



# 142<sup>nd</sup> IPU ASSEMBLY AND RELATED MEETINGS

Geneva, 16–20 April 2020

## Public engagement in the work of parliaments: Challenges, opportunities and good practices

*Session jointly organized by the IPU and the ASGP in partnership with UNDP  
in preparation for the next Global Parliamentary Report*

*Monday, 20 April 2020, 10 a.m.–12.30 p.m.*

*Rooms 5 & 6, level 3, CICC*

### **Provisional concept note**

In recent years, there has been a large increase in citizens' demand to have their voice heard and to be part of decision-making processes. Heightened by a general public disappointment with established representative institutions and enabled by a rapid development of new technologies, public engagement has become an emerging theme in the parliamentary context.

How do parliaments react to these trends? Have they developed effective mechanisms to engage with citizens? In which ways and to what extent do participatory processes transform the relationship between citizens and their elected representatives? How do they affect the traditional parliamentary role? What has been the impact of participatory initiatives, on parliamentary work and on relations with citizens? How are parliaments adapting to engage with such new forms of communities and social movements?

This joint IPU-ASGP session will debate the challenges and opportunities of public engagement in the work of parliament. It will provide a space for parliamentarians and Secretaries General of parliaments to share their experiences and good practices.

Parliaments are invited to contribute examples of good practice in advance through an [online pre-session survey](#). These examples will help to inform the preparation of this session, so that it can be firmly grounded in parliamentary experience.

This session will extend the discussion that took place at the 141<sup>st</sup> IPU Assembly in Belgrade in October 2019 on the selection of the theme of the next Global Parliamentary Report. That discussion showed that parliaments are concerned about gaps between the public and their institutions of governance. Parliaments spoke of their interest in re-establishing links with citizens and creating new, open and well-structured processes for public engagement in parliamentary decision-making. Parliaments need tools to organize participation effectively, resulting in laws that better serve the people.

Accordingly, public engagement in the work of parliament will be the theme of the next Global Parliamentary Report. Throughout 2020, the IPU and UNDP will undertake research and gather good practice examples with the aim of developing recommendations for more effective public engagement in parliamentary decision-making processes around the world.

### **About the Global Parliamentary Report**

The Global Parliamentary Report (GPR) is a flagship IPU-UNDP publication that contributes to realizing the vision of better parliaments and stronger democracies. The GPR offers findings and recommendations based on parliamentary experiences and good practice.

The target audience of the GPR is first and foremost the parliamentary community. This includes the members and staff of parliaments as well as people and organizations working to enhance the effective functioning of parliaments, such as parliamentary strengthening practitioners, researchers and civil society organizations. The secondary audience is the broader set of policymakers with an interest in parliament and the media.

The first edition, published in 2012, focused on "[The changing nature of parliamentary representation](#)". The second edition in 2017, entitled "[Parliamentary oversight: Parliament's power to hold government to account](#)", shone the spotlight on another of parliament's critical functions. More than 150 parliaments have contributed to both reports, giving it a unique global perspective and considerable authority.

For any questions, please contact [standards@jpu.org](mailto:standards@jpu.org).