Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good	Excellent
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

_____

Evidence for this assessment criterion:

Assessment criterion 4: Accessibility of the text

The annual State budget is communicated to the public in plain, easy-to-understand language, enabling active engagement and meaningful contribution from citizens.

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

Assessment criterion 5: Practice

Parliament regularly consults with the public about the budget, using a wide range of instruments and methods.

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.

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Dimension 6.2.4: Managing public input and providing feedback

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 6.2: Public participation in parliamentary processes
- Target 6: Participatory parliament

About this dimension

This dimension covers parliament's responsibility to effectively make use of public input in its work. It is important for parliament to demonstrate that it has a functioning system in place for managing public input, i.e. for collecting and analysing proposals on legislative and/or oversight actions and for bringing these to the attention of MPs and parliamentary bodies. Having solicited public input, it is also important for parliament to provide members of the public with feedback on the results of their participation.

Aspiring goal

Based on a global comparative analysis, an aspiring goal for parliaments in the area of "managing public input and providing feedback" is as follows:

Parliament has a functioning system in place for processing public input and making it available to MPs in formats that allow them to see the main themes and to draw upon the public input in parliamentary work.

Parliament has a functioning system in place for providing feedback to the public on the results of their participation.

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:

- Specific rules or procedures that provide for processing public input and making it available to MPs and parliamentary bodies

- Parliamentary records with data on public input

- Excerpts from parliamentary and committee reports containing information on the consideration of public input

- Specific rules or procedures that provide for regular feedback to the public on the results of their participation

- Parliamentary records on feedback provided to the public

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

Assessment criterion 1: Processing public input

MPs and parliamentary bodies receive information about the main themes emerging from public input in a timely manner and in formats that help them to incorporate this input into parliamentary work.

_____

Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good	Excellent
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Evidence for this assessment criterion:

Assessment criterion 2: Providing feedback to the public

Parliament has a functioning system for providing regular feedback to the public on the results of their participation. The effectiveness of this feedback system is regularly evaluated and improvements are made where necessary.

Non-existent	Rudimentary	Basic	Good	Very good	Excellent
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Evidence for this assessment criterion:

Assessment criterion 3: Resources

Parliament has appropriate human and technical resources to process public input, to supply MPs with relevant findings and to provide feedback to members of the public who participate in the work of parliament.

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.

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Indicator 6.3: Participation of diverse groups in the work of parliament

About this indicator

It takes strategic and concerted effort and resources to make parliament accessible to all groups. This often requires proactive outreach and collaboration with others who can connect with certain groups within the community and bridge the divides that exist.

Parliaments have a responsibility to create an environment that allows civil society to make its voice heard. They therefore need to engage with civil society organizations (CSOs) and ensure that participatory processes are both inclusive and invite input from diverse groups.

Parliament should place a special emphasis on those who have historically been marginalized, such as women, youth, persons with disabilities, and remote and minority groups, including by developing specific engagement tools for these sections of the community.

Without this effort, parliaments risk speaking only with politically engaged groups and hearing only those voices that can reach them easily – those who are often already empowered.

This indicator comprises the following dimensions:

● Dimension 6.3.1: Engaging civil society organizations

● Dimension 6.3.2: Reaching out to all communities

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Dimension 6.3.1: Engaging civil society organizations

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 6.3: Participation of diverse groups in the work of parliament
- Target 6: Participatory parliament

About this dimension

This dimension focuses on the engagement of CSOs in the work of parliament.

Having CSOs participate in parliamentary processes brings additional opinions and expertise into the discussion. CSO participation can contribute to more informed policymaking and has the potential to amplify the voices of the most vulnerable in society. It should therefore be encouraged in a thriving democracy.

Aspiring goal

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

The procedures by which CSOs can participate in the work of parliament are set out in the legal framework and/or in rules of procedure.

Parliament regularly invites a wide range of CSOs to contribute to the law-making process, oversight activities, parliamentary consultations and committee inquiries.

Parliament makes particular efforts to engage with CSOs that help it to connect with hard-to-reach and historically marginalized groups.

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:

- Laws or rules of procedure that support consultation with CSOs

- Clauses specifically focused on remedies for redress where participation obligations are not met

- Evidence of published information on parliamentary processes

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

Assessment criterion 1: Legal framework

The legal framework sets out the procedures by which CSOs can participate in the work of parliament.

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

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Assessment criterion 2: Consultation

Parliament systematically consults with CSOs in its law-making and oversight activities. CSO representatives can access parliamentary premises and attend relevant meetings. Parliament creates tools for engaging CSOs in consultation processes both in person and online.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Diversity

Parliament facilitates participation from a broad range of CSOs representing diverse points of view, including those that work with hard-to-reach and historically marginalized groups. Parliament ensures a level playing field for all CSOs that engage with parliament.

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.

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Dimension 6.3.2: Reaching out to all communities

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 6.3: Participation of diverse groups in the work of parliament
- Target 6: Participatory parliament

About this dimension

This dimension covers parliament's capacity to reach all communities. Without a proactive effort from parliament, structural barriers are likely to limit some voices and inequalities can be widened. It is vital for parliament to promote participation from all communities. This might entail making strategic choices about whom to target, identifying the most effective ways of working with the target communities and investing resources in making parliament more accessible to all.

Groups facing barriers to engagement with parliament include women, youth, older people, rural groups, LGBTQI+ people, Indigenous communities, national, ethnic, linguistic and religious minorities, and migrants and refugees.

See also *Dimension 5.1.5: Youth inclusion*.

Aspiring goal

Based on a global comparative analysis, an aspiring goal for parliaments in the area of "reaching out to all communities" is as follows:

Parliament's law-making and oversight activities are accessible to all members of the public regardless of their age, gender, location, physical ability or any other characteristic.

Parliamentary consultations, including committee inquiries, are conducted in an accessible and inclusive way. Information about these engagement opportunities is made available in a timely manner and to a wide and diverse audience.

The participation of women is institutionalized and mainstreamed throughout the work of parliament.

Parliament provides targeted engagement opportunities for groups who may otherwise face barriers to engagement.

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:

- Parliamentary strategies or action plans outlining the inclusivity of parliamentary engagement programmes

- Data on diverse participation in parliamentary consultations

- Gender balance in public consultation and among witnesses over the course of a year

- Data on young people consulted by parliament over the course of a year

- Materials in sign language or Braille

- Records showing diverse participation in committee processes/hearings

- Information about remote parliamentary committee meetings and/or other programmes outside the parliamentary premises

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

Assessment criterion 1: Policies

Parliament sets out strategies for engaging all groups within the community, especially those facing barriers to engagement with parliament, regardless of their age, gender, location, physical ability or any other characteristic.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Accessibility

Information about parliamentary consultations is made available in a timely manner and to a wide and diverse audience. Parliamentary buildings and infrastructure, as well as print and digital materials, are accessible and inclusive.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Engaging women

The participation of women is institutionalized and mainstreamed throughout the work of parliament. Engagement is safe and accessible for women. Parliament ensures that both women and men are equally represented among experts and other witnesses at committee hearings.

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

Assessment criterion 4: Engaging youth

Parliament provides targeted engagement opportunities for youth and young people are systematically consulted on matters that are important to them.

