

These guidelines constitute the **operational output** of the mission reflecting on parliamentary oversight,¹ whose activities are focused on six objectives: **clarifying, prioritising, coordinating, consolidating, following up and communicating.**

Each of these objectives is accompanied by **methodological recommendations** for committees, delegations and temporary bodies.

Objective no. 1

Clarify oversight methods to enhance their visibility

✓ Use a **uniform classification** common to all Senate bodies for oversight work.



Note: the names used for the budgetary oversight operations of the OPECST Finance and Works Committee are to remain unchanged

¹The group's proposals were adopted on 1 December 2021 by the working group on the modernisation of Senate working methods (rapporteur: Pascale Gruny, Vice-President of the Senate in charge of parliamentary work, oversight and ordinance follow-up).

Objective no. 2

Target senatorial oversight priorities more effectively

- ✓ **Focus the oversight program for standing committees and delegations on 3 to 4 priority themes per body**, leaving some leeway to trigger "flash" missions
 - To the extent possible, the priority themes will include an assessment of a flagship law adopted over the course of the last 10 years.
 - The budgetary oversight activities of the Finance Committee and the work of the Social Security Assessment and Control Mission (MECSS) are not included in this process.
- ✓ Determine the **format of oversight arrangements** based on:
 - The objective pursued
 - The methodology adopted
 - The provisional timetable
- ✓ Ensure **political pluralism** and the **successful organisation of the Senate agenda** in accordance with the proposals of the Senate working methods study group²

For example, keeping the number of follow-up groups limited to those strictly necessary to prevent the excess proliferation of bodies and limit excess meetings and overlapping with public sessions

Objective no. 3

Enhance coordination between the various bodies to ensure the legibility of the Senate's work

- ✓ **Organise a consultation ahead of the Chairpersons' Conference** to coordinate the work of the committees and delegations more effectively in the annual oversight program
 - The Chairpersons' Conference meets in January to define the Senate's annual oversight programme, thus allowing inclusion of the work of the Finance and Social Affairs Committees
 - In the autumn, a consultation and discussion meeting is organised between the heads of committees and delegations. In case of difficulty, dialogue will be initiated between the chairs of the committees or delegations concerned

² "Pour un Sénat plus efficace, plus présent, plus moderne, plus garant de l'équilibre des pouvoirs et de la représentation des territoires" rapporteurs: Roger Karoutchi and Alain Richard, March 2015.

✓ Continue these coordination efforts throughout the year

When a committee or a delegation creates a mission or follow-up group during the year, it notifies the other bodies concerned as well as the Director General of Institutional Missions (DGMI), the Director of Legislation and Control (DLC) and the Director of Parliamentary Initiative and Delegations (DIPED)

✓ For committees: engage more closely with the delegations and OPESCT, taking an approach that is synergistic rather than competitive

Objective no. 4

Consolidate oversight work by applying the full range of available tools

✓ Trigger "flash" missions throughout the year so as to be more responsive to current events

"Flash" missions are organised as follows:

- Narrowly-defined and topical themes
- Mission performed within 3 months at most, in order to provide a rapid response and attract the attention of the general public and the media
- A flexible and reactive mode of organisation, involving a limited number of rapporteurs (with some exceptions) and respecting pluralism
- Succinct reporting and operational proposals
- Possibility to fuel current affairs debates in public session

✓ Establish a **roadmap** in advance of each oversight mission, indicating:

- The scope of the subject and key issues to be addressed
- The working method: resources to be used and means of investigation
- The provisional timetable
- Work carried out by other bodies (National Assembly, Court of Auditors, general inspectorates, etc.)
- Communications strategy

✓ Use **available resources to carry out oversight work**, including:

- Travel, if necessary, to organise hearings to be held in Paris

- Written contribution requests, including on the basis of a widely-distributed standardised questionnaire
- Senate contracts for studies, polls and interpretation services
- Consultation platform for local elected officials (<https://participation.senat.fr/>)
- Participatory spaces and citizens' consultations
- Public databases
- The comparative law division, for international comparisons (also consulting previously published studies³)
- The Senate's permanent office in Brussels
- External bodies, such as independent administrative authorities (CNIL, Competition Authority, ARCEP, etc.), extra-parliamentary bodies (OEP), associations of elected officials, etc.

✓ Request **committee-of-inquiry powers** to reinforce the information available to Parliament:

- Investigation of specific facts or the management of public services or state enterprises (outside of legal proceedings)
- Procedure established under Article 22 *ter* of the Senate Standing Orders: examination by the Law Committee, vote in public session
- Plenary hearings held under oath + rapporteur's working hearings (less formal)
- Enhanced rights to information for obtaining documents (may be limited only on grounds of secrecy related to matters of national defence, foreign affairs and the internal or external security of the State)
- Documentary and on-site inspections

✓ **Assess the implementation of laws, quantitatively and qualitatively**

- Committees examine the publication of implementing decrees for laws adopted during the previous parliamentary session
- The contributions of the committees are summarised in the annual report on the implementation of laws
- The Minister responsible for Parliamentary Relations is heard in a hearing in the presence of the committee chairs and the Secretary General of the Government (SGG). This hearing is open to all senators, the public and the press.
- In parallel to this, the committees, and delegations, if necessary, will assess the implementation of a flagship law promulgated over the last 10 years; this work will culminate in the publication of a summary report
- Debates on these flagship laws are held in public session in the presence of the relevant minister

³ <https://www.senat.fr/legislation-comparee-theme/index.html>.

