This press tool kit includes an overview of the European Parliament’s composition and powers, political priorities, completed and ongoing work, background material, graphics, public opinion data, as well as useful contacts.

It is designed to help journalists covering Parliament’s activities to quickly find relevant, up-to-date information and easily navigate Parliament’s websites.

The content of this press tool kit is updated regularly.
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European Elections 2024

From 6 to 9 June 2024, around 360 million Europeans were called to the polls to elect the 720 members of the European Parliament for its tenth legislative term.

The EU Electoral Act determines that the European parliamentary elections take place every five years. In 2024, elections were held across the 27 EU member states from Thursday 6 June to Sunday 9 June.

Organisation of the elections

The European elections are organised according to member states’ national legislation, though there are a number of common provisions established by EU law. Proportional representation has to be ensured, and while most of the countries are organised as a single constituency some – Belgium, Ireland, Italy and Poland - divide their territories into multiple constituencies.

Find details on these and other organisational aspects of the elections in this infographic and this briefing.

Lead candidates

In order to “Europeanise” the elections and to boost the democratic legitimacy of EU decision-making, Parliament called ahead of the 2014 European elections on the European political parties to nominate candidates for the Presidency of the European Commission. The aim was to allow citizens to influence directly, through their vote in the European elections, the choice of the head of the European executive. This procedure has become known as the Spitzenkandidaten (‘lead candidates’ in German) process.

In the 2014 elections, it resulted in the election of Jean-Claude Juncker.

Following the May 2019 European elections, the European Council proposed Ursula von der Leyen as candidate for President of the European Commission to the European Parliament. She was not a lead candidate.

Ahead of the 2024 European elections, Parliament confirmed the importance of applying the lead candidate system (the “Spitzenkandidaten” process), in which European political parties designate their respective candidates for the post of EU Commission President ahead of the elections. For Parliament, a clear and credible link between the choice made by voters and the position of the Commission President is necessary. Based on the EU Treaties, this choice should depend on the candidate that secures majority support in Parliament.

The lead candidates for the 2024 European elections were:

Ursula von der Leyen (Germany) for the European People’s Party (EPP) group,
Nicolas Schmit (Luxembourg), for the Socialists and Democrats (S&D) group,

Marie-Agnes Strack-Zimmermann (Germany), Sandro Gozi (Italy) and Valérie Hayer (France), for Renew Europe group,

Terry Reintke (Germany) and Bas Eickhout (The Netherlands), and Raül Romeva (Spain) and Maylis Roßberg, for the Greens/EFA group, and

Walter Baier (Austria), for The Left - GUE/NGL group.

The Identity and Democracy (ID) and the European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR) groups did not officially appoint any lead candidate.

A debate among the lead candidates, organised by the European Broadcasting Union (EBU), took place on 23 May in the afternoon, in the Parliament's plenary chamber in Brussels. Find here more information about the debate.

Election results

From Sunday 9 June 2024, the European Parliament published data on the election results as they became publicly available in member states, in 24 EU languages, on https://results.elections.europa.eu.

Technical questions about election results should be addressed to election-results-data@europarl.europa.eu

Results from previous elections

The dynamic and interactive website https://results.elections.europa.eu offers overall European election results, including national breakdowns, the composition of all outgoing European Parliaments since 1984, breakdowns by national parties and political groups since 1979 and all results at the national level since 2009. In addition, the site offers information on trends in European elections, for example on gender balance.

The tool allows you to compare data between different elections. A widget can tailor the website to your needs. It will publish historical results of European elections on your website and provide live results. You may download datasheets in open data formats (json, xml and csv) and graphic image formats (jpg and png).

Further information

European Elections 2024 website
EP factsheets: The European Parliament: electoral procedures
Distribution of seats per EU member state in the European Elections 2024 (infographic)
Audiovisual material: European Elections 2024 package
After the European elections

Following the elections, member state national authorities communicated to the European Parliament the names of the elected members of the EP after checking they do not hold incompatible mandates or functions.

Verification of MEP credentials

The credentials of newly-elected MEPs are verified to establish that they do not hold another office that is incompatible with membership of the European Parliament (rule 3 of the European Parliament Rules of Procedure). Incompatible offices include being a member of government or parliament of an EU member state, of the European Commission, the Court of Justice, the European Central Bank Board of Directors, the Court of Auditors, or the European Investment Bank. Active officials working for the EU institutions or bodies set up under the EU treaties to manage EU funding are also barred from being MEPs.

Once the election results are official, member states communicate the names of those who have won a seat to the EP and ask them to take the necessary measures to avoid any incompatibility of offices.

Before taking their seats, new MEPs whose election has been notified to Parliament must declare in writing that they do not hold any office incompatible with that of an MEP. This declaration needs to be made no later than six days before Parliament's constitutive sitting.

These credentials are checked ex post by Parliament's Legal Affairs Committee, which draws up a decision based on the information provided by member states. This decision is then passed to the President who informs the plenary during the next sitting. Other than checking credentials, Parliament also rules on any disputes around the incompatibility of different offices (pursuant to the Act of 20 September 1976), except those based on national electoral laws.

Where it is established that an MEP holds an incompatible office, Parliament "shall establish that there is a vacancy."

Constitution of the political groups
Negotiations for the constitution of the political groups started after the elections, leading to the creation of eight political groups (one more than in the previous term). A political group must consist of at least 23 MEPs elected in at least one-quarter of the member states (i.e. at least seven), as established in rule 33 of the EP rules of Procedure.