_____

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

Assessment criterion 5: Engaging remote communities

Parliament proactively offers engagement opportunities for communities that are geographically remote from parliament. These may include bringing people to parliament, organizing committee hearings outside the parliamentary premises or offering educational programmes to people in remote areas.

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.

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Indicator 7.1: Electoral integrity

About this indicator

Parliament plays a key role in setting the legal framework for free and fair elections. Elections constitute the cornerstone of any democratic society and should provide voters, candidates and political parties with equal opportunities for participation, a level playing field and a safe environment.

For the credibility of the electoral process, it is necessary for electoral law to be stable and in line with international standards. Public authorities should remain neutral in the electoral process. Elections should be administered by an independent electoral management body (EMB) in a transparent, impartial, open and accountable manner.

This indicator comprises the following dimensions:

- Dimension 7.1.1: Voting and election rights
- Dimension 7.1.2: Candidacy, party and campaign rights and responsibilities
- Dimension 7.1.3: Role of public authorities in elections

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Dimension 7.1.1: Voting and election rights

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 7.1: Electoral integrity
- Target 7: Representative parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the provisions of the constitution and/or other aspects of the legal framework that establish the basis for democratic elections.

The constitution establishes fundamental electoral principles such as the electoral system, universal suffrage, the frequency of elections and the use of secret ballots.

Electoral law addresses issues related to election management, such as the composition of the administration, boundary delimitation and other procedural matters, as well as fundamental human rights such as freedom of expression, freedom of movement, freedom of peaceful assembly and association, and access to information during the electoral process. The stability of electoral law is important for the credibility of the electoral process.

Aspiring goal

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

The constitution and/or other aspects of the legal framework establish fundamental electoral principles. The legal framework concerning elections is clear, consistent and unambiguous and in line with international electoral standards.

Changes to electoral law are made in a timely manner and at least one year in advance of any elections.

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 constitution and/or other aspects of the legal framework establishing the electoral system, the frequency of elections and the use of secret ballots

- Provisions of the constitution and/or other aspects of the legal framework guaranteeing universal and equal suffrage for all citizens above a certain age

- Details of adaptations for specific groups in society, such as accessible polling stations and electoral materials translated into minority languages

- Relevant provisions of electoral law

- Provisions of the legal framework establishing effective mechanisms and remedies for violations of voting rights

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

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Assessment criterion 1: Constitution and/or legal framework

The constitution and/or other aspects of the legal framework establish fundamental electoral principles. These provisions are clear, consistent and unambiguous and are in line with international electoral standards.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Stability of electoral law

Changes to electoral law are made in a timely manner and at least one year in advance of any elections.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Practice

In practice, elections take place regularly. A significant proportion of citizens participate in these elections. Elections are competitive and citizens' fundamental rights are respected before, during and after election day.

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.

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Sources and further reading

- European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission), *Code of good practice in electoral matters: Guidelines and explanatory report* (2002).

- Guy S. Goodwin-Gill, *Free and Fair Elections: New expanded edition* (2006).

- International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA), *International Electoral Standards: Guidelines for reviewing the legal framework of elections* (2002).

- International IDEA, *Voting from Abroad: The International IDEA Handbook* (2007).

- International IDEA, *Electoral Justice: The International IDEA Handbook* (2010).

- International IDEA, *Electoral Management Design: Revised Edition* (2014).

- International IDEA, *International Obligations for Elections: Guidelines for Legal Frameworks* (2014).

- International IDEA, Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and Stockholm University, *Atlas of Electoral Gender Quotas* (2013).

- IPU, "Declaration on Criteria for Free and Fair Elections", adopted by the Inter-Parliamentary Council at its 154th session (1994).

- Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), *International Standards and Commitments on the Right to Democratic Elections: A Practical Guide to Democratic Elections: Best Practice* (2002).

- United Nations Centre for Human Rights, *Human Rights and Elections: A Handbook on the Legal, Technical and Human Rights Aspects of Elections* (1994).

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Dimension 7.1.2: Candidacy, party and campaign rights and responsibilities

> This dimension is part of:
>
> - Indicator 7.1: Electoral integrity
> - Target 7: Representative parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the right of citizens to stand for election and to campaign on an equal basis with other candidates. This includes the freedom to reach out to voters and express political views, freedom of movement within a country to campaign, and access to the media.

Countries should ensure that individuals and groups have the right to join or form political parties. Any exceptions should be non-discriminatory, consistent with international obligations, and clearly defined by law. Once a political party is officially registered, it should have an equal chance to participate in the electoral process and to gain access to the ballot.

The legal framework should provide for the right to appeal regarding alleged violations of political and electoral rights – taking place before, during and after elections – to a competent and independent EMB and/or court. Time limits for lodging appeals should be short, but long enough to make an appeal possible. The time limit deciding on appeals should be equally short in order to allow for the effective restoration of electoral rights.

Aspiring goal

> _Based on a global comparative analysis, an aspiring goal for parliaments in the area of "candidacy, party and campaign rights and responsibilities" is as follows:_
>
> Every eligible citizen has the right to stand for election on an equal basis with other candidates.
>
> Individuals and groups have the right to join or form political parties in order to contest elections. Any exceptions to this right are non-discriminatory, consistent with international obligations, and clearly defined by law.
>
> The legal framework ensures that candidates have the right and the opportunity to freely express their opinions to the electorate, and to campaign on an equitable basis with other candidates and political parties.
>
> Every voter, candidate and political party has a right to appeal regarding alleged violations of political and electoral rights to a competent and independent body.

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 establishing that every citizen has the right to stand for election as an individual candidate and/or as a member of a political party

- Provisions of electoral law setting out all criteria for participation in elections

- Legal provisions regulating political funding

- Legal provisions regulating the electoral dispute resolution system

- Reports and media coverage showing actual practice

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

Assessment criterion 1: Right to stand for election

The legal framework establishes that every eligible citizen has the right to stand for election, including as an individual candidate and/or as a member of a political party.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Right to join or form political parties

Individuals and groups have the right to join or form political parties in order to contest elections. Any exceptions to this right are non-discriminatory, consistent with international obligations, and clearly defined by law.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Right to appeal

The legal framework guarantees the right to appeal regarding alleged violations of political and electoral rights to a competent and independent body. The appeal procedure, as well as the powers and responsibilities of the bodies involved, are clearly regulated. The time limits for lodging and deciding on appeals are reasonably short.

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.*

Sources and further reading

● European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission), *Code of good practice in electoral matters: Guidelines and explanatory report* (2002).

● Guy S. Goodwin-Gill, *Free and Fair Elections: New expanded edition* (2006).

● International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA), *International Electoral Standards: Guidelines for reviewing the legal framework of elections* (2002).

● International IDEA, *Electoral Justice: The International IDEA Handbook* (2010).

● International IDEA, *International Obligations for Elections: Guidelines for Legal Frameworks* (2014).

● International IDEA, *Funding of Political Parties and Election Campaigns: A Handbook on Political Finance* (2014).

● Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), "Declaration on Criteria for Free and Fair Elections", adopted by the Inter-Parliamentary Council at its 154th session (1994).

● Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), *International Standards and Commitments on the Right to Democratic Elections: A Practical Guide to Democratic Elections: Best Practice* (2002).

● United Nations Centre for Human Rights, *Human Rights and Elections: A Handbook on the Legal, Technical and Human Rights Aspects of Elections* (1994).

