

Directorate-General for the Presidency
Directorate for Relations with National Parliaments



Factsheet:

The Belgian House of Representatives

1. At a glance

Belgium is a federal state consisting of three communities and three regions.

The three communities are the Flemish-speaking, French-speaking and German-speaking community. The three regions are Flanders, Wallonia and Brussels.

Belgium has a Federal Parliament consisting of two chambers, the House of Representatives (Kamer van volksvertegenwoordigers/Chambre des représentants) and the Senate (Senaat/Sénat).

In principle, the communities and the regions have their own elected assemblies.

In 1980, however, the Flemish-speaking community and the Flemish region merged their parliaments into one single Flemish Parliament.

In Brussels, community matters are managed by community committees. These consist of representatives from the different communities in Brussels. Firstly, there is CoCoF (Commission communautaire française) or the consultative body for community matters of the French-speaking inhabitants of the Brussels Region and, secondly, there is the Joint Community Commission (GGC), which also acts a consultative body in order to achieve maximum coherence between the policies of the Flemish-speaking and the French-speaking Communities in the Brussels Region.

As a result, the Belgian parliamentary system consists of nine fully-fledged parliamentary assemblies.

The 150 representatives of the House of Representatives are directly elected under a proportional voting system from 11 electoral districts. Belgium has compulsory voting and thus maintains one of the highest rates of voter turnout in the world.

After the 2019 elections, Belgium had a Federal Government in current affairs from 27 October 2019 to 16 March 2020, led by Ms Sophie WILMÈS (MR/Renew Europe). Following the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic, the so-called Wilmès-II-government with emergency powers took the oath on 17 March 2020. On 1 October 2020, a fully-fledged federal government, led by Alexander DE CROO (OpenVLD/Renew Europe), was established.

The House's Advisory Committee for European Affairs was established in 1985. It is composed of ten representatives and ten Belgian members of the European Parliament.



In October 1995, it was decided to set up a Federal Advisory Committee for European Affairs, which consists of the Advisory Committee of the House and a delegation of ten senators. The Federal Advisory Committee for European Affairs represents the Belgian Federal Parliament at COSAC meetings.

Traditionally, the Federal Advisory Committee is co-chaired by the President of the House of Representatives and the Chairperson of the delegation of the Senate.

2. Composition

Results of the House of Representatives elections on 26 May 2019				
	Party	EP affiliation	%	Seats
	Nieuw-Vlaamse Alliantie (N-VA) New Flemish Alliance		16,03%	25
	Parti Socialiste (PS) Socialist Party - Walloon		9,46%	20
	Vlaams Belang (VB) Flemish Interest		11,95%	18
	Mouvement Réformateur (MR) Movement for Reform		7,56%	14
	Ecolo Greens-Walloon		6,14%	13
	Christen-Democratisch en Vlaams (CD&V) Christian Democratic and Flemish		8,89%	12
	Partij van de Arbeid van België/ Parti du Travail de Belgique (PVDA-PTB) Workers' Party		8,62%	12
	Open Vlaamse Liberalen en Democraten (Open Vld) Open Flemish Liberals and Democrats		8,54%	12
	Socialistische Partij Anders (sp.a) Socialist Party–Differently (Flemish)		6,71%	9
	Groen Flemish Green Party		6,1%	8
	Centre démocrate humaniste (cdH) Humanist Democratic Centre		3,7%	5
	DéFI Challenge	Not affiliated	2,22%	2
	Others		4,08%	0
			100%	150
Turnout: 88.38% The next elections should take place in 2024.				

3. Officeholders

<p>President of the House of Representatives</p>  <p>Ms Éliane TILLIEUX (PS/S&D) since 13 October 2020</p>	<p>Chairperson of the Federal Advisory Committee for European Affairs</p>  <p>Ms Éliane TILLIEUX (PS/S&D) since 13 October 2020 <i>(The Committee is chaired alternatively and for the duration of a full legislature by the President of the House of Representatives or the Chairperson of the delegation of the Belgian Senate.)</i></p>
<p>Secretary General of the House of Representatives: Mr Marc VAN DER HULST, since 1 October 2016</p>	

4. Relations with Members of the European Parliament

<p>Participation rights for Belgian MEPs in plenary sittings</p>	<p>No, in principle MEPs are not allowed to participate in a plenary meeting. However, there are precedents during which MEPs presented their report (drafted on behalf of the Federal Advisory Committee on European Affairs).</p>
<p>Participation rights for Belgian MEPs in committee meetings</p>	<p>In the Federal Advisory Committee for European Affairs, MEPs can take part in the debate and also vote, while in other Committees MEPs can only take part in the debate but not vote. The Chairperson of the Committee has to give them permission in advance.</p>
<p>Availability of videoconferencing system in Belgian House of Representatives</p>	<p>Zoom is available for legislative and non-legislative work</p>

5. Information links

Official website: www.dekamer.be ; www.lachambre.be

[Rules of procedure in English](#)

[List of committees](#)

[Recent documents submitted by the House of Representatives to the Interparliamentary EU Information Exchange \(IPEX\)](#)

[European Parliament Information Office in Brussels](#)

6. Contacts

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