



REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
NATIONAL COUNCIL



**IPEX Annual Report 2022 by the Chairs of the IPEX Board to the
Secretaries General of
the EU National Parliaments and the European Parliament**

(Draft as of 2 February 2023)

Presented by the Chair of the IPEX Board
Uršula Zore Tavčar
Secretary General of the National Assembly

Foreword

The COVID-19 pandemic forced adjustments to the established and familiar ways of parliamentary functioning. Parliamentary activities were moved online, and video conferencing became the new normal. Although progress on digitization has brought results, we can be proud and grateful for, we now realize that videoconferences can never fully supplant in-person meetings. The Slovenian Chairmanship therefore strived to organize in-person events, aiming to further strengthen cooperation with all interested parties.

The Slovenian Chairmanship is looking forward to fulfilling the last third of its term in office before handing over the rotating Chairmanship to our Czech colleagues.

1. Meetings under the Slovenian Chairmanship

The following meetings were held during the Slovenian Chairmanship of the IPEX Board:

- Three IPEX Board meetings on 6 May 2022, 21 October 2022, and 20 January 2023 respectively, two as video conferences and one as an in-person meeting.
- The Annual IPEX Correspondents' Meeting on 27 and 28 October 2022, held in person in Ljubljana.
- One IPEX Now meeting on 21 June 2022, held as a videoconference.
- Working group meetings, held as videoconferences and in-person meetings.

2. Composition of the IPEX Board (to be updated)

According to the IPEX Guidelines, the 2023/2024 composition of the IPEX Board will be as follows:

- Ex-officio members:
 - The Czech Republic (Chamber of Deputies, Senate), which will assume the Chairmanship of the IPEX Board after the Conference of Speakers of Parliaments of the European Union Member States on 24–25 April 2023
 - Spain (Cortes Generales)
 - Hungary (National Assembly)
 - Sweden (Riksdag)
 - European Parliament
- National parliaments willing to contribute to the Board and its activities:
 - Austria (Bundesrat, Nationalrat)
 - Bulgaria (National Assembly)
 - Cyprus (House of Representatives)
 - Denmark (Parliament)
 - France (Assemblée Nationale, Sénat)
 - Germany (Bundestag)
 - Greece (Parliament)
 - Ireland (Houses of the Oireachtas)
 - Italy (Chamber of Deputies, Senate)
 - Luxembourg (Chamber of Deputies)
 - The Netherlands (Senate)
 - Poland (Sejm, Senate)
 - Portugal (Assembleia da República)

- Romania (Chamber of Deputies, Senate)
- Slovenia (National Assembly)

According to the IPEX Guidelines, the IPEX Information Officer, COSAC, the ECPRD, the European Commission, and the Council all likewise participate in and contribute to IPEX Board meetings.

3. IPEX Rolling Work Programme

IPEX is a one-of-a-kind platform that fosters interparliamentary cooperation and provides a wide range of EU-related information. The creation of a work programme is essential to ensure continuity and maintain focus between rotating chairmanships. Due to the termination of the 3-year cycle, the Slovenian Chairmanship focused on the implementation of the tasks set up in the 2021–2023 IPEX Rolling Work Programme, ensuring a good foundation for the smooth development of IPEX in the next cycle. The Slovenian Chairmanship supports efforts to continue raising awareness about the role IPEX plays within interparliamentary cooperation. Special attention must be given to adjustments to users' needs and finally to ensuring the technical accuracy, accessibility, and reliability of the entire IPEX platform.

To implement the Rolling Work Programme, the Board established 3 working groups, each with its own action plan. The following working groups have been active during the Slovenian Chairmanship:

1. The Working Group on Content, chaired by Ms Maria Schininá, Mr Yves Carl and Ms Ilse van den Driessche.
2. The Working Group on Training, chaired by Ms Livia Spada.
3. The Working Group on Promotion and Social Media, chaired by Ms Tuula Zettermann and Mr Yiannis Tsagadopoulos.

There were also 2 dedicated working groups, outside the scope of the Rolling Work Programme:

1. The Working Group on IPEX Guidelines, chaired by Mr Luka Kavčič and Ms Neža Dular.
2. The Steering Group for IPEX v3, chaired by Mr Luka Kavčič.

4. 2nd IPEX Baseline Study

After completing its work on the new categories of EU-related information from parliaments and pursuant to the conclusions adopted by the Secretaries General in Ljubljana, inviting the IPEX Board to examine the expectations of IPEX users in detail, the Working Group on Content was tasked with developing a follow-up to the baseline study. The follow-up study, which corresponds to one of the activities announced in the IPEX Rolling Work Programme for 2021–2023, should focus on new insights into the use of IPEX and on strengthening interparliamentary networks.

Considering one of the aims of the Working Group on Promotion and Social Media was to perform a user analysis to better understand the user's needs and identify IPEX functions in need of development or promotion, it was necessary to cooperate and coordinate with the working group to avoid any overlap and duplication of work. A draft framework was presented to the Board members at the October 2022 Board Meeting. The proposed approach, the different chapters of the draft questionnaire, and the

timeline for the follow-up study were discussed with the Board members who gave the go ahead. Since the Secretaries General at their meeting in Ljubljana welcomed the initiative to strengthen exchange between IPEX and the scientific community, the Working Group on Content dedicated a specific part of the baseline study questionnaire to the scientific community, seeking to benefit from studies on the activities of EU national parliaments concerned with research.