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Dimension 7.1.3: Role of public authorities in elections

> This dimension is part of:
>
> - Indicator 7.1: Electoral integrity
> - Target 7: Representative parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the administration of elections by public authorities, which should be impartial, transparent and independent. Public authorities should observe their duty to remain neutral in the electoral process and guarantee the right of voters to freely form an opinion.

Elections should be administered by an independent electoral management body (EMB) in a transparent, impartial, open and accountable manner. The composition of the EMB, the procedures for the appointment and removal of EMB officials, their duties and responsibilities, and the guarantee that the election process is to be conducted in an independent and impartial manner, should be established in and protected by law.

Public authorities should ensure that citizens understand the electoral process and that information about elections and candidates is widely available.

See also _Dimension 7.2.1: Representation of political diversity_.

Aspiring goal

> _Based on a global comparative analysis, an aspiring goal for parliaments in the area of "role of public authorities in elections" is as follows:_
>
> Public authorities observe their duty to remain neutral in the electoral process and guarantee the right of voters to freely form an opinion.
>
> An EMB is tasked with ensuring the proper conduct of the electoral process. The EMB operates according to clearly defined and publicly available rules, enjoys independence of decision-making and action. The EMB carries out its tasks impartially and transparently, and enjoys the trust and respect of the community.
>
> Information about the electoral process is widely available, including as part of civic education programmes. Public authorities ensure that voters are aware of electoral procedures and have access to candidate lists and information. Information is available in the languages that are widely used in the country.

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 maintenance of the electoral register

- Provisions of the legal framework mandating public authorities to provide civic education and information programmes about the electoral process

- Details of the EMB's legal authority and rules

- Documents produced by election observers

- Reports and media coverage showing actual practice

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

Assessment criterion 1: Neutrality of public authorities

The legal framework guarantees the integrity and transparency of the entire electoral process, including sanctions for electoral fraud. The neutrality of public authorities in the electoral process is ensured by law and in practice.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Electoral management body (EMB)

An EMB is tasked with ensuring the proper conduct of the electoral process. The EMB operates according to clearly defined and publicly available rules, and enjoys independence of decision-making and action. The EMB carries out its tasks impartially and transparently, and enjoys the trust and respect of the community.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Access to information about the electoral process

Information about the electoral process is widely available, including as part of civic education programmes. Public authorities ensure that voters are aware of electoral procedures and have access to candidate lists and information. Information is available in the languages that are widely used in the country.

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

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Recommendations for change

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

Sources and further reading

● European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission), *Code of good practice in electoral matters: Guidelines and explanatory report* (2002).

● Guy S. Goodwin-Gill, *Free and Fair Elections: New expanded edition* (2006).

● International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA), *Electoral Justice: The International IDEA Handbook* (2010).

● International IDEA, *Electoral Management Design: Revised Edition* (2014).

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● Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), "Declaration on Criteria for Free and Fair Elections", adopted by the Inter-Parliamentary Council at its 154th session (1994).

● Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), *International Standards and Commitments on the Right to Democratic Elections: A Practical Guide to Democratic Elections: Best Practice* (2002).

● United Nations Centre for Human Rights, *Human Rights and Elections: A Handbook on the Legal, Technical and Human Rights Aspects of Elections* (1994).

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Indicator 7.2: Composition of parliament

About this indicator

The composition of a democratic parliament should reflect diverse political opinions as well as different groups in society. A parliament that is unrepresentative of its society will leave some social groups and communities feeling disadvantaged in, or even excluded from, the political process, with consequences in terms of the quality of public life or the stability of the political system and society in general.

The composition of parliament is determined by multiple factors, including the electoral system, political parties and of course the preferences of the electorate. Parliament plays a role in shaping this system and ensuring that parliament reflects the social diversity of the nation. Many parliaments have also adopted special measures such as quotas to promote the representation of women, youth and other underrepresented groups.

This indicator comprises the following dimensions:

●   Dimension 7.2.1: Representation of political diversity

●   Dimension 7.2.2: Representation of women

●   Dimension 7.2.3: Representation of youth

●   Dimension 7.2.4: Representation of other underrepresented groups

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Dimension 7.2.1: Representation of political diversity

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 7.2: Electoral integrity
- Target 7: Representative parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the legal provisions that support the representation of diverse political opinions in parliament. These provisions cover aspects such as the electoral system, the procedures for registering political parties and, if applicable, independent candidates, as well as electoral thresholds and the powers attributed to different political groups and, where applicable, independent MPs.

Aspiring goal

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

The design of the electoral system ensures that the allocation of parliamentary seats accurately reflects the proportion of votes received by political parties and candidates.

The legal framework establishes clear and transparent procedures for registering political parties and candidates for elections, including reasonable eligibility criteria, consistent procedures and feasible deadlines.

Where applicable, the legal framework sets a reasonable electoral threshold for parties and/or candidates to gain seats in parliament.

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 constitution and/or other aspects of the legal framework establishing an electoral system that allows different political opinions to be represented in parliament
- Provisions of the legal framework on the delimitation/redistricting of boundaries for electoral districts
- Provisions of electoral law on party/candidate registration
- Provisions of the constitution and/or other aspects of the legal framework on electoral thresholds
- Election observation reports

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

Assessment criterion 1: Electoral system design

The design of the electoral system ensures that the allocation of parliamentary seats accurately reflects the proportion of votes received by political parties and candidates.

_____

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

Assessment criterion 2: Party/candidate registration

The legal framework establishes clear and transparent procedures for registering political parties and candidates for elections, including reasonable eligibility criteria, consistent procedures and feasible deadlines.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Electoral thresholds

Where applicable, the legal framework maintains a reasonable electoral threshold for parties and/or candidates to gain seats in parliament.

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

Assessment criterion 4: Practice

In practice, political parties are represented in parliament in proportion to their support among the electorate. No parties or candidates are arbitrarily prevented from participating in elections or taking up seats in parliament.

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

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Recommendations for change

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

Sources and further reading

● European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission), *Report on thresholds and other features of electoral systems which bar parties from access to parliament* (2010).

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Dimension 7.2.2: Representation of women

> This dimension is part of:
>
> - Indicator 7.2: Electoral integrity
> - Target 7: Representative parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the legal framework and the mechanisms in place to achieve gender parity in the composition of parliament, as well as the means to make progress towards this goal.

The legal framework should guarantee equal opportunities for the political participation of women, and an electoral environment that is free from barriers and violence.

Parliament can take action towards gender parity in parliament by adopting legislation on measures such as candidate quotas or reserved seats. Many countries have demonstrated that *q*uotas – including their design and objectives – have a significant positive impact on women's representation.

Parliament also has a lead role in combating violence against women in politics, as well as in society.

The number of women in parliament is only one way of measuring progress towards a gender-sensitive parliamentary institution.

See also *Dimension 5.1.3: Gender mainstreaming, Dimension 5.1.4: Gender-responsive budgeting, Dimension 5.2.3: Combating sexism, harassment and violence* and *Dimension 7.3.3: Gender and age balance in parliamentary bodies*.

Aspiring goal

> *Based on a global comparative analysis, an aspiring goal for parliaments in the area of "representation of women" is as follows:*
>
> There is gender parity in the composition of parliament.
>
> The legal framework guarantees the political participation of women and promotes the equal representation of women and men in parliament.
>
> Parliament has adopted legislative and other measures designed to increase women's representation in parliament.
>
> Legislative and policy measures are taken to address and prevent violence against women in politics, both as candidates for election and while in office.

