

INTER PARES

EU Global Project to Strengthen
the Capacity of Parliaments

INTER PARES is the European Union's global flagship programme for strengthening the capacities of parliaments in emerging democracies, funded by the European Commission and delivered by International IDEA. INTER PARES is part of the European Commission's WYDE initiative (Women and Youth in Democracy). The first phase of the project ran from 2019-2023 (€5 million) and was renewed for a second phase from 2023 – 2025 (€5 million). A third phase is expected to follow between May 2026 - January 2029.

The peer-to-peer model leverages the rich and diverse expertise from European Union Member State Parliaments (EUMSPs) and builds a coordinated network of parliamentary expertise within EUMSPs, beyond traditional support mechanisms, aiming to build stronger parliaments in all regions of the world. The project engages with parliaments, both at the political level, with elected Members of Parliament (MPs), as well as at the administrative level, with the staff of parliaments' secretariats, which are the "backbone" of effective parliaments.

The project primarily supports parliaments' capacities to fulfil their core democratic functions:

- representing the diverse perspectives of citizens in decision-making;
- proposing, amending, adopting and scrutinising legislation;
- holding government and other state institutions democratically accountable;
- scrutinizing and adopting the national budget, overseeing its execution and audit;
- institutional strengthening to enable parliaments to function effectively, transparently and accountably.

The establishment and curating of peer-to-peer partnerships, collaborative identification and dissemination of good practices in strengthening democratic parliaments, and the development of knowledge products on parliamentary development all contribute to the project's goal of enhancing parliamentary functions and, by extension, democratic governance.

OBJECTIVES



Supporting the effective, accountable and transparent functioning of parliaments in partner countries.



Strengthening global parliamentary development and inter-parliamentary cooperation.



Enhancing parliaments' capacities to address a series of critical global challenges, with a strong focus on youth and women political participation.

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Funded by the European Union, WYDE initiative

Managed by the European Commission in coordination with the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the European Parliament

Implemented by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA), leveraging the expertise of EU Member State parliaments

Budget: EUR 10.5 million + 3 million

Implementation period: 2019-2022 (Phase 1); 2023-2026 (Phase II); 2026-2029 (Phase III)



WYDE
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Parliaments in Partnership
EU Global Project to Strengthen the Capacity of Parliaments



ACTIVITIES

Supporting the effective, accountable, and transparent functioning of parliaments in partner countries

INTER PARES aims to increase capacities of partner parliaments to perform their core functions of representation, law-making, oversight and budgetary prerogative and to perform effectively as public administrations through:

- The 28 partner parliaments supported during the project include Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Chile, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea Bissau, The Gambia, Indonesia, Libya, Malawi, Malaysia, The Maldives, Montenegro, Nepal, Niger, Panama, Peru, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Trinidad and Tobago, Ukraine, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Zambia, and Gabon and Jordan for short quick impact actions;
- 24 EUMSPs have joined in partnerships;
- Peer-to-peer exchanges and assistance;
- Knowledge exchanges, training, hands on technical assistance and mentoring;
- Co-production of parliamentary handbooks and tools;
- Innovative approaches, including, experiential learning and mentoring aligned to parliamentary calendar, sequenced and modular approaches.

Enhancing parliaments' capacities to address a series of critical global challenges, with a strong focus on youth and women political participation

The project produces knowledge, exchanges, and fosters changes to help parliaments:

- Engage youth;
- Promote gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE);
- Protect and foster human rights;
- Engage with citizens and civil society;
- Mitigate climate change and promote environmental protection;
- Harness the opportunities and address the challenges of digital technologies;
- Manage crises and engage in foresight and anticipatory governance;
- Foster global connectivity and infrastructure networks.

Strengthening global parliamentary development and inter-parliamentary cooperation

Acting as a knowledge hub and convener, INTER PARES fosters networks on parliamentary development and inter-parliamentary cooperation at the global and regional levels, by:

