



# **EUROPEAN COMMITTEE BLUEPRINT 2029**



**Committee Structures in Federal Europe**



## Abstract

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This proposal outlines a comprehensive committee system designed for a future European Federation, a federal republic composed of sovereign European states. Drawing on comparative analysis of parliamentary committee structures from EU institutions and federal democracies such as Germany, the United States, Denmark, and Finland, the paper proposes a balanced, transparent, and functionally specialized committee architecture tailored to the unique multilevel governance needs of a European Federation.

The model emphasizes democratic oversight, legislative efficiency, and institutional accountability through a mix of core standing committees, strategic foresight bodies, intergovernmental coordination structures, and integrity oversight panels.

Special attention is given to lessons learned from existing committee dysfunctions, including politicization, opacity, and redundancy, which the proposed system explicitly avoids. By integrating best practices and anticipating future challenges, such as digital regulation, climate action, and migratory dynamics, this committee framework offers a scalable and resilient institutional foundation for a federated European democracy.



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## Distribution of Committee Membership

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Committees shall operate under the authority of the European Parliament, the lower chamber of the federal legislature. The composition of each committee, including the appointment of both chairs and members, shall be determined by the Speaker-General<sup>1</sup>, in consultation with parliamentary leadership and subject to formal approval by the Senate. The Speaker-General's authority over committee assignments and leadership appointments is inherently shaped by coalition dynamics and the need for cross-party cooperation.

Members may serve on additional committees, such as temporary investigatory bodies or Joint Intergovernmental Committees, at the Speaker-General's discretion, based on expertise and institutional needs. This framework promotes full legislative engagement, functional oversight, and a stable yet flexible system of governance within a federal parliamentary democracy.

To ensure that committee appointments reflect the broader interests of the Federation rather than partisan agendas, the Senate plays a critical oversight role. The following three points serve as a framework for that evaluative process.

### 1. Balance of Expertise and Representation

*Senators should assess whether the proposed committee compositions reflect a fair distribution of subject-matter expertise and inclusion of perspectives from both ruling and opposition parties. Appointments should demonstrate a commitment to effective policy making over partisan advantage.*

### 2. Institutional Functionality and Legislative Coverage

*Approval should be contingent on whether the structure ensures all core standing committees are adequately staffed, all 720 Members of Parliament are meaningfully engaged, and no essential policy area*

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<sup>1</sup> In this context, the Speaker-General is not a head of government, but the chief institutional officer of the European Parliament, elected by its members to coordinate committee appointments, manage legislative workflow, and ensure procedural integrity within the chamber.



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*is underrepresented. Duplication, over-concentration of roles, or systemic imbalances should be grounds for revision. Strict proportionality isn't required, but general balance should be maintained.*

3. Procedural Transparency and Democratic Legitimacy

*Senators should evaluate whether the Speaker-General's nomination process has followed transparent and consultative procedures, including reasonable engagement with party leadership and committee stakeholders. If the process appears opaque or exclusionary, approval should be withheld until satisfactory revisions are made.*



## **Core Standing Committees**

Core standing committees are permanent legislative bodies responsible for reviewing, drafting, and amending laws within specific policy areas such as finance, foreign affairs, health, or the environment. They form the backbone of parliamentary work in a federal system, enabling detailed scrutiny of legislation, oversight of executive actions, and expert-driven deliberation. Unlike ad hoc or temporary committees, core standing committees operate continuously across legislative sessions, ensuring continuity, institutional memory, and effective division of labor within the legislature.

### **[1] Constitutional & Federal Affairs (45 members)**

This committee oversees the fundamental legal and institutional framework of the European Federation, focusing on constitutional issues, federalism, and governance structures. It ensures that legislative proposals respect the constitutional order, addresses questions of federal-state relations, and manages institutional reforms. Given its role in safeguarding the legal foundation of the Federation, the committee plays a pivotal role in maintaining political stability and balancing powers across levels of government.

### **[2] Justice & Civil Liberties (55 members)**

Responsible for upholding the rule of law, civil rights, and fundamental freedoms, this committee handles legislation related to justice systems, human rights protections, data privacy, and civil liberties. It monitors law enforcement practices, judicial cooperation among states, and the protection of citizens' rights within the Federation. The committee's work is critical to maintaining democratic principles and protecting individual freedoms, making it highly influential.

### **[3] Foreign Affairs & Defense (70 members)**



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This committee manages the Federation's external relations, including diplomatic policy, security, defense, and strategic partnerships. It oversees foreign policy directives, defense cooperation among member states, and crisis management efforts. Given Europe's geopolitical significance and security challenges, this committee holds exceptional importance in shaping the Federation's global role and internal security posture.

**[4] Finance & Federal Budget (75 members)**

Central to fiscal governance, this committee controls the Federation's budgetary process, taxation policies, and financial regulations. It scrutinizes government spending, revenue collection, and public debt management to ensure economic stability and transparency.