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:

- The numbers of women and men holding seats in parliament, both currently and in the recent past, and a gender breakdown of leadership positions in parliament

- Provisions of the constitution and/or other aspects of the legal framework highlighting the importance of women's equal political participation

- Provisions of electoral or other laws that aim to promote gender balance, such as gender quotas in parliament

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- Parliamentary committee reports indicating recommendations for the amendment and/or review of legislation with a view to enhancing the political participation of women
- Laws and policies addressing violence against women in politics

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

Assessment criterion 1: Equal opportunities

The legal framework guarantees equal opportunities for the political participation of women and men in parliament.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Measures to increase women's representation

Parliament has adopted legislative and other measures designed to increase women's representation in parliament, such as quotas.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Violence against women in politics

Legislative and policy measures are taken to address and prevent violence against women in politics, both as candidates for election and while in office.

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

Assessment criterion 4: Practice

In practice, consistent progress is made towards gender parity in parliament and the elimination of violence against women in politics.

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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.

Sources and further reading

- European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), *Gender equality in national parliaments across the EU and the European Parliament* (2019).

- Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), *Gender-Sensitive Parliaments: A Global Review of Good Practice* (2011).

- IPU, *Guidelines for Women's Caucuses* (2013).

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- IPU, *Women in parliament in 2022: The year in review* (2023).

- IPU and Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW Committee), "Joint Call by IPU and CEDAW Committee on International Women's Day 2021" (2021).

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- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), *Guidance Note: Strategies and good practices in promoting gender equality outcomes in parliaments* (2016).

- United Nations, *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)* (1979).

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Dimension 7.2.3: Representation of youth

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 7.2: Electoral integrity
- Target 7: Representative parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the representation of young men and women in parliament. An enabling legal framework, free of restrictive barriers, is important for increasing the political participation of young people.

The alignment of the minimum age of eligibility to run for office with the minimum voting age is a considerable factor for youth representation. In the case of bicameral parliaments, it is also beneficial to equalize the age of eligibility for both chambers.

Some parliaments have adopted special measures to enhance youth representation in parliament, such as legislated candidate quotas or reserved seats. Political parties can also make an impact by introducing voluntary quotas, by strengthening party youth wings/organizations and by promoting young people to run for office.

Many parliaments have committees that work on youth issues. In some parliaments, caucuses dedicated to youth issues or caucuses of young MPs have been formed, while in other cases young parliamentarians have developed their own networks.

Organizing specific training and mentoring for young MPs, as well as providing an enabling environment through measures such as childcare facilities, a flexible work schedule and remote working possibilities, are other examples of good parliamentary practices for enhancing the representation of youth.

For ways in which parliament seeks to include the views of young people in its work, see also _Dimension 5.1.5: Youth inclusion_.

Aspiring goal

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

The legal framework establishes that the minimum age of eligibility to run for political office is the same as the minimum voting age.

Legislative and policy measures are taken to promote youth representation in parliament.

Parliamentary bodies, such as committees, caucuses or networks of young MPs, are mandated to address youth issues.

There is an enabling environment for young MPs in parliament, including the availability of training and mentoring.

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 constitution and/or other aspects of the legal framework establishing the minimum voting age and the minimum age of eligibility to run for office

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- Parliament's policies, structures and/or documents addressing the engagement of young MPs and the support provided to them

- The number of MPs under age 45, under age 40 and under age 30

- Evidence of parliamentary communication promoting the work of young MPs

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

Assessment criterion 1: Minimum age of eligibility

The legal framework establishes that the minimum age of eligibility to run for political office is the same as the minimum voting age.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Promoting youth representation

Legislative and policy measures are taken to promote youth representation in parliament.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Bodies addressing youth issues

Parliamentary bodies, such as committees, caucuses or networks of young MPs, are mandated to address youth issues.

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

Assessment criterion 4: Enabling environment for young MPs

There is an enabling environment for young MPs in parliament, including the availability of training and mentoring.

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

Assessment criterion 5: Practice

In practice, there is commitment to enhancing youth representation in parliament. Over the past three parliaments, there has been an increase in both the number and proportion of seats held by MPs under age 45, under age 40 and under age 30.

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.

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Dimension 7.2.4: Representation of other underrepresented groups

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This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 7.2: Electoral integrity
- Target 7: Representative parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the representation of groups and communities who may otherwise be underrepresented in parliament. The definition of "underrepresented groups" is highly dependent on the context of each country, but generally includes national, ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, Indigenous peoples and other social groups in vulnerable situations. Underrepresented groups often face marginalization and are disproportionately affected by poverty, unemployment, and limited access to quality education and healthcare. Representation in parliament is an important step towards overcoming these challenges and ensuring equality more broadly.

Different mechanisms for promoting the representation of underrepresented groups are observed across different countries. Special measures to ensure the representation of minority and Indigenous groups in parliament are often used, such as reserved seats. Some systems allow the formation of political groups on the basis of ethnic, religious or linguistic identity, while in other countries this may be prohibited.

By virtue of their numerical size, the number of MPs representing minority groups is likely to be quite small. Parliament should consider ways to ensure the equitable participation of such MPs in its work.

In addition to guaranteeing their parliamentary representation, parliaments often seek to maintain dialogue and to consult with underrepresented groups in order to ensure their voice is heard in the decision-making process. See also _Target 6: Participatory parliament_.

Aspiring goal

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

The legal framework guarantees the right of all people, including underrepresented groups, to take part in the conduct of public affairs, including the right to vote and to stand for office, without discrimination.

Parliament has adopted special measures to promote the representation of underrepresented groups in parliament, such as quotas and reserved seats.

Parliament's rules of procedure provide opportunities for MPs representing minority groups to participate actively in the work of parliament.

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 constitution and/or other aspects of the legal framework guaranteeing the political rights of minority and Indigenous groups and prohibiting discrimination

- Provisions of the legal framework establishing special measures for minority and Indigenous groups

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- Evidence of representatives of minority and Indigenous groups in parliament, including on parliamentary committees, caucuses and/or councils

- Statistics on minority and Indigenous MPs in the current parliament

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

Assessment criterion 1: Right to participate in public affairs

The legal framework guarantees the right of all people, including underrepresented groups, to take part in the conduct of public affairs, including the right to vote and to stand for office, without discrimination.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Special measures

Parliament has adopted special measures to promote the representation of underrepresented groups in parliament, such as quotas and reserved seats.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Rules of procedure

Parliament's rules of procedure provide opportunities for MPs representing minority groups to participate actively in the work of parliament.

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

Assessment criterion 4: Practice

In practice, underrepresented groups are represented in parliament and are able to engage effectively in parliamentary work.

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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.

Sources and further reading

- Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM), *The Lund Recommendations on the Effective Participation of National Minorities in Public Life* (1999).

- OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), *Guidelines to Assist National Minority Participation in the Electoral Process* (2001).

- Oleh Protsyk, *The representation of minorities and indigenous peoples in parliament* (2010).

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Indicator 7.3: Composition of parliamentary bodies

About this indicator

The composition of parliamentary bodies, and of parliament as a whole, should reflect the diversity of political opinions and of social groups within a country.