Objective no. 5

Follow up Senate proposals to ensure their proper implementation

✓ **Harmonise the rules for adopting oversight proposals and reports**

→ To better inform their votes, the members of the committee, delegation or temporary body have access to the rapporteur's proposals in advance of the adoption of the report

The terms of this consultation are set by the body's chair, depending in particular on the degree of confidentiality and organisational constraints in place and without prejudice to the rules governing committees of inquiry. Proposals may be published on the DEMETER application.

→ The adoption of proposals is subject to a vote by the committee, delegation or temporary body, in accordance with the procedure defined below

Adoption of proposals

- In case of consensus, all the proposals are subject to a single vote.

- In the absence of consensus, each proposal is put to a vote successively and may, if necessary, be eliminated or amended during the meeting held for the adoption of the report.

In practice, the adoption of proposals constitutes authorisation to publish the report.

- If all the proposals are to be rejected, the body concerned will decide by vote whether or not to publish the report.

If the body agrees to publish a report, it will appear under a specific title ("*Work of the [committee, delegation or temporary body]*"). Its cover page will specify that the body has not adopted the proposals, and that consequently the document thus published is not binding upon it.

According to the case law of the Constitutional Council,⁴ this is not possible for committees of inquiry: when the report is not adopted, only the minutes can be published.

✓ **Give priority to operational proposals, even if it means reducing their number, in order to guarantee their effectiveness and facilitate their implementation**

✓ **Ensure the implementation of the parliamentary components of proposals**

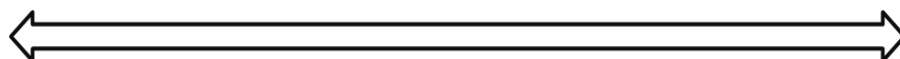
⁴ Constitutional Council, 11 December 2014, *Résolution tendant à modifier le règlement de l'Assemblée nationale*, decision no. 2014-705 DC.

Draft member’s bills, amendments, or draft resolutions where applicable

✓ **Present proposals in a standardised manner in the implementation and monitoring table (TMiS)**

- Proposals are included in the report as standardised framed headings ("*Proposal no. XX*")
- As part of the report, the TMiS presents a list of proposals, specifying: the stakeholders involved in their implementation, the judicial vehicle, and timetable elements
- The TMiS can be posted on the web page for the summary report and can be updated at least for the three years following the publication of the report, in order to monitor the implementation of the proposals and instruments used (laws, decrees, budgetary resources, questions to a minister, etc.)

Proposal no.	Proposal	Stakeholders concerned	Provisional timetable (If applicable)	Support	Instruments for follow-up and implementation	Implementation (yes, no, partial)
Focus Area No. XX: Increasing the value of oversight and assessment work						
1	Designing an implementation and follow-up table (TMiS)	Committees, delegations, temporary bodies and DSI	First half of 2022	Guidelines for oversight work		



Information provided in the oversight report



Updates after report publication

✓ **Implement "follow-up rights" to allow rapporteurs to track the degree of implementation of their proposals**

→ Oversight mission rapporteurs may retain monitoring rights until the next Senate renewal elections or thereafter if the committee or delegation re-elects them to their positions⁵
If necessary, the committee or the delegation may appoint another rapporteur or monitoring group

→ For temporary bodies, this monitoring right may be entrusted to rapporteurs if they so request, for a period of 6 months, at the end of which it will revert to the competent committee

✓ **Conduct an annual review of the implementation of their proposals amongst the committees and delegations**

→ This assessment is carried out based on the TMiS, when Parliament resumes in October, before the next annual oversight program is planned

→ Rapporteurs may intervene to assess the implementation of their proposals and, if necessary, may propose to alert the Government to proposals that have not been implemented

Objective no. 6

Communicate better about the Senate's oversight work

✓ **Develop a communications strategy to bring "life" to the oversight mission over the duration of the work, whilst ensuring the maintenance of political pluralism**

→ Integrate the communications strategy into the roadmap for the oversight mission in collaboration with the communications department

→ Use the full range of available communications tools (media coverage of key trips or hearings, publication of interim reports, studies, surveys or public consultations, videos, etc.)

→ Identify journalists interested in the work

→ Develop a provisional timetable for the highlights of the oversight mission: travel, hearings of prominent individuals, topical issues (days focused on a given theme, ceremonies, salons, international gatherings, etc.)

→ Organise communications so as to avoid "media bottlenecks", addressing the release of the report and any consequences (filing of a member's bill, debate in public session, organisation of an event, etc.)

✓ **Enhance online communications in line with the Senate's digital strategy and website redesign**

⁵ Consistent with the monitoring rights provided with regard to the implementation of laws and ordinance tracking (under Article 19 bis, item B of the Senate Regulations).

- Promote the oversight mission's social media presence
- Create a section on the Senate's website dedicated to Senate oversight, updated regularly, listing all the work in progress and highlighting key events (the publication of a report, a particularly well-attended hearing, etc.)
- Develop a dedicated page for each oversight action based on a standardised model, following the example of the "legislative files"

✓ **Ensure the local visibility of the Senate's work**

- Publicise trips and encourage feedback from the field
- Contact regional daily media outlets
- Provide a "communications kit" for senators so that they become local ambassadors for the primary conclusions of the reports (distribution of the Senate "Focus On" publication, infographics or videos produced, information on trips taken and persons encountered, etc.)