

ENHANCING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: THE ROLE OF **PARLIAMENTS** IN PUBLIC **ENGAGEMENT** AND **OUTREACH**

18-19 March 2025,
Room SPAAK 4B1

European Parliament
Brussels

Organised by:
Democracy Support and Election
Coordination Group (DEG)



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INTER PARES
Parliaments in Partnership
EU Global Project to Strengthen the Capacity of Parliaments



**Enhancing Public Participation:
The Role of Parliaments in Public Engagement and Outreach**

Brussels, 18-19 March 2025

European Parliament

Democracy Support and Election Coordination Group (DEG)

Room SPAAK 4B1

Interpretation: EN, RO, UK

Draft Programme

18 March

8:15-9:00 *Accreditation of participants (Station Europe)*

09:15- 10:00 **Scene-setter: Parliamentary communication – key to citizens' participation and engagement**

[Webstream](#)

Introduction:

Armelle DOUAUD, Director for Democracy Support, Directorate-General for External Policies of the Union, EP

Welcome speech:

Sabine VERHEYEN MEP (EPP, DE), Vice-President, Chair of the Bureau Working Group on Communication, Outreach and Research

Opening remarks:

Oleksandr KORNIYENKO, First Deputy Chairperson, Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine

Sam Van der STAAK, Director for Europe, International IDEA

Jonathan MURPHY, Head of Programme Inter Pares, International IDEA

Coffee break

10:15- 12:00 **Session 1: Communicating the role & activities of the European Parliament under the broader EU agenda: lessons from Brussels and Strasbourg**

Introduction and moderation:

Philipp SCHULMEISTER, Director for Campaigns, Director for Campaigns, Directorate-General for Communication (DG COMM), EP

Panellists:

Neil CORLETT, Head of the Press Unit, EP

Nastja KLEMENCIC, Head of the Web Communications Unit, EP

Sanne De RYCK, Head of EP Liaison Office in Belgium

Q&A session

14:00– 15:30

Session 2: How Members of parliaments engage with the communities they represent: outreach in EU Member States and candidate countries

[Webstream](#)

Introduction and moderation:

Stephen CLARK, Director, Dir. for Liaison offices, DG COMM

Panellists:

Marc ANGEL MEP (LU, S&D), Quaestor for Liaison offices and Relations with national and local authorities

Serhii KALCHENKO MP, Chair, the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine

Lena NINAUS, Advisor, EU & International Affairs Department, Austrian Parliament

Ingrid WALKER, Programme Manager Inter Pares, International IDEA

Q&A session

Coffee break

16:00– 17:30

Session 3: Best practices of EP political groups in engaging citizens & communicating EU policies

Introduction and moderation:

Delphine COLARD, Spokesperson

Panellists:

Pol. Group [spokespersons:](#)

Marek EVISON, Director for Campaigns, EPP group

Peter RUSZ, Head of Web & Events, S&D group

Simon Mc KEAGNEY, Head of Communications Strategy, Greens/EFA group

Thomas SHANNON, Head of Communications, the Left group

Q&A session

19 March

9:15 – 10:45

Session 4: Communicating enlargement: the view from the EP, Member States and candidate countries

[Webstream](#)

Introduction and moderation:

Augustin PALOKAJ, senior correspondent, "Jutarnji list" (Croatia)

Panellists:

Petras AUŠTREVICIUS MEP (Renew, LT), Chair, AFET Working Group on Enlargement East

Vadym HALAICHUK MP, First Deputy Chair of Committee on EU Integration, Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine

Oazu NANTOI MP, Member of the Committee on National Security, Defence & Public Order, Parliament of the Republic of Moldova

Anđela VOJINOVIĆ MP, Member of the Committee on European Integration, Parliament of Montenegro

Q&A session

Coffee break

11:00 – 12:00

Closing session: Creating synergies and way forward: strengthening cooperation on parliamentary communication, outreach and citizens' engagement

Conference takeaways:

Jonathan MURPHY, Head of Programme Inter Pares, International IDEA

Marta UDINA, Head of Parliamentary Support & Capacity Building Unit, EP

Tour de table of participants:

Vitalii BEZGHIN MP, Chair of the Subcommittee on Decentralization and Local Self-Government, Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine

Tamila TASHEVA MP, Member of the Committee on Organization of State Power, Local Self-Government, Regional Development and Urban Planning, Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine

Alina DANDARA MP, Member of the Committee on Foreign Policy and European Integration, Parliament of the Republic of Moldova

Anđela VOJINOVIĆ MP, Member of the Committee on European Integration, Parliament of Montenegro

Concluding remarks:

Sam Van der STAAK, Director for Europe, International IDEA

Background

Under the auspices of the [Democracy Support and Election Coordination Group](#) (DEG), the European Parliament engages in comprehensive capacity building support for the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (VRU). A conference on the role of parliaments and political groups in engagement and outreach is part of the ongoing capacity building activities on communication, media relations and outreach, provided together with the International IDEA and, until recently, supported by the USAID "RADA: Next Generation Program". The Inter Pares programme, the EU's global project of support to parliaments worldwide, implemented by International IDEA, is supporting the conference as part of its ongoing peer-to-peer partnership with the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine.

The conference will bring together MEPs, Ukrainian MPs and parliamentarians and practitioners from the EU and a number of candidate countries, looking at the key lessons in political communication and outreach. The sessions include panels on: communicating the role & activities of the European Parliament; parliamentary engagement in EU Member States and candidate countries; best practices of EP political groups in engaging citizens & communicating EU policies; communicating the enlargement process.