The representation of political groups in the composition of parliamentary bodies is usually proportionate to the representation of these political groups in parliament as a whole. Parliaments often give special consideration to smaller political groups and independent MPs to ensure their effective representation.

Rules and practice have a significant role in determining the composition of parliament's governing bodies, such as the presidium, committees and other parliamentary bodies, and the distribution of leadership roles.

This indicator comprises the following dimensions:

● Dimension 7.3.1: Composition of governing bodies

● Dimension 7.3.2: Composition of committees

● Dimension 7.3.3: Gender and age balance in parliamentary bodies

See also _Indicator 1.4: Parliamentary organization_.

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Dimension 7.3.1: Composition of governing bodies

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 7.3: Composition of parliamentary bodies
- Target 7: Representative parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the provisions that ensure representation and balance among political groups in parliament's governing bodies, such as the presidium, the Conference of Speakers, and administrative and financial bodies. These provisions are typically set out in the legal framework and/or parliament's rules of procedure. They usually foresee the representation of all political groups in parliament's governing bodies in proportion to their representation in parliament.

The inclusion of political groups from the opposition or the political minority in the governing bodies is one form of institutional recognition of the political diversity of parliament. Many parliaments ensure that opposition or minority political groups also hold leadership positions, such as Deputy Speaker.

In parliaments where there are significant numbers of independent MPs, consideration should be given to ensuring their representation in parliament's governing bodies.

See also _Dimension 1.4.3: Presidium_.

Aspiring goal

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

The principles for the composition of parliament's governing bodies are clearly set out in the legal framework and/or parliament's rules of procedure. These provisions guarantee the representation of all political groups in the governing bodies and ensure an appropriate balance between them.

Parliament reserves leadership positions, such as at least one Deputy Speaker role, for the opposition or political minority groups.

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 constitution and/or other aspects of the legal framework concerning the composition of parliament's governing bodies

- Provisions of parliament's rules of procedure granting at least one Deputy Speaker position to an opposition MP

- Provisions of parliament's rules of procedure granting independent MPs representation in parliament's governing bodies

- Provisions of the legal framework establishing clear and transparent procedures for the formation of political groups in parliament

- The number of opposition MPs represented in the current parliament's governing bodies

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

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Assessment criterion 1: Representation of all political groups

The principles for the composition of parliament's governing bodies are clearly set out in the legal framework and/or parliament's rules of procedure. These provisions guarantee the representation of all political groups in the governing bodies and ensure an appropriate balance between them.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Leadership positions

Parliament reserves leadership positions, such as at least one Deputy Speaker role, for the opposition or political minority groups.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Practice

In practice, there is balanced representation of political groups in parliament's governing bodies.

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.

Sources and further reading

- European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission), _Report on the role of the opposition in a democratic Parliament_ (2010).

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- European Conference of Presidents of Parliament, *Majority and opposition – striking a balance in democracy* (2014).

- Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), *Guidelines on the Rights and Duties of the Opposition in the Parliament* (1999).

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Dimension 7.3.2: Composition of committees

> This dimension is part of:
>
> - Indicator 7.3: Composition of parliamentary bodies
> - Target 7: Representative parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns the rules and practice regarding the composition of parliamentary committees, including committee membership and leadership. It is important that MPs should be able to engage in committee work, in accordance with their personal expertise and interests and with the selection and decision-making processes of their political groups. Political groups often play a key role in committee assignments.

Committee membership is usually determined at the start of a parliamentary term. Generally, the composition of committees is proportionate to that of parliament as a whole. While there is considerable variation in committee structures, parliaments often require each MP to sit on at least one committee. Many parliaments allow MPs to be members of more than one committee, whereas some parliaments limit the number of committees on which each MP can sit.

Committee leadership roles – chairs and vice-chairs – are often elected by and from committee members after the composition of the committee is determined, soon after the first meeting of the newly elected parliament. In some systems, the majority party obtains chair positions for all committees, while in others, committee leadership positions are distributed among political groups based on the principle of proportionality.

Regardless of the system, it is important for parliament to establish and apply clear, fair and transparent rules and procedures for the composition of committees and the selection or election of committee leadership positions. Parliament's rules of procedure often explicitly assign leadership of some committees – such as the budget committee or the human rights committee – to the opposition.

Special consideration may be given to small political groups and independent MPs to ensure their representation in committees, either as full members or as observers.

See also _Dimension 1.4.4: Parliamentary committees_.

Aspiring goal

> _Based on a global comparative analysis, an aspiring goal for parliaments in the area of "composition of committees" is as follows:_
>
> There are clear, fair and transparent rules and procedures for determining membership of committees and for the selection or election of committee leadership roles.
>
> Special consideration is given to small political groups and independent MPs in order to ensure their representation in committees.
>
> The expertise and interests of MPs are taken into consideration when assigning committee roles.
>
> The composition of committees and committee leadership roles reflects that of parliament as a whole.

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 governing the composition and leadership of parliamentary committees
- Provisions of parliament's rules of procedure relating to the distribution of committee leadership positions among political groups
- The number of committees or subcommittees chaired by opposition MPs

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

Assessment criterion 1: Rules and procedures for composition of committees

There are clear, fair and transparent rules and procedures for determining membership of committees and for the selection or election of committee leadership roles.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Small political groups and independent MPs

Special consideration is given to small political groups and independent MPs in order to ensure their representation in committees.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Expertise and interests of MPs

The expertise and interests of MPs are taken into consideration when assigning committee roles.

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

Assessment criterion 4: Practice

In practice, the composition of committees and committee leadership roles reflects that of parliament as a whole.

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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.

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Dimension 7.3.3: Gender and age balance in parliamentary bodies

This dimension is part of:

- Indicator 7.3: Composition of parliamentary bodies
- Target 7: Representative parliament

About this dimension

This dimension concerns arrangements and practices relating to the representation of women and young MPs in leadership positions and in parliamentary bodies, including as Speakers or Deputy Speakers, in the presidium, on administrative and financial bodies, as committee chairs and vice-chairs, and as members of different committees.

Achieving gender and age balance in the leadership and composition of parliamentary bodies provides opportunities for women and young MPs to influence parliament's work and helps to ensure that parliament addresses the needs of women and young people.

It is important that women MPs, in particular, should have access to leadership roles in all policy areas, including as chairs of foreign affairs, defence and finance committees.

For gender and age balance in the parliamentary secretariat, see also _Indicator 5.2: Inclusive institutional practices_.

Aspiring goal

Based on a global comparative analysis, an aspiring goal for parliaments in the area of "gender and age balance in parliamentary bodies" is as follows:

Parliament takes measures to promote the equitable representation of women and young MPs in all parliamentary bodies, including in leadership positions.

MPs of different genders and ages are equitably represented in parliamentary leadership positions, including among committee chairs and vice-chairs.

Parliament monitors and reports on gender and age balance in the composition and leadership of parliamentary bodies.

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:

- The number of women and young MPs holding leadership positions in parliament

- The number of women and young MPs holding committee chair and vice-chair positions

- A list of members of different portfolio committees in parliament

- Provisions of the legal framework and/or parliament's rules of procedure ensuring gender and age balance in parliamentary bodies and in the positions of chair, vice-chair and members of parliamentary committees

- Objectives and actions of parliament's strategic plan and other policies outlining steps or special measures to ensure balanced representation of women and young MPs on parliamentary bodies

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- Parliamentary communication materials showcasing the positive role that women and young MPs play across parliament's work

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

Assessment criterion 1: Measures to promote equitable representation

Parliament takes measures to promote the equitable representation of women and young MPs in all parliamentary bodies.

