



Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy. For everyone.

Rules of the Committee on Health

*Approved by the IPU Governing Council at its 214th session
(Geneva, 17 October 2024)*

Role of the Committee

Rule 1

1. The Committee shall provide a global parliamentary focal point for health. It will work to promote parliamentary engagement on health at the global, regional and national level, focusing on inequalities and discrimination in access to health.
2. The Committee shall support the implementation of the health component of the IPU Strategy. It shall offer guidance to IPU Member Parliaments on implementing relevant international commitments; help design information and training material for parliamentarians; conduct field visits to learn lessons from national responses that can be shared with the wider parliamentary community; hold hearings and formulate recommendations for parliamentary action; and generally expand the scope of parliamentary interventions on health by identifying more effective strategies.
3. The Committee may advise the IPU Standing Committees and other IPU bodies on health issues that may require their attention.
4. The Committee shall submit a written report on its work to the Governing Council. It may also express a political position on a health issue or situation for endorsement by the Governing Council.

Composition

Rule 2

1. The Committee shall be composed of 15 members, elected by the Governing Council for a term of four years. The members shall be elected on the basis of their interest and expertise in the subject matter and of their availability to attend all Committee sessions. For full participation in all the Committee's activities, including field visits, it is desirable that members have at least limited working proficiency in English.
2. No more than eight of the members shall be of the same sex and as many of the geopolitical groups as possible shall be represented on the Committee.
3. If a member of the Committee dies, resigns or ceases to be a parliamentarian, an election to replace that person shall be held at the next session of the Governing Council. A retiring member shall not be eligible for re-election for two years.
4. If a member of the Committee fails to attend more than two consecutive sessions without a valid reason, he or she shall be replaced through an election at the Governing Council.

Sessions

Rule 3

1. The Committee shall meet in ordinary session at each Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union. The Secretary General shall fix the place and date of its ordinary sessions.

Presidency

Rule 4

1. The President of the Committee shall be elected by the Committee members for a one-year term, renewable once.
2. The Committee President shall open, adjourn and close the meetings, direct the work of the Committee, ensure respect for the Rules and call upon members to speak. The Committee President's decisions on these matters shall be final and shall be accepted without debate.
3. The Committee President may entrust Committee members with preparing reports for submission to the ordinary Committee session at the following IPU Assembly.
4. In the absence of the Committee President, the Committee shall elect a provisional Chair for its meeting.

Agenda

Rule 5

1. The provisional agenda of each session shall be fixed by the Secretary General in agreement with the Committee President.
2. A member of the Committee may request the inclusion of supplementary items in the agenda.
3. The definitive agenda of each session shall be adopted by the Committee at the opening of each session.

Deliberations – Voting

Rule 6

1. The members of the Committee shall deliberate in camera.
2. The Committee's decisions shall be taken by consensus. If it fails to reach consensus, the Committee shall decide by simple majority of the members present. The Committee President shall have the casting vote.
3. The Committee shall normally vote by show of hands. However, if the Committee President deems it necessary or if one member of the Committee so requests, a secret ballot shall be held.
4. Representatives of partner organizations with expertise in the field of health may be invited, in consultation with the Committee President, to ordinary sessions of the Committee.
5. During its ordinary sessions, the Committee may decide to hold a hearing with experts or parliamentary delegations on an issue of particular concern.
6. The Committee may carry out field visits, principally to examine the role played by a given national parliament in addressing issues within the Committee's mandate.

Secretariat

Rule 7

1. The Secretariat of the IPU shall receive or prepare all documents necessary for the deliberations of the Committee and shall distribute them to its members in English and French.
2. It shall prepare reports of the Committee's regular sessions, in consultation with the President, for submission to the Governing Council.

Adoption and amendment of the rules

Rule 8

1. One or more of the members of the Committee and/or the IPU Secretary General may propose amendments to the Rules for discussion by the Committee. The Committee shall discuss such proposed amendments and adopt, with the support of an absolute majority of the members present at the time of the vote, its own views thereon. Should these views favour specific amendments to the Rules, such amendments shall be submitted to the Governing Council for approval.