



Interest
Group on
Civil Society

The case for a European Parliament **Interest Group on Civil Society**

Civil society is an essential part of EU democracy. It contributes to promoting and protecting democracy and fundamental rights, supports governments and institutions to respond to people's needs, and offers citizens a platform – especially for marginalised groups – to better connect with decision makers and participate in decisions that affect them.

It also contributes to alerting elected representatives on issues regarding the implementation of policies and legislation, use of funds and breaches of fundamental rights, supporting the European Parliament to play its role as check and balance to the rule of law.

The role of civil society, along with the need for an open civic space and for structured engagement of civil society organisations in the EU policy-making process, has been acknowledged in the Treaty on European Union,[1] in various EP resolutions,[2],[3] and in the new EP rules of procedure 2024-2029[4].

Why an Interest Group?

An EP interest group on civil society will act as a cross-group political space to engage in dialogue and strengthen relations with civil society representing citizens. The group will bring the added value of mainstreaming civil society recognition and engagement across the work of all committees, covering internal and external policies.



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What can the Interest Group on Civil Society do?

1. Act as a crucial forum for promoting policies aiming to better regulate and support the civil society sector, notably a European Civil Society Strategy and an Agreement on Civil Dialogue between EU institutions, as called for by the European Parliament.
2. Coordinate and exchange information on key votes on legislation directly or indirectly affecting civil society.
3. Draft amendments and other parliamentary initiatives on civil society matters.
4. Discuss access to structural multi-annual funding for civil society across all EU relevant grant programmes.
5. Monitor the coherence of internal and external EU policies regarding civil society.
6. Organise debates with colleagues in the EP and with other EU institutions.
7. Participate as keynote speakers in relevant events.

[1] Art. 11.2 TEU: <https://shorturl.at/MabV9>

[2] EP resolution of 8 March 2022 on the shrinking space for civil society in Europe: <https://shorturl.at/2f4ja>

[3] EP legislative resolution of 13 March 2024 on the proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on European cross-border associations: <https://shorturl.at/RbaVL>

[4] Articles 25.15, 27.5, 35.1 and 36.1 of the EP rules of procedure 2024-2029: <https://shorturl.at/WgAOE>

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