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

Assessment criterion 2: Gender and age balance in leadership positions

MPs of different genders and ages are equitably represented in parliamentary leadership positions, including among committee chairs and vice-chairs.

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

Assessment criterion 3: Monitoring and reporting

Parliament monitors and reports on gender and age balance in the composition and leadership of parliamentary bodies.

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

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Recommendations for change

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

Sources and further reading

- Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), *Gender-Sensitive parliaments: A Global Review of Good Practice* (2011).

- IPU, *Evaluating the gender-sensitivity of parliaments: A self-assessment toolkit* (2016).

- IPU, *Women in parliament in 2020: The year in review* (2021).

- IPU, *Youth participation in national parliaments* (2021).

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Glossary of terms

Various sources were used to select the terms and develop the definitions in this glossary, including glossaries and similar resources from the following parliaments: Australia, Botswana, Canada, Ireland, Montenegro, Nauru, Singapore, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. Other sources included the European Parliament's *Terminology for Parliamentary Work* and *The Plenary: a User's Guide*, as well as the following National Democratic Institute publications: *Civic Participation Terminology: A Guide to Frequently Used Terms and Phrases* and *Violence Against Women in Politics (VAWIP): Defining Terminologies and Concepts*.

A

Accountability

The level of responsibility and action taken by government actors in line with citizens' priorities and legal frameworks. Accountability is assured through relationships which allow government and citizens opportunities to engage in two-way feedback. This enables the public to ensure that government actors are responsible, and that they act with integrity, in the interest of public priorities and in line with regulations. Accountability requires the government to acknowledge and take responsibility for decisions, actions and policies in light of agreed expectations, such as a legislative agreement between an elected official and their constituents.

Act of parliament

Usually a law passed (or adopted) by parliament. It is sometimes called a "statute". In this publication, the term "parliamentary act" may also be used to refer to other regulations, rulebooks or similar operational (and sometimes internal) acts unique to parliament. See also: *Law* and *Legislation*.

Ad hoc committee

A committee that may be formed to address a particular issue, subject or event, but that does not have standing responsibilities.

Advocacy

A process aimed at influencing government discussion, procedures and policies. It consists of a set of organized, strategic actions over a period of time, usually guided by civil society and citizens, directed at bringing about change through political participation to address issues.

Affirmative action

A set of policies and practices, within a government or organization, aimed at ensuring better representation or inclusion of particular underrepresented or disadvantaged groups.

Agenda

The chronological list of all items to be discussed at a formal meeting (including plenary and committee meetings).

All-party group

An informal group formed by MPs, usually from different parties, who share a common interest in a particular policy area, region or country. See also: *Caucus* and *Cross-party group*.

Amendment

A change proposed to the wording of a proposal for a law during its passage through parliament – or to a motion, resolution or committee report – with the intention of improving it or providing an alternative option. Amendments may seek to alter a part of

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a text by deleting, adding or substituting words or figures in that text. They can usually be tabled by an MP, a group of MPs or a committee.

Assembly

See: *Parliament*.

Audience

A person or people to whom information is conveyed or messages are directed.

Autonomy

Political independence and self-government. The ability to operate without outside control. The capacity to make an informed, uncoerced decision.

B

Bicameral

Denotes a parliament or legislature that has two separate chambers or houses. In some cases, they have equal but distinct privileges and powers, and are separated in structure and statute. A bicameral system has a significant impact on the way parliament works.

Bill

See: *Proposal for a law*.

Budget

A plan typically prepared by the executive and placed before parliament each year (depending on national statute) showing what money the government expects to receive (revenue) and how the government proposes to spend it (expenditure).

Bureau

See: *Presidium*.

By-law

A law or rule governing the internal affairs of an organization, or a secondary law. See also: *Delegated legislation*, *Rules of procedure* and *Secondary legislation*.

C

Caucus

A group composed of all MPs from the same political party, or a meeting of party leaders or civic organizers, the purpose of which may be to show unity for a particular issue or to select a candidate for office. Sometimes, the term "caucus" is used for all MPs who are in Cabinet or who support the government. In some parliaments, cross-party or all-party groups are known as "caucuses". The term may also refer to issue-based or thematic groups formed within parliament that include MPs from multiple parties. See also: *All-party group* and *Cross-party group*.

Citizen

An individual who is a naturalized or native-born resident of a State, displays allegiance to that State's political and legal authority, and is therefore entitled to the rights and protections of its laws, including the right to political participation.

Citizens' assembly

See: *Citizens' jury*.

Citizens' jury

A form of deliberative democracy in which small groups of people are brought together to hear evidence about a policy or legislative issue, and to debate and determine a

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judgement based on the evidence received. Citizens' juries are used to inform issue-based advocacy campaigns or decision-making by public officials on complex policy matters.

Citizens' legislative initiative

A public participation method that allows citizens to submit legislative proposals on a constitutional and/or legislative matter. See also: *Advocacy* and *Petition*.

Citizenship

The right of national identity bestowed by a State on individual members of that system by birth or application. Citizenship carries an expectation of allegiance.

Civic education

Programmes that introduce the basic rules and institutional features of a democratic political system, and that provide knowledge about democratic rights and practices, such as constitutional rights, gender equality and collective action. Civic education programmes aim to impart the necessary knowledge and skills needed to effectively participate in the community, government and politics.

Civic engagement

The involvement of citizens and citizens' organizations in, or their commitment to, the political or community process as they fulfil their rights and responsibilities.

Civic space

The legal, political, social and economic environment that enables people, without hindrance, to organize, communicate and participate with each other to consider and influence issues that matter to them.

Civil servant

A person who works for the administrative service of a government, which is known as the "civil service" or the "public service/administration" and usually includes government (executive) departments as well as various bodies and agencies. Depending on the nature of a country's laws, civil servants may be eligible to work in other branches of government, including the legislature or the judiciary, in addition to subnational government offices.

Civil society

People in the community not associated with the government. Also, the groups and organizations outside of government in which people participate. The term also refers to all sorts of voluntary, collective activities organized around shared interests, values and objectives.

Civil society organization (CSO)

An association of people who work for a common cause. This umbrella term can include non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations and other diverse organizations.

Clerk

See: *Secretary General*.

Coalition

An alliance, temporary or permanent, of different people or organizations that come together for a common cause or to engage in a joint activity, usually focused on advocating with the government for change. In the parliamentary context, a coalition is often an alliance formed by two or more political parties for the purpose of gaining more representation.

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Code of conduct

A document adopted by many parliaments that explicitly codifies acceptable standards of behaviour and general conduct for MPs. A parliamentary code of conduct may also apply to parliamentary staff, or there may be a separate code of conduct for staff at the level of parliament or the entire public administration.

Committee

See: *Parliamentary committee.*

Communication

The process of exchanging information, opinions and ideas through dialogue and interactions between people, or between government institutions and people.

Community

People living in the same place or area, or a group of individuals that have particular characteristics in common.