**[5] Economic & Industrial Policy (60 members)**

Tasked with promoting sustainable economic growth, this committee covers industrial development, trade policies, market regulation, and economic innovation. It formulates policies to support competitiveness, job creation, and economic integration across member states. Its role is vital for fostering a dynamic economy and addressing challenges such as globalization and technological disruption.

**[6] Social Affairs & Labor (55 members)**

Focused on labor rights, social welfare, employment policies, and workplace regulations, this committee works to improve social protections and promote equitable labor markets. It addresses issues such as unemployment, workplace safety, social inclusion, and pensions, directly affecting citizens' quality of life.

**[7] Health, Education & Culture (60 members)**

Covering public health policies, educational systems, cultural programs, and scientific research, this committee plays a crucial role in shaping societal well-being and development. It addresses



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healthcare access, disease prevention, educational standards, and cultural preservation, impacting long-term social cohesion and human capital.

**[8] Environment & Climate (60 members)**

Dedicated to environmental protection, climate change mitigation, and sustainable resource management, this committee develops legislation to preserve natural ecosystems and promote green technologies. Its work is increasingly critical given global environmental challenges and international climate commitments.

**[9] Agriculture & Rural Development (45 members)**

This committee oversees agricultural policies, food security, rural economies, and sustainable farming practices. It balances the interests of farmers, consumers, and environmental concerns while supporting rural community development. Given the vital role of agriculture in food supply and regional economies, the committee's work ensures the Federation's agricultural sector remains resilient and competitive.

**[10] Transport & Infrastructure (45 members)**

Responsible for transportation networks, infrastructure development, and regional connectivity, this committee designs policies to improve mobility, logistics, and public works. It plays a key role in supporting economic integration, reducing regional disparities, and promoting sustainable transport solutions.

**[11] Technology & Innovation (40 members)**

Focusing on advancing technological progress, digital transformation, and innovation ecosystems, this committee fosters policies that support research and development, technology adoption, and competitiveness in high-tech sectors. Its role is critical in driving economic modernization and addressing challenges like cybersecurity and digital inclusion.





## **Oversight & Integrity Committees**

Oversight & Integrity Committees are permanent bodies dedicated to ensuring transparency, accountability, and ethical conduct within the government and public institutions. They play a crucial role in monitoring the implementation of laws, auditing public expenditures, investigating corruption, and upholding standards of ethics and integrity. These committees act as watchdogs of the federal system, protecting democratic governance by preventing abuse of power and fostering public trust. Unlike legislative committees focused on policy creation, Oversight & Integrity Committees operate continuously to provide checks and balances essential for good governance and institutional credibility.

### **[1] Audit & Budgetary Control (30 members)**

This committee plays a vital role in ensuring the financial accountability of the Federation's institutions and government bodies. It conducts audits of public spending, monitors budget implementation, and evaluates financial management practices to prevent misuse or inefficiencies. Its oversight helps maintain fiscal discipline and public trust in the allocation and use of funds. The committee's size of 30 allows for thorough, detailed review processes and engagement with financial experts.

### **[2] Transparency & Anti-Corruption (25 members)**

Charged with safeguarding integrity within public institutions, this committee works to identify, investigate, and prevent corruption and unethical conduct across the Federation. It promotes transparency in government operations, advocates for whistleblower protections, and recommends reforms to close loopholes that facilitate corrupt practices. Given the critical nature of its mission, 25 members are allocated to ensure comprehensive coverage while maintaining focused investigative capacity.

### **[3] Ethics & Conduct (20 members)**



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This committee oversees the ethical standards and conduct of Members of Parliament and other federal officials. It handles cases related to conflicts of interest, breaches of parliamentary rules, and maintains the code of conduct. By upholding high ethical norms, the committee strengthens public confidence in the legislative process.

**[4] State-Owned Entities Oversight (20 members)**

Tasked with supervising enterprises owned or controlled by the Federation, this committee ensures that state-owned entities operate transparently, efficiently, and in the public interest. It reviews financial performance, governance practices, and strategic decisions within these entities to prevent political interference or mismanagement.

**[5] Rules and Coordination Committee (19 members)**

Composed of the Chairs and Vice Chairs of all standing committees, this body ensures procedural coherence and inter-committee coordination. It resolves jurisdictional disputes, aligns legislative calendars, and recommends joint hearings where appropriate. The committee may issue binding rulings on committee competence by qualified majority, maintaining legislative order and functional clarity across the parliamentary process.

**[6] Petitions & Public Complaints (15 members)**

This committee acts as a direct interface between citizens and the Federation's legislative institutions by reviewing petitions, grievances, and complaints submitted by the public. It facilitates citizen participation in governance and ensures that their concerns are addressed in a timely and effective manner.



## **Joint Intergovernmental Committees**

Joint Intergovernmental Committees are permanent collaborative bodies that facilitate coordination and cooperation between the federal government and the member states within a federal system. They serve as essential platforms for harmonizing policies, resolving jurisdictional disputes, and ensuring effective communication across different levels of government. By bridging federal and regional legislatures, these committees promote unity while respecting state autonomy. Joint Intergovernmental Committees focus primarily on intergovernmental relations and policy alignment.

