

Composition of the European Parliament

Following a vote in the Constitutional Affairs Committee on 11 September, the European Parliament is expected to vote in plenary in September on giving its consent to a decision of the European Council establishing Parliament's composition for the next term. This decision would adjust the current distribution of seats among Member States, to a total of 720, taking into account demographic changes that have occurred since the 2018 decision that redistributed seats following the UK's withdrawal from the EU.

Background

According to the Treaties ([Article 14](#) of the Treaty on European Union –TEU), Parliament has the right to propose to the European Council (EUCO) a decision on its composition, abiding by three principles: i) a maximum number of 751 MEPs, distributed following the degressive proportionality principle; ii) a minimum of six seats per Member State; and iii) a maximum of 96 seats per Member State. Currently, Parliament's composition is determined by [European Council Decision 2018/937](#), which stated that should the United Kingdom withdraw from the EU, [27 \(of the 73\) seats](#) left vacant by the UK's withdrawal would be redistributed among 14 Member States. Decision 2018/937 also defined the notion of 'degressive proportionality' as the principle according to which each Member from a more populous Member State represents more citizens than each Member from a less populous Member State and, conversely, that no less populous Member State should have more seats than a more populous Member State. The current distribution of seats however does not comply in all cases with the first requirement. A new (permanent) allocation model has proven difficult to establish, although during the [2014-2019 legislative term](#) the Committee on Constitutional Affairs (AFCO) examined proposals based on a mathematical formula. Any permanent system should be linked to a revision of the Council's voting system.

The proposal on the composition of the European Parliament

In June 2023, the AFCO committee adopted a [report](#) providing for a redistribution of seats for the 2024-2029 legislative term, proposing an increase in the current number of seats (705) by 11, and their allocation to 9 Member States, to take account of demographic developments. On 15 June 2023, [Parliament](#) adopted a [resolution](#) based on the AFCO report and its [attribution of seats](#), namely 1 additional seat to Denmark, Ireland, Latvia, Austria, Slovenia, Slovakia and Finland; and 2 additional seats to Spain and the Netherlands. Parliament's proposal was submitted to the European Council, which increased further the number of seats proposed by Parliament, allocating a total of **15 additional seats: 1 each to Belgium, Denmark, Ireland, Latvia, Austria, Poland, Slovenia, Slovakia and Finland, and 2 each to Spain, France and the Netherlands** (see Figure 1). The European Council also called on Parliament to propose – by the end of 2026 – an objective, fair, durable and transparent seat distribution method, implementing degressive proportionality without prejudice to the institutions' prerogatives.

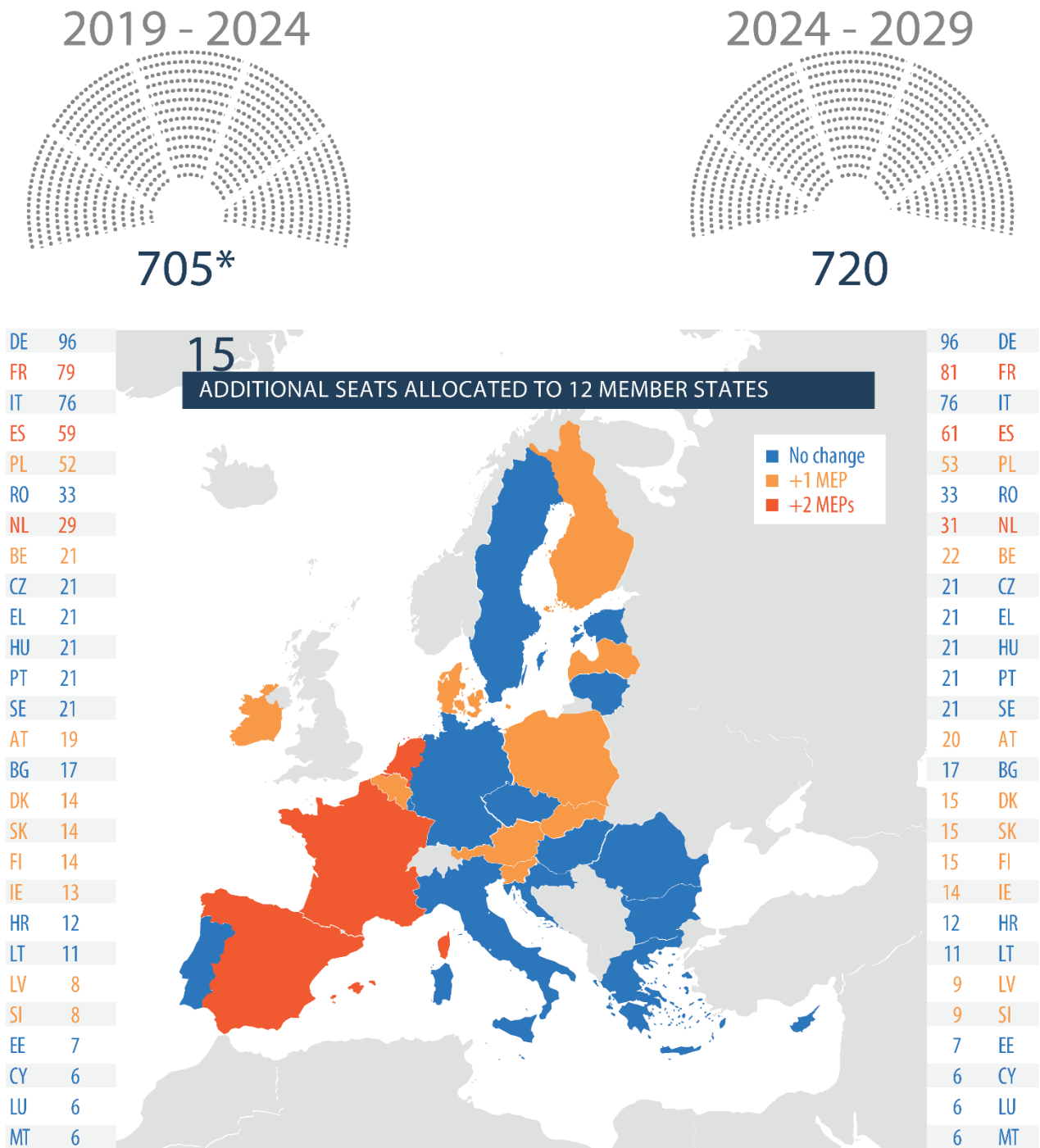
Next steps

The European Council agreed on the draft decision, acting unanimously ([Article 14\(2\) TEU](#)), by [written procedure](#) ([Article 7](#) EUCO Rules of Procedure). [Parliament](#) must now give its consent, in accordance with [Rule 105](#) of its Rules of Procedure before the European Council can adopt it. The AFCO committee is scheduled to vote on 11 September 2023 on its recommendation on whether to give consent, with the Parliament then considering the draft decision during the September plenary session.

Recommendation on EP consent: [2023/0900\(NLE\)](#); Committee responsible: AFCO; Rapporteurs: Loránt Vincze, (EPP, Romania); Sandro Gozi (Renew Europe, France).



Figure 1: Additional seats in the European Parliament under the draft decision of the European Council



*Composition of Parliament after the withdrawal of the UK from the EU.

Source: EPRS.