Conflict of interest

In the parliamentary context, a situation in which someone in a position of trust or authority has competing professional or personal interests that directly challenge their role as a person representing the public interest, leaving them unable to fulfil their duties impartially. A conflict of interest exists even if no unethical or improper act result from this situation, and where there is an appearance of impropriety that can undermine confidence in the person/position/office.

Constituency

A specific geographic area or electoral division in a country that an MP represents, also known as a "riding" or "electoral district". The term may also refer to a portion of the population represented by a particular elected leader or organization.

Constituent

A citizen who votes or lives in an MP's area of representation.

Consultation

The process through which the opinions, views and suggestions of the community are sought on an issue or an activity.

Cross-party group

A group of MPs from two or more political parties who work together towards a common goal. Usually, a cross-party group is not an official parliamentary body and can also include external stakeholders as well as MPs. See also: *All-party group* and *Caucus*.

D

Debate

A discussion in which the arguments for or against a subject are presented according to specific rules. In the parliamentary context, debate is a mechanism by which a chamber deliberates on matters under consideration and provides members with the opportunity to publicly register their support for, or rejection of, an idea based on the priorities of their constituency and/or party.

Decision maker

A person who has the authority to create or change communal, organizational or governmental policies, programmes or laws.

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Delegated legislation

Secondary, subordinate or subsidiary legislation. Also, a process by which the executive authority is given powers by law to make secondary legislation in order to implement and administer the requirements of that law. Examples of delegated legislation might include regulations, standards, ordinances and other types of statutory instruments and by-laws. See also: *By-law* and *Secondary legislation*.

Deliberative democracy

A concept based on the principle that legitimate democracy arises from the public deliberation of citizens. Activities associated with this process might include citizens' juries, town hall meetings, public debates and other citizens' forums.

Democracy

The belief in freedom and equality between people, or
a system of government based on this belief, in which power is held
either by elected representatives or directly by the people themselves. Also, a basic right of citizenship to be exercised under conditions of freedom, equality, transparency and responsibility, with due respect for the plurality of views, and in the interest of the polity.

Diversity

The inclusion, in activities and decision-making, of people from various backgrounds of ethnicity, religion, age, gender and sexual orientation.

Draft law

See: *Proposal for a law*.

E

Electoral district

See: *Constituency*.

Electoral management body (EMB)

A body or bodies responsible for electoral management, usually impartial and independent from political influence. In some countries, national and local government institutions are trusted to handle the electoral process, while other countries establish an independent EMB. Different countries use various names for this kind of body, such as "electoral/election commission", "electoral council", "department of elections", "election unit" and "electoral/election board".

Executive

The branch of government that carries out or administers laws. The executive may also refer to the head of the government (President, Prime Minister, Head of State, etc.) and members of Cabinet and their staff, as well as the civil service, which implements policies and administers public programmes and resources through government departments and relevant offices. In a democratic system, the executive is held accountable by parliamentary oversight and checks and balances. In this publication, the terms "executive" and "government" are used interchangeably.

G

Gender-sensitive

An approach that acknowledges the way in which gender informs activities and decisions by taking account of, and responding to, the unique views, perspectives and needs of men, women and gender non-conforming individuals.

General secretariat

See: *Parliamentary administration*.

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Government

See: *Executive*.

Note: In this publication, the terms "government" and "executive" are used interchangeably, and the traditional definition of the three branches of government (executive, legislative and judicial) is not used.

H

Hansard

The official record or transcript of debates in a parliament. The term "Hansard", which is mostly used in Westminster-style parliaments, originated from the name of the printer in England who began preparing reports of parliamentary debates in the 18th century. The other terms in use are "transcript", "record" and "stenogram".

House

See: *Parliament*.

I

Impact assessment (IA)

In the parliamentary context, a structured process for considering the implications, for people and their environment, of proposed legislative actions in preparation for a policy debate, or in the event that there is an opportunity to amend (or even, if appropriate, abandon) a proposal. An impact assessment can be applied at all levels of policy development and decision-making, or can be related to a specific project.

Inclusion

In a parliamentary context, inclusion relates to both the institution of parliament, and the responsibilities and actions of members to fulfil their mandate as representatives of that institution. Inclusion in the institution relates to the processes and actions that ensure all operations and activities are structured in a way that gives individuals equal opportunities to participate and contribute to decision-making. Inclusion related to the actions of members to fulfil their mandate describes the methods used to ensure all individuals and groups, particularly those who are vulnerable and underrepresented, have equal opportunities to inform the law-making, oversight and representation processes.

Independent member of parliament

An MP who does not belong to a parliamentary (political) party. In systems that have a small number of central, dominant parties, this term can also refer to a member who represents or belongs to a party that is outside those dominant parties.

L

Law

A body of rules of action or conduct prescribed by a controlling authority (usually passed by parliament), which has a binding legal force and must be obeyed and followed by citizens, subject to sanctions or legal consequences. Also, the whole body of binding customs, practices or rules of a community prescribed or formally recognized and enforced by a controlling authority. See also: *Act of parliament*, *Bill*, *Law-making* and *Legislation*.

Law-making

The legislative process or the act of legislating, i.e. the process by which laws are made. See also: *Act of parliament*, *Law* and *Legislation*.

Lawmaker

See: *Member of parliament (MP)*.

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Leader of the opposition

Depending on the structure of the institution, the leader of the party that has the second largest membership in each chamber, also referred to as the "opposition". The leader of the opposition is responsible for leading opposition debates, setting the agenda for the opposition, and shaping the opposition's general vision and priorities in coordination with other members of that party or coalition. See also: _Opposition_.

Legal framework

In this publication, "legal framework" is an inclusive term referring to the constitutional, legal and/or regulatory provisions that apply in a given country. Its use recognizes the existence of different systems in different countries and the fact that, under some systems, there may be provisions on a particular issue at more than one level (e.g. in the constitution and in law).

Legislation

A law or a set of laws that have been passed by parliament. The word is also used to describe the act of making a new law. See also: _Act of parliament_, _Law_ and _Law-making_.

Legislative drafting

The act of writing a bill or an amendment to a law. Also referred to as "legislative technique".

Legislator

See: _Member of parliament (MP)_.

Legislature

See: _Parliament_.

LGBTQI+

An evolving acronym that stands for "lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning and intersex". The '+' represents minority gender identities and sexualities not explicitly included in the term "LGBTQI".

M

Motion

A proposal for action put forward in parliament for consideration, debate and decision.

Member of parliament (MP)

A person elected (or in some systems appointed) by the people to represent them in parliament. In a bicameral parliament, the term can refer to members of both chambers. Other terms in use in some systems include "delegate", "deputy", "senator" and "congressperson".

N

National human rights institution (NHRI)

A body that plays a crucial role in promoting and monitoring the effective implementation of international human rights standards at the national level. For instance, an NHRI can perform core protection functions such as the prevention of torture and degrading treatment, and can play a role in advancing aspects of the rule of law pertaining to those core protections. NHRIs can take various forms, such as human rights commissions or ombudspersons, hybrid institutions, consultative and advisory bodies, and other types of human rights institutes and centres. See also: _Ombudsperson_.

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O

Official

In this publication, the term "official" refers primarily to office-holders or high representatives of the executive or parliament. In some countries, the term "official" is used for staff members.

