

## **Senate**

### Operation

#### **Meetings**

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Pursuant to article 44, paragraph 2 of the Constitution, the Senate is a non-permanent body.

The Senate holds eight ordinary plenary sessions each year. If the bureau of the Senate observes that there are no items on the agenda, it may decide not to hold an ordinary plenary session. The bureau of the Senate may convene extraordinary plenary sessions.

#### **Linguistic groups**

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The Dutch linguistic group consists of

- the 29 Senators designated by the Flemish Parliament from its ranks or from the ranks of the Dutch linguistic group of the Parliament of the Brussels-Capital Region;
- the 6 Senators co-opted by the Senators designated by the Flemish Parliament or the Dutch linguistic group of the Parliament of the Brussels-Capital Region from its ranks.

The French linguistic group consists of

- the 10 Senators designated by the Parliament of the French-speaking Community from its ranks;
- the 8 Senators designated by the Parliament of the Walloon Region from its ranks;
- the 2 Senators designated by the French linguistic group of the Parliament of the Brussels-Capital Region from its ranks;
- the 4 Senators co-opted by the Senators designated by the Parliament of the French-speaking Community from its ranks, by the Parliament of the Walloon Region from its ranks or by the French linguistic group of the Parliament of the Brussels-Capital Region from its ranks.

The senator appointed by and from the Parliament of the German-speaking Community does not belong to the linguistic groups. However, when voting on a law to be adopted by a special majority, a yes vote by this senator is counted in the total of the yes votes and in the votes cast.

#### **Political groups**

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Senators may form political groups. No member may form part of more than one group.

The bureau of the Senate sets the amount of the subsidy allocated to the groups, and the conditions of the facilities they occupy and the right of access to the premises of the Senate for their staff.

#### **Committees**

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Each time the Senate is re-elected, and after the appointment of the definitive bureau, the assembly appoints from its ranks the standing committees; their number (which may not exceed five), name and duties shall be decided by the bureau. The committees meet every fortnight on Mondays and/or Fridays.