5. Training

IPEX's core task as a platform for exchanging information between parliaments requires input from a network of dedicated and trained correspondents. Enhancing the usefulness of IPEX for users also requires practical training and instruction materials.

The Working Group on Training regularly updates the training materials (the latest revision came in January 2023) on how to manage IPEX accounts and contacts, edit information on parliaments, create and edit news, work with double dossiers, and upload scrutiny information. The working group created new training material on how to personally create new content (reflecting the new categories of EU-related information from parliaments on IPEX v3), based on a guide prepared by the Working Group on Content.

The training of IPEX correspondents was also the subject of one of the sessions at the IPEX National Correspondents' Meeting held in Ljubljana in October 2022. Additionally, participants gave valuable input on several topics, including on ways to make the training materials more visible. During the IPEX Today workshop, it also raised awareness about the work of the IPEX Board and working groups. During the Slovenian Chairmanship, the training was mainly focused on providing support to the National Correspondents, updating existing training materials to make them more user-friendly, and on discussing the best way to assess the training needs of the correspondents. The working group has also worked on training material on creating personal new content, based on a guide from the Working Group on Content.

6. IPEX Promotional Activities

The new IPEX tools play an important role in promoting activities and the IPEX website's role as a one-stop-shop for information on the national parliaments' EU-related activities and documents.

During the Slovenian Chairmanship, the Working Group on Promotion and Social Media created and distributed an IPEX leaflet to everyone taking part in the meeting hosted on the IPEX website. The IPEX logo was placed on the website of the Parliamentary Dimension of the Presidency of the Council of the EU. There were Twitter campaigns for meetings (COSAC, CFSP/CSDP) and Europe Day. The working group created a visual identity, composed of three visual identity packs to be used by IPEX Correspondents, IPEX Chairs, the IPEX Information Officer, the organizers of the IPEX Correspondents' Meeting, and Users Conference, as well as the Presidency of Council of the EU.

During the Slovenian Chairmanship, the IPEX Board approved the proposal of the Working Group on Promotion and Social Media regarding replacing the IPEX video for 3

weeks with a presidency video at the beginning of each presidency, made available on the IPEX YouTube channel or the YouTube channel of the presidency.

The IPEX Board also approved the visual identity packs proposed by the Working Group on Promotion and Social Media.

7. Revision of the IPEX Guidelines

The Slovenian Chairmanship took on the revision of the IPEX Guidelines, needed after the launch of IPEX v3, deciding to make it one of key goals of the Chairmanship. The Working Group on IPEX Guidelines was established at the IPEX Board Meeting held on 6 May 2022. It was set up with the aim of preparing a draft document containing updated IPEX Guidelines – including the changes necessary to accommodate the new IPEX v.3 functionalities – by the meeting of the IPEX Board held on 21 October 2022. Due to the complexity of the work undertaken, its lifetime was prolonged until the Board Meeting on 20 January 2023. The Working Group on IPEX Guidelines held a total of nine meetings. The aim of the working group was to adopt new guidelines that would be in line with the new functionalities offered by the IPEX v.3 platform and in line with as much of the proposals submitted by the parliaments to the Chairmanship as possible. The working group succeeded in reaching a consensus on the proposed new text of the Guidelines for the following articles: Preamble, Article 2, Article 3, Article 4, Article 5, Article 6, Article 7, New Article 7a, Article 8, and Article 9. The proposal for the revised and amended IPEX Guidelines was approved by the IPEX Board and submitted to the Secretaries General for adoption.

8. IPEX v3

The Slovenian Chairmanship saw five significant releases aimed at making the IPEX platform more reliable and accessible. The updates and development of the IPEX v3 platform were monitored at the IPEX Steering Group meetings. The meetings came up with a reliable and transparent method developed for reviewing any technical errors during the testing period, relying on the cooperation and responsiveness of the IPEX Correspondents. It guarantees the swift and smooth development of IPEX. The Slovenian Chairmanship encourages the continuation of the established practice.

9. Annual National Correspondents' Meeting

The Annual National Correspondents' Meeting was held in-person in Ljubljana on 27 and 28 October 2022. On Day 1, the participants took part in a general training workshop that presented the basic functionalities of the platform. On Day 2, participants could attend two workshops on how to utilize and upgrade IPEX to its full potential. The first workshop was devoted to the current state of IPEX and involved discussions on the regular duties of IPEX correspondents, ways on how to make the best use of the website tools, and on the content uploaded by parliaments. The second workshop focused on the future of IPEX. It included discussions on how national parliaments and IPEX Correspondents can best contribute to the evolution of the platform, exploring new ways of cooperating, producing new content, and exchanging information and networks, going beyond technical developments.

10. Cooperation with the Democracy Support Network

The Slovenian Chairmanship enhanced cooperation between IPEX and Democracy Support Network. The network is present on the IPEX platform, which is why the Slovenian Chairmanship encourages all national parliaments to update all relevant information and share it via the website and network to give an idea of the priority countries, the projects being developed and implemented by various national parliaments, as well as find synergies and discover new opportunities for cooperation.

11. The Future of IPEX

Per the European Council's decision, adopted in June 2022, to grant candidate country status to Ukraine and to the Republic of Moldova, as well as the European Council's decision, adopted in December 2022, to grant candidate status to Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Slovenian Chairmanship extended an invitation to the parliaments of the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, looking forward to constructively workin with them in the future.

The Slovenian Chairmanship acknowledges that IPEX is developing into an effective platform for information exchange and evolving into a unique one-stop-shop for information on the European Union.

Attachment:

- Written report of the IPEX Information Officer on the work of IPEX in 2022