



Tithe an
Oireachtais
Houses of the
Oireachtas

Draft Outline of the 46th COSAC Bi-annual Report

Meeting of the Chairpersons of COSAC

Irish Presidency

12–13 July 2026

Dublin Castle, Ireland

Introduction

This document sets out the draft outline of the 46th COSAC Bi-annual Report, prepared under the Irish Presidency for the Meeting of the Chairpersons of COSAC, to be held on 13 July 2026 in Dublin Castle, Ireland.

The report will be based on responses provided by parliaments and chambers to the COSAC questionnaire. It will examine key developments across the European Union in the areas of democratic resilience, enlargement policy, climate and sustainability, and the digital transformation of society.

The structure of the report follows the thematic chapters set out in the questionnaire and is designed to facilitate comparative analysis of parliamentary practices and perspectives.

Chapter I: Parliamentary Cooperation and Democratic Resilience in an Uncertain World

In recent years, democratic systems across the European Union have come under increasing strain from disinformation, cyber threats, and foreign information manipulation and interference (FIMI), compounded by the rapid development of artificial intelligence and other emerging technologies. These challenges have heightened concerns regarding the integrity of electoral processes, the resilience of democratic institutions, and public trust in governance. Further, these concerns are increasingly relevant in the accession journeys of prospective Member States, and in advancing initiatives aimed at climate sustainability and in ensuring a just transition. Advancements in technology and the digital environment also play a central role, particularly in the spheres of social media and other online platforms.

In response, the European Union has advanced a range of initiatives aimed at strengthening democratic resilience, including measures relating to media freedom, online platform regulation, and cybersecurity. Central among these is the proposed European Democracy Shield, which seeks to enhance coordination across Member States, strengthen responses to disinformation and hybrid threats, and safeguard democratic processes across the Union.

Against this backdrop, this chapter will examine how parliaments are responding to these evolving threats. In particular, it will consider national arrangements for monitoring and countering misinformation, disinformation and FIMI, as well as the development of mandates and powers of competent authorities, especially in light of AI. It will also examine parliamentary scrutiny of cyber threats to State infrastructure and broader national approaches to cybersecurity preparedness, including legislative frameworks and incident response capacity. The chapter will further explore measures to safeguard electoral processes, implementation of the European Media Freedom Act, and parliamentary engagement with misinformation in the context of enlargement debates. Finally, it will consider interparliamentary cooperation in strengthening democratic resilience, including scrutiny of EU-level initiatives such as the European Democracy Shield.

Chapter II: EU Enlargement and the Future of Europe's Neighbourhood

The European Union's enlargement policy has gained renewed strategic importance in light of evolving geopolitical dynamics, particularly following Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and the EU's deepening engagement with its neighbourhood. Enlargement is increasingly viewed as both a political and security imperative, raising complex questions around accession readiness, institutional reform, and the future shape of the Union. In response, the EU has stated an ambition to reinvigorate the accession process through its revised enlargement methodology, strengthen political engagement with candidate countries, and reflect on internal reforms required to accommodate future enlargement.

Against this backdrop, this chapter will explore the role of parliaments in enlargement policy and their engagement with candidate countries. It will examine parliamentary missions, exchanges and interparliamentary cooperation, as well as interactions with candidate countries during accession negotiations. It will also consider challenges identified across negotiating clusters, including recurring or particularly complex policy areas. The chapter will further explore parliamentary discussions on alternative models of EU membership, such as associate membership, and any political positions or recommendations arising from these debates. In addition, it will assess parliamentary consideration of potential EU reforms linked to enlargement, including institutional, decision-making and budgetary changes, as well as the impact of the war in Ukraine and wider geopolitical developments on the level of parliamentary attention to enlargement.

Chapter III: Climate Adaptation, Just Transition and Delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals

The European Union continues to face significant challenges in addressing climate change, accelerating the transition to a low-carbon economy, and ensuring the delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals. Rising energy costs, geopolitical instability, and the need to balance environmental ambition with social and economic fairness have placed increased emphasis on the concept of a just transition. In response, the EU has developed an extensive policy framework, including the European Green Deal, the Fit for 55 package, Just Transition mechanisms, and proposals under the forthcoming Multiannual Financial Framework to support climate and sustainability objectives.

Against this backdrop, this chapter will assess parliamentary scrutiny of climate policy and sustainability measures at both national and EU levels. It will examine how parliaments engage with elements of the Multiannual Financial Framework, including external action instruments such as Global Europe, and the institutional levels at which such scrutiny takes place. It will also explore national measures and parliamentary discussions on energy costs, electrification, and related supports such as tax measures and subsidies. The chapter will consider scrutiny of fossil fuel usage, fuel pricing, and the broader impact of geopolitical developments on energy policy. In addition, it will assess parliamentary cooperation and contributions to the implementation and monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals, including identification of priority areas requiring further EU-level action. Finally, it will examine consideration of carbon capture technologies and scrutiny of EU cohesion policy instruments and Just Transition funding mechanisms, including their accessibility and effectiveness.

Chapter IV: A Safe and Secure Digital Single Market

The continued expansion of the digital economy has created significant opportunities for innovation and growth, while also introducing new risks related to online safety, data protection, cybersecurity, and the societal impact of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence. Issues such as harmful online content, platform accountability, and the increasing use of generative AI and deepfakes have become central to policy and public debate. In response, the European Union has developed a comprehensive regulatory framework, including the Digital Services Act, the Digital Markets Act, the Artificial Intelligence Act, and strengthened cybersecurity legislation such as the NIS2 Directive.

Against this backdrop, this chapter will examine how parliaments are addressing these challenges and opportunities. It will explore parliamentary scrutiny of the Digital Services Act and broader Digital Single Market issues, including competition, data protection, consumer protection, and platform regulation. It will also consider parliamentary engagement with the Artificial Intelligence Act and wider AI developments, including approaches to oversight of generative AI and public sector applications. The chapter will examine the impact of deepfakes on public discourse and democratic processes, as well as wider digital safety concerns such as the protection of minors, harmful and illegal content, cyberbullying, and unfair commercial practices. In addition, it will assess scrutiny of the EU Digital Identity Wallet and parliamentary oversight of cybersecurity frameworks, including implementation of the NIS2 Directive, national preparedness for cyber and hybrid threats, and government measures to support citizens and businesses in strengthening cybersecurity.

Conclusion

The final report will synthesise the findings from all four chapters, highlighting key trends, common challenges, and emerging best practices among parliaments. It will also identify areas where enhanced cooperation, coordination, or policy development at European Union level may be beneficial.