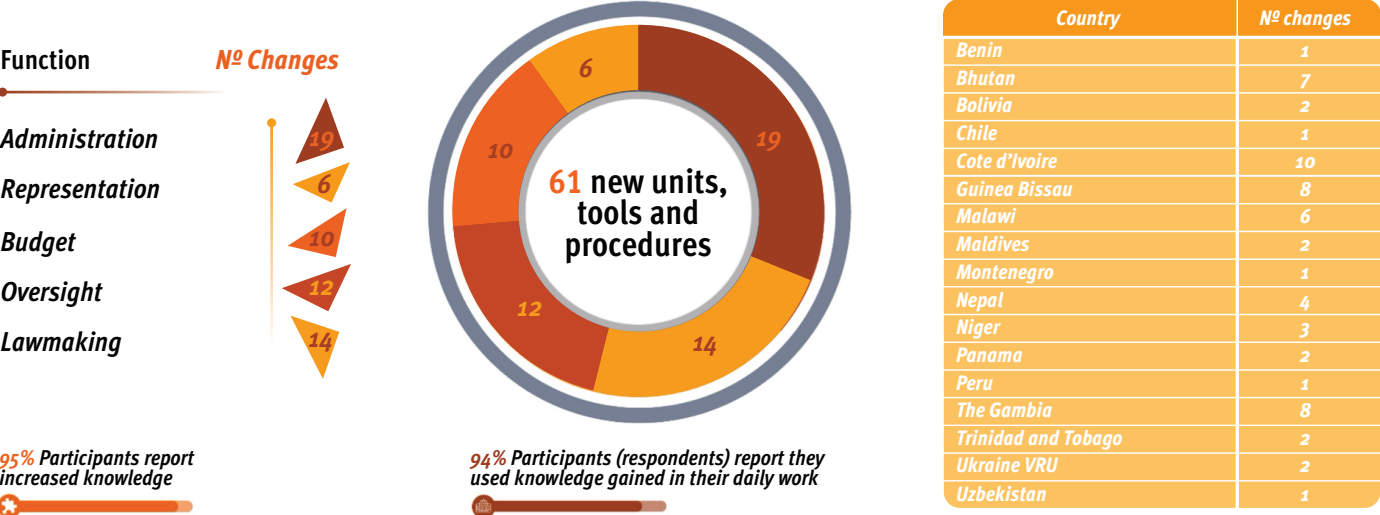
- Collaborating with international organizations like the IPU, Parlatino, SADC Parliamentary Forum and others to co-create publications and joint initiatives;
- Managing the AGORA knowledge hub and the Parliamentary Development Community of Practice;
- Organizing 6 annual Summer Schools on parliamentary functions and issues;
- Preparing 14 e-Learning courses on topics ranging from legislative drafting to environmental protection and climate change, to representation and gender;
- Increasing global access to research, new knowledge, good practices and innovative tools on parliamentary matters and support approaches;
- Preparing and disseminating knowledge products, including reference materials for parliaments and development partners like, Beyond Numbers: Stories of Gender Equality, Effective Human Rights Engagement for Parliamentary Bodies, 8 Quick Guides for Enhancing Citizen Engagement, the Indicators for Democratic Parliaments, Handbook for Parliamentary Oversight of Large Infrastructure Projects, Guidelines on Parliamentary Strategic Planning, and guides and handbooks for partner parliaments.

RESULTS HIGHLIGHTS

Since the start of INTER PARES partner parliaments have introduced a total of 61 changes in processes, tools, or structures related to their core functions. Several partner parliaments, including in Bhutan, Bolivia, Chile, Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Zambia, Botswana, Maldives, Malawi, Montenegro, Panama, Peru, and Trinidad and Tobago, exhibited significant improvements and modifications in different core functions of the parliament, contributing to the project's overall success.

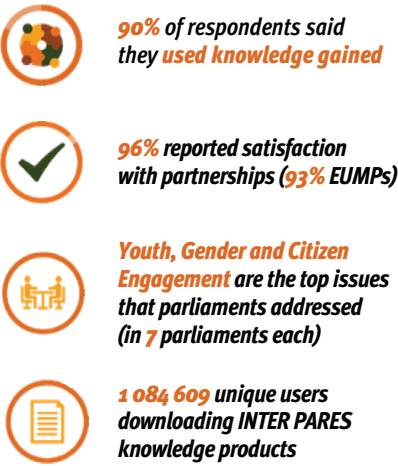
Partner parliaments also introduced changes in procedures and tools to promote gender equality and women's empowerment and to enhance citizen engagement, and 90% of participants said that they have used new knowledge and skills related to crosscutting issues like gender, youth, and climate change.

Since the start of INTER PARES Partner Parliaments are establishing new units and developed new procedures to enhance their core functions



The project has also had success fostering collaboration among Parliaments, academics and practitioners, and contributes to the EU's role as a key partner in the field of parliamentary development. Three dozen new inter-parliamentary cooperation initiatives have been fostered, including the revival of the AGORA parliamentary information hub and the Parliamentary Development Community of Practice which has become a major convening point for discussions in the field. The Project has produced over 164 publications which have been downloaded by more than 1,084,609 unique individuals.

Since the start of INTER PARES, Partner Parliaments have made 24 changes to procedures regarding cross cutting issues



ABOUT INTER PARES



*26 partner parliaments
in developing democracies
and 24 EUMSPs engaged
in multiple partnerships*

- **14** Online e-learning courses on parliamentary functions;
- **6** Summer Schools offered annually for parliament staff from around the world;
- **164** Knowledge products produced and disseminated.



4,157

*participants from partner
parliaments in INTER
PARES activities*



700+

*MPs and staff from EU
parliaments participated in
peer-to-peer work*



5,200 participants

*in global events and summer
schools*



164

*knowledge products,
handbooks and guidelines
produced*

The second phase of INTER PARES (2023 – April 2026) is funded as part of the European Commission's Women and Youth in Democracy Initiative (WYDE). A third phase is expected to follow between May 2026-January 2029. The initiative seeks to strengthen the rights, empowerment, and participation in public and political life of youth and women as key actors of development and change. WYDE promotes political pluralism and the inclusiveness of democratic processes. An important thrust of these efforts is to strengthen the capacity of parliaments as core institutions of democratic governance.



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