

Policy Department Services

Policy departments are research units that support parliamentary bodies (the President, committees, and the Secretary General) in performing their legislative and institutional tasks. They provide in-house and external expertise to support the committees and other parliamentary bodies in shaping legislation and exercising democratic scrutiny.

For an overview of all the available research services the European Parliament has to offer, please visit: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/sources.html>

What makes policy departments unique?

- They are dedicated to serving committees and respond to their requests for expertise.
- They operate on the basis of political priorities set by committees.
- As well as support from in-house specialists, they also offer access to paid external experts.

POLICY DEPARTMENT FOR ECONOMIC, SCIENTIFIC AND QUALITY OF LIFE POLICIES

Policy Department A provides high-quality expertise, up-to-date analysis and independent research to the **committees it supports: ECON, EMPL, ENVI, ITRE and IMCO.**

Policy department A serves its committees by:

1. **Connecting committees** with an extensive network of expertise in academia, specialist consultancy firms, and think tanks, other EU institutions and international organisations;
2. **Providing** expert policy advice and carefully targeted research at any point in the legislative cycle that is independent, of high quality and mindful of political sensitivities; supporting the scrutiny role of committees;
3. **Repurposing committee research** to support informed engagement between EU citizens and Members; ensuring that parliamentary work is carried out objectively and by experts;
4. **Managing** committee expertise budgets, implementing projects, using external expertise to meet requirements set by the Committee coordinators.

In-house policy analysts and researchers provide ad-hoc information and policy analysis, either in response to a specific request or on their own initiative and following personal consultation with Members. They also support the work of the President and the Secretary-General with briefings and background information.

External paid expertise is provided exclusively at the request of the committee, following a decision by the Committee coordinators. A budget appropriation is allocated each year to committees for this purpose. When working with external experts, the policy department ensures that the research meets the highest standards of independence and quality, and addresses the committee's specific needs. To this end, external experts are selected through procurement procedures based on objective selection and award criteria. The policy department then closely oversees their work to ensure that it is fully in keeping with the research request.



The most common research products delivered by Policy Department A are:

- **“At a glance”:** a 2-page research paper providing a concise summary of a particular policy, legislative proposal or event, including essential information with text and graphics, plus links and suggestions for further reading.
- **Briefing:** a concise research paper providing background information to closely-defined topics, which can feed for example into the drafting of a committee report.
- **In-depth analysis:** a medium length research paper generally directly linked to an upcoming legislative proposal or an own-initiative report.
- **Study:** a longer-term research paper usually offering comparative examinations of the laws or policies of Member States or third countries in areas where no such analysis is available. They may form the basis for later parliamentary work or for more focused research.
- **Workshop:** a dedicated session with a group of experts to address a specific issue raised by the committee. A workshop brings in contracted independent experts from external organisations, such as universities, and it is not necessarily open to the public.

HOW IS EXPERTISE REQUESTED FROM POLICY DEPARTMENT A?



FOCUS ON THE ENVI COMMITTEE

Within Policy Department A, a [specific team](#) provides expertise and advice **to the Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI)** in all areas of the committee’s remit.

The ENVI Committee is responsible for a wide range of policy areas including climate change, air and water quality, the protection of biodiversity, labelling of foodstuff, to name only a few. The powers and responsibilities of the ENVI Committee are listed in [Annex V of the EP’s Rules of Procedure](#).

A SELECTION OF RECENT RESEARCH PAPERS REQUESTED BY THE ENVI COMMITTEE

Studies:

Sampling points for Air Quality - Representativeness and Comparability



Air quality monitoring at fixed sites is a major instrument provided for in the Ambient Air Quality Directive to check compliance with limit or target values, which have been set for the protection of human health. This study analyses the criteria for the location of monitoring sites in five Member States to identify ambiguous provisions that might lead to different assessments of air pollution exposure



Green Public Procurement and the EU Action Plan for the Circular Economy



Public procurement and the purchasing of services, works and supplies cover about 14% of European gross domestic product (GDP), and therefore have tremendous power and make products and services greener and more sustainable. The assessment carried out in this study provides results on the applicability of ongoing initiatives and shows how they contribute to the European Commission's Action Plan on the Circular Economy.



Emission Reduction Targets for International Aviation and Shipping



This study provides an overview of potential CO₂ mitigation targets for international aviation and maritime transport and analyses which targets would be compatible with the global long-term goal of keeping the temperature increase below 2°C compared to pre-industrial levels. It underlines the need to establish targets for both sectors which clearly indicate that emissions cannot grow in an unlimited and unregulated way.



Guidelines for the approval of active substances in pesticides



Active substances are an essential element of pesticides. Their approval occurs at EU level, and guidance exists to clarify, harmonise and standardise the complex approval process. This study examines the existing guidance and guidelines; the level of harmonisation among them; the connection to the good laboratory practice (GLP) principles; and provides an overview of the studies which are required for active substance approval.



Briefings:

European policies on climate and energy towards 2020, 2030 and 2050

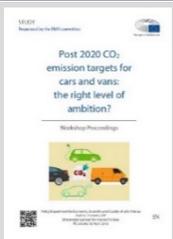


This briefing describes the EU policies on climate and energy, as well as the challenges that must be faced in order to achieve the Paris Agreement target of keeping the increase in global temperature well below 2°C and to pursue efforts to achieve 1.5°C.



Workshop proceedings:**Supporting the Market for Secondary Raw Materials in a Circular Economy**

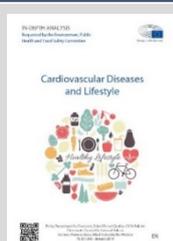
This report summarises presentations and discussions of a workshop organised to raise the understanding of the role and opportunities for secondary raw materials as part of the implementation of the Circular Economy Action Plan, including the proposed waste legislation.

**Post 2020 CO₂ emission targets for cars and vans**

This report summarises the presentations and discussions of a workshop highlighting the role of light duty vehicles in achieving emissions reductions, the proposed post-2020 targets and the increase in their efficiency, as well as the way forward for electric vehicles and the possible steps for further improvement.

**Robots in Healthcare: a solution or a problem?**

This report summarizes the presentations and discussions of a workshop on the status and prospects of applying robotic and artificial intelligence (AI) based technologies in healthcare. The first part of the workshop focused on the practical application of AI and robots in healthcare, while the second part examined the ethical implications and responsibilities of AI and robotic based technologies in healthcare.

**Cardiovascular Diseases and Lifestyle**

This document summarizes the presentations and discussions of a workshop on the limits and opportunities of lifestyle impact on cardiovascular diseases. The aim of the workshop was to inform on the relationship between cardiovascular and related diseases and a number of lifestyle choices in the context of the European Union, and to have an overview of the global and EU policy landscape addressing these challenges.

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All our research papers are available on our website:

<https://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/envi/supporting-analyses.html>

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