Ombudsperson

In the parliamentary context, an ombudsperson ensures that public programmes and services are adequately supporting the citizens for whom they are intended. Ombudsperson offices can serve as a liaison between citizens and government services, programmes and agencies, ensuring that those resources are in compliance with regulatory frameworks and human rights standards. See also: _National human rights institution (NHRI)_.

Opposition

The parliamentary minority party or parties. In some systems, the "opposition" refers to the political party or parties in parliament that do not form the government. It is also possible that the party or parties that form the government do not have a majority in parliament. See also: _Leader of the opposition_.

P

Parliament

A national body of elected (or sometimes appointed) representatives that makes laws, debates issues and holds the government to account.

Parliamentarian

See: _Member of parliament (MP)_.

Note: in the United States Congress, the term "parliamentarian" refers to the individual (and their respective office) who is responsible for maintaining precedent and compliance with the legislature's rules of procedure. There is a separate "parliamentarian" for each chamber in Congress.

Parliamentary administration

A set of administrative services and administrative staff that serve a parliament. Offices and staff of the parliamentary administration are professional, neutral and impartial in their work and actions.

Parliamentary committee

A body comprised of MPs who are appointed, on either a temporary or a permanent basis, to debate or closely examine matters closely related to specific policies, issues or circumstances, in line with the committee's scope of work. The theme, structure and nature of parliamentary committees are established by a chamber's rules of procedure. Depending on the these rules, the composition of a committee may reflect that of the whole parliament or include diverse party representation. In some parliaments, the term "commission" is used instead of, or interchangeably with, "committee".

Parliamentary control

See: _Parliamentary oversight_.

Parliamentary democracy

The system of government where the people elect representatives and the representative body chooses the executive to govern the State, with that executive held accountable by parliament (the elected body).

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Parliamentary oversight

> The close examination and investigation of government policies, actions and spending that is carried out by parliament to ensure they are reaching their intended beneficiaries appropriately, equitably and with integrity.

Parliamentary secretariat

> See: _Parliamentary administration_.

Parliamentary service

> See: _Parliamentary administration_.

Parliamentary scrutiny

> See: _Parliamentary oversight_.

Parliamentary staff

> Employees working for the parliamentary administration who provide professional and impartial support and services to enable MPs to fulfil their legislative responsibilities. In this publication, the term "parliamentary staff" does not include political staff who provide support to individual MPs or parliamentary (party) groups. It should be noted that parliamentary staff are categorized differently across the globe, and the term may refer to individuals who work under either partisan or non-partisan capacities in parliament. In this publication, the term refers to individuals who are non-partisan. Typically, parliamentary staff are separate and independent from the executive's civil service.

Participation

> The process through which people, individually or in groups, get involved in an activity or decision.

Petition

> A document presented to parliament by a person or group of people asking for action on a particular matter. The term "petition" can also cover any submission – proposal, criticism or complaint – made to parliament.

Presiding officer

> See: _Speaker_.

Presidium

> The collective governing body of parliament. Its composition varies among countries. The presidium might consist of individuals such as the Speaker and Deputy Speaker(s), but could also include a board with political responsibilities that brings together leaders from the different parliamentary (party) groups. In bicameral systems, each chamber usually has its own governing bodies.

Proposal for a law

> A proposal for a new law or changes to an existing law, tabled by MPs or the executive, to be considered by parliament.

Public Accounts Committee (PAC)

> A specialized parliamentary committee with responsibility for scrutinizing the budget and public expenditure. It is usually found in Westminster-type parliaments. In this publication, the term refers to all types of parliamentary committees that are responsible for oversight of government spending (such as committees on budget, finance, expenditure or similar).

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Public engagement

> The various methods and processes through which the community is involved in an activity, process or decision, including education, information, communication, consultation and participation.

Public

> All the members of a community in general, regardless of their citizenship status.

R

Rules of procedure

> The rules approved by parliament to regulate its proceedings and govern the way it conducts its business.

S

Secondary legislation

> Types of legislation created by ministers (or other bodies) under powers given to them by a law passed by parliament. Secondary legislation is used to fill in the details of law, providing practical measures that enable the law to be enforced and operate in daily life. A piece of secondary legislation usually has the words "rule", "order" or "regulation" in its title. Many pieces of secondary legislation are referred to as "statutory instruments" (or SIs), which are the most common form of this type of legislation. See also: _By-law_ and _Delegated legislation_.

Secretary General

> Typically the most senior permanent officer of parliament, who advises on procedure and records the decisions of the house. This person is also usually the administrative head of the parliamentary administration. In some institutions, the role of Secretary General and the responsibilities listed here may be performed by more than one individual or by several offices of jurisdiction.

Speaker

> The highest authority and principal presiding officer of the parliament, or of the house or chamber in bicameral parliaments. The Speaker is usually an MP elected at the beginning of each convocation by fellow MPs to preside over the parliamentary chamber or, in a unicameral system, to preside over the parliament.

Standing orders

> See: _Rules of procedure_.

Supreme audit institution (SAI)

> A body responsible for auditing public financial administration and the management of public funds. It plays a central role in the efficient, effective, transparent and accountable use of the public resources approved by parliament through the annual budget process. In some jurisdictions, the SAI may be known as the "national audit office", "court of auditors", "audit bureau", "board of audit" or "auditor-general".

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

> Global goals adopted by the United Nations in 2015 as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that, by 2030, all people enjoy peace and prosperity. Together, the SDGs constitute the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: a series of 17 interlinked goals designed as "the blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all".

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T

Tabling

The act of formally putting forward a question, motion, bill or amendment; a formal presentation of a document to parliament.

U

Unicameral

Denotes a parliament that has just one chamber, consisting of elected (or appointed) MPs. A unicameral parliament is defined under a nation's statute and is guided by the institution's rules of procedure.

V

Vote

The action taken by MPs to make a decision on pending legislation, amendments and other items requiring their discretion, in plenary or a committee setting. Voting regulations are codified in a chamber's rules of procedure. Typically, members must be present to cast a vote, which is recorded on paper or through an electronic system. In some jurisdictions, however, voting may take place virtually (such rules were commonly enacted by parliaments during the COVID-19 pandemic). Members can also vote by voice or "*en-bloc*" through unanimous consent.

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Abbreviations

ASGP	Association of Secretaries General of Parliaments
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CEDAW Committee	Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
CPA	Commonwealth Parliamentary Association
CSO	civil society organization
DCAF	Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EIGE	European Institute for Gender Equality
EMB	electoral management body
EU	European Union
FOI	freedom of information
GOPAC	Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption
GPG	Global Partners Governance
GTZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
HCNM	OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities
ICT	information and communications technology
IDB	Islamic Development Bank
IFLA	International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions
International IDEA	International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INTOSAI	International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions
IPU	Inter-Parliamentary Union
IVEA	Irish Vocational Education Association
LGBTQI+	lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning and intersex
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
MP	member of parliament
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NATO PA	NATO Parliamentary Assembly
NHRI	national human rights institution
ODIHR	OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
OPC	United Kingdom Office of the Parliamentary Counsel
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PAC	Public Accounts Committee

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PCI	parliamentary committee of inquiry
PCO	New Zealand Parliamentary Counsel Office
PLS	post-legislative scrutiny
SAI	supreme audit institution
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UN	United Nations
UN DESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UPR	universal periodic review
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WFD	Westminster Foundation for Democracy

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