



Spotlight on Parliaments in Europe

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Participation rights of MEPs in Sitzings of National Parliaments

On 10 June 2014, the Austrian Parliamentary Administration conducted, via the ECPRD network, a comparative survey on the participation rights of each country's MEPs in sittings of national Parliaments. 33 out of the 41 Chambers of the EU Parliaments replied. With few exceptions (Denmark, Finland, Latvia, Romania, Spain, Sweden and the UK) there is wide recognition by national Parliaments of their MEPs right to participate in their sittings mainly at committee level but in some cases, in plenary too (Bulgaria, Hungary, Lithuania and the Netherlands). Generally, the right to participate comprises only the right to speak. However, in Belgium, MEPs who are members of the Joint Advisory Committee on European Affairs of the Chamber of Representatives (consisting of 10 MPs and 10 MEPs) and of the Federal Advisory Committee on European Affairs (which consists of 10 Members of the House, 10 Members of the Senate and 10 MEPs) have the right to vote. In Lithuania, there is also a right to submit remarks and proposals orally or in writing in committee sittings.

Chamber	Plenary		EU Affairs Committee		Other Committees	
	Debate	Vote	Debate	Vote	Debate	Vote
Austrian National Council	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO
Austrian Federal Council	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO
Belgium Chamber of Representatives	NO ⁱ	NO	YES	YES	YES ⁱⁱ	NO
Belgium Senate ⁱⁱⁱ	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Bulgarian National Assembly	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
Croatian Parliament	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES ^{iv}	NO
Cyprus House of Representatives ^v	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Czech Chamber of Deputies	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
Czech Senate	NO	NO	YES	NO ^{vi}	YES	NO ^{vii}
Danish Parliament	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Estonian Parliament	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO
Finnish Parliament	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO ^{viii}	NO
French National Assembly	NO	NO	YES ^{ix}	NO	NO	NO
French Senate	NO	NO	YES ^x	NO	NO	NO
German Bundesrat	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
German Bundestag	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO
Hellenic Parliament	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO ^{xi}	NO
Hungarian National Assembly	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
Irish Houses of Oireachtas	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES ^{xii}	NO
Italian Chamber of Deputies ^{xiii}	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
Italian Senate ^{xiv}	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
Saeima Parliament of Latvia	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania ^{xv}	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
Luxembourg Chamber of Deputies ^{xvi}	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
The Netherlands Senate	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
The Netherlands House of Representatives	YES ^{xvii}	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
Polish Sejm	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES ^{xviii}	NO
Portuguese Assembly	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO
Romania Chamber of Deputies	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
National Council of the Slovak Republic	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO
Slovenia National Assembly	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
Spain Congress	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Swedish Parliament	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
UK House of Commons	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
UK House of Lords	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO

Directorate Relations with National Parliaments - Institutional Co-operation Unit www.europarl.europa.eu/relnatpar/

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- i MEP's are in principle not allowed to participate in a plenary meeting. However, there are precedents, during which MEP's presented their report (drafted on behalf of the mixed Advisory Committee on European Affairs of the **Belgian House of Representatives**)
- ii Every MEP elected in Belgium is allowed to participate in the activities of the Standing Committees (Art. 34 of the Rules of Procedures of the **Belgian House of Representatives**) The Chairperson of the Committee (with the agreement of the members of the Committee) has to give them permission in advance. The MEP can deliver a consultative voice in meetings with an information character.
- iii The **Belgian Senate** Members are part of the Federal Joint Committee on European Affairs composed of 10 Members of the Chamber of Representatives, 10 members of the Senate and 10 MEPs, but there is no specific Advisory Committee on European Affairs of the Senate with the participation of MEPs.
- iv Upon invitation, as stated in Article 57, Paragraph 2 of the Standing Orders: "Working bodies of Parliament may invite members of the European Parliament from the **Republic of Croatia** to meetings.
- v Usually the MEPs from **Cyprus** are invited, on an ad hoc basis, mostly by the House Standing Committee on European Affairs, but also by other Committees, if and when the agenda of their meeting(s) so calls for. In general, the House cooperates with the Cypriot MEPs as the need may arise, but there are no specific laws or regulations regarding this cooperation.
- vi Section 119c of the **Czech Senate** Rules of Procedure (Act No. 107/1999 Coll.) "Members of the European Parliament elected in the Czech Republic may attend meetings of the Designated Committee, and they shall be entitled to an advisory vote; they may express their opinion on the matter under consideration and submit proposals thereon. The committees designated to manage the parliamentary scrutiny of the EU affairs in the Senate are the EU-Affairs Committee and the Foreign Affairs Committee (for the CFSP and JHA).
- vii Idem.
- viii The Rules of Procedure of the **Finnish Parliament** (Section 37) state "A Committee may hear expert opinions", MEPs can participate only as invited experts on a specific subject (most commonly handling of a specific bill) in a committee hearing. Also in practise some MEPs have been heard in committees – for example in the recent handling of The Lisbon Treaty.
- ix The EU Affairs Committee of the **French Assemblée Nationale** can invite MEPs to participate in its debates.
- x Idem for the **French Senate**.
- xi According to par.3 of the article 44 of the S.O. following a decision of the Speaker of Parliament, the **Greek** Members of the European Parliament may participate and speak in the Committee on matters of National Significance or general interest sittings, in cases there is a debate on issues related to their mission in the European Parliament.
- xii **Irish** MEPs can attend and participate to the debates in the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs.
- xiii Rule 127-ter of the **Italian Chamber of Deputies'** Rules of Procedure states that: "On questions for which they have responsibility, and subject to agreement with the President of the Chamber, the Committees may invite members of the European Parliament to provide information on aspects concerning the powers and activities of the institutions of the European Union.
- xiv In relation to matters falling within its remit, a committee may, with leave of the President of the **Italian Senate**, invite members of the European Parliament to provide information on aspect relating to the powers and activities of EU institutions.
- xv Law on the Status and working conditions of the members of the European Parliament elected in the **Republic of Lithuania** adopted in 17 February 2004 (No. IX-2025). According to the Article 3 - a Member of the European Parliament shall have the right: 2) to participate in meetings of all Seimas committees and commissions in an advisory capacity, to submit remarks and proposals orally or in writing; 3) by permission of the Seimas, to take the floor at Seimas plenary sittings and to pose questions for reporters and supplementary reporters;
- xvi The Standing Committees may invite MEPs from the **Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg** to take part to their deliberations in an advisory capacity.
- xvii In the **Netherlands House of Representatives**, during the annual Plenary debates about the European Union EP members can request to participate in the discussions.
- xviii The provision allowing polish MEPs to take part in debates of the **Polish Sejm's** committees cannot apply to the Constitutional Accountability Committee and to investigative committees appointed pursuant to Article 111 of the Constitution.