### **[1] Federal-State Coordination Committee (15 members)**

This committee serves as the primary forum for coordinating policies and actions between the federal government and the member states within the European Federation. It addresses issues of shared jurisdiction, manages intergovernmental cooperation, and resolves conflicts arising from overlapping competencies. The committee ensures coherent policy implementation across all levels of government, promoting unity while respecting state autonomy.

### **[2] Council of State Legislatures (15 members)**

Functioning as a bridge between sub-national legislative bodies and the federal parliament, this committee facilitates communication and cooperation among the diverse regional legislatures of the Federation. It plays a key role in harmonizing laws, sharing best practices, and addressing regional concerns at the federal level. By providing states a direct voice in federal deliberations, the committee strengthens federalism and ensures regional diversity is respected.

### **[3] Harmonization Committee (10 members)**

Focused on aligning legislation, regulatory standards, and policy frameworks across the Federation, the Harmonization Committee works to reduce legal fragmentation and promote



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uniformity where appropriate. This committee addresses issues such as market regulations, technical standards, and cross-border cooperation, facilitating smoother integration and cohesion.

# Committee Function and Mechanism

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## General Structure and Flow of Legislation

All legislation introduced in the Parliament must first be submitted to the relevant core standing committee based on the topic's policy area. Committees have the exclusive authority to conduct the first round of review, initiate expert hearings, debate amendments, and vote on whether a bill should proceed. Only upon approval in committee does a bill advance to the full European Parliament for plenary debate. If passed by the Parliament, the bill then proceeds to the European Senate for ratification.

This linear mechanism enforces three critical outcomes:

1. **Deliberative depth** through subject-matter expertise and long-term institutional memory.
2. **Legislative filtration**, which blocks poorly designed or politically unserious proposals.
3. **Multi-chamber accountability**, where both the Parliament and Senate have defined roles in shaping final legislation.

## Speaker-General Oversight and Committee Formation

The Speaker-General, elected by the Parliament as the legislative head, holds the institutional responsibility for assigning Members of Parliament to committees and appointing committee chairs. This role is not executive; rather, the Speaker-General functions as the chief institutional officer of the legislature. Their legitimacy and stability depend on the coalition majority that supports them.

All committee compositions proposed by the Speaker-General must pass Senate review. The Senate evaluates appointments based on three principles:

- **Balance of expertise and representation** (across parties and policy domains)

- **Institutional functionality** (ensuring no committee is under- or over-staffed)
- **Procedural transparency** (consultation with party leadership and stakeholders)

The Senate shall review proposed committee structures in open session, applying these three principles as a formal evaluative framework. If the Senate rejects the proposal, the Speaker-General must submit a revised distribution within 14 days. A second rejection shall trigger formation of a cross-party mediation panel composed of Senators and MPs.

To reinforce pluralism and prevent majoritarian domination, each committee must also include:

- **One Vice Chair from the opposition**, with procedural rights to access advance agendas, request minority reports, and call minority hearings (with 25% committee support).

This structure guarantees both inter-party negotiation in appointments and opposition access to procedural levers, ensuring healthy democratic contestation within the legislative core.

## **Fast-Track and Emergency Mechanisms**

To address urgent crises or high-consensus reforms, the system incorporates three procedural accelerators:

1. **Emergency Bills:** The Chancellor (executive) may propose up to three bills per year that bypass committee scrutiny. These must be approved by supermajorities in both Parliament and Senate.
2. **Dual-Track Legislation:** Bills receiving unanimous approval within committee may skip plenary debate and proceed directly to the Senate.
3. **Expedited Procedure:** International treaties and budgetary legislation follow a time-limited fast-track route to ensure timely implementation.
4. **Senate-Initiated Emergency Referral:** In the event of a formally declared emergency, the Senate may, by two-thirds majority, authorize the direct referral of a stalled bill to the full Parliament for debate, bypassing committee review. This mechanism may be invoked only when a relevant committee has refused to act on a



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bill for at least 14 days after its formal submission, and only when the Senate affirms that the delay poses a risk to public welfare, security, or federal integrity.

These exceptions maintain the integrity of deliberation while equipping the federal system with the capacity to act swiftly when needed.

### **Civil Society Integration and Regional Inclusion**

The committee system also acts as a participatory institution. It integrates civic voices and regional perspectives through:

- **Mandatory public hearings** for all major bills.
- **Citizen testimony quotas**, requiring the appearance of at least 2–3 civil society groups per legislative cycle.
- **Petition-triggered hearings**, activated by 500,000 verified signatures.
- **Open Committee Days**, where registered observers such as students, NGOs, and journalists may attend.
- **Regional Witness Quota**, mandating that major hearings include at least one civil society representative or expert from a different country than the committee Chair