Constituent plenary sitting on 16-19 July 2024

The new legislature officially began on Tuesday 16 July 2024. On that day, and until Friday 19 July, newly elected MEPs met in Parliament's seat in Strasbourg to elect their President, and their 14 Vice-Presidents and five Quaestors, as established in .

The European Parliament elects its President from among its members, for a renewable term of two and a half years.

Roberta Metsola (EPP, MT), EP President since January 2022, was re-elected until 2027, with 562 votes in the first round of voting.

Read more about the election of the EP’s President, Vice-Presidents and Quaestors in this briefing by the Parliament’s Research Service.

MEPs also confirmed the numerical composition of Parliament’s standing committees and subcommittees, as well as parliamentary delegations. The decision on which MEPs sit on each committee, taken by the political groups and the non-attached members (rules 212 and 216 of the Rules of Procedure), was announced in plenary.

Election of the President of the European Commission

On 18 July, Parliament backed Ursula von der Leyen for a second term as President of the European Commission, with 401 votes in favour in a secret ballot. Ahead of the vote, Ursula von der Leyen presented her political priorities for the next five years during a debate with MEPs.

Article 14 of the Treaty of the European Union provides that the EP “shall elect the President of the Commission.” In practice, based on rule 128 of the Rules of Procedure, the candidate proposed by the European Council presents their political guidelines to Parliament, followed by a debate.
Constitutive Committee meetings

Parliament’s committees and subcommittees held their first meetings to elect their respective bureaux (which include a Chair and up to four Vice-Chairs) on 23 July in Brussels.

Committees and subcommittees’ Chairs and Vice-Chairs are elected among the Members sitting on each of them. The list of all members on Parliament’s committees and subcommittees was announced in plenary on 19 July.

According to Rule 219 of the Parliament’s Rules of Procedure, the diversity of Parliament must be reflected in the composition of the bureau of each committee.

Confirmation hearings of Commissioners-designate

As established in rule 129 of the Rules of Procedure, together with the Commission President-elect, the Council appoints the Commissioners-designate. Each Commissioner-designate is assigned responsibility for a specific policy area (portfolio) by the Commission President-elect in accordance with the political guidelines she/he has outlined. The relevant EP committees assess each of the Commissioners-designate, before a plenary vote on the appointment of the College as a whole.

Examination by the Committee on Legal Affairs of the declaration of interests

The Committee on Legal Affairs carries out a full examination of the declaration on financial interests of the Commissioners-designate - ahead of their committee hearings - in order to assess the content is accurate and complete as well as possible conflicts of interest.

Should the Legal Affairs Committee have any doubts, it can ask for supplementary information or invite the Commissioner-designate for a discussion. It can also issue recommendations on how to resolve a conflict of interest.

Before the confirmation hearings with the relevant committees can take place, the Legal Affairs Committee must confirm in writing the absence of any conflict of interest. If no solution is found for a given conflict of interest, the Legal Affairs Committee will conclude that the Commissioner-designate is unable to exercise their function.

Written procedure: questions from MEPs
The Commissioner-designate has to provide written replies to several questions, including some from MEPs in the committees responsible for the portfolio to which they have been assigned. A first block of questions revolves around their general competence, European commitment and personal independence, the management of the portfolio and planned cooperation with Parliament. The specialist committees prepare a series of specific questions on the portfolio.

The CVs of all Commissioners-designate and their reply to the written questions will be published on the EP website ahead of the hearings.

**Confirmation hearing in the relevant committee or committees**

The Commissioner-designate is invited to a three-hour hearing, streamed live, in front of the EP committees responsible for their portfolio. The candidate makes an opening speech of maximum 15 minutes and will then reply to MEPs’ questions.

Exceptionally, a confirmation hearing may be carried out in a different format when the responsibilities of a Commissioner-designate fall within the remit of two or more committees without any of them prevailing. The Commissioner-designate will then be heard jointly by those committees for up to four hours, based on a recommendation of the Conference of Committee Chairs.

The confirmation hearings shall be held in public and webstreamed.

**Evaluation after the confirmation hearing**

Chairs and coordinators of the responsible committee(s) must finalise their evaluation of a Commissioner-designate within 24 hours following the hearing and should meet in camera (behind close doors) “without delay” for that purpose. The committee(s) in charge of the hearing can also ask the Commissioner-designate for more information in writing, or organise a shorter additional hearing.

An evaluation letter for each candidate is prepared by the political group coordinators, stating whether a candidate is qualified both:

- to be a “Member of the College” (the European Commission) and
g- to carry out their assigned duties.

This letter is then transmitted for examination to the Conference of Committee Chairs (CCC) within 24 hours after the completion of the evaluation.

**Conclusion of the hearing process**

Following an exchange of views, and unless it decides to request further information, the Conference of Presidents declares the confirmation hearings closed. Only at this point
can the evaluation letters be published and comments on the evaluation be made.

**Presentation of the College and plenary vote**

Taking into account the results of the hearings, as well as consultations with Parliament's political groups, the Commission President-elect presents the whole College of Commissioners-designate and their programme at a sitting of Parliament.

After a debate, MEPs decide, by a majority of the votes cast, whether to invest the new College of Commissioners for a mandate of five years. It may defer the vote until the following sitting.

**Pending legislative proposals**

Not all negotiations between EU co-legislators (Parliament and Council) on proposals tabled by the European Commission were concluded by the end of the ninth legislative term. This can happen for several reasons, for example when no agreement could be reached in interinstitutional negotiations, or when national governments are unable to agree on a common position.

In concrete terms, legislative files

- that were adopted by Parliament in plenary before the elections, whether at first reading or second reading, or under the consultation procedure, will remain legally valid for the next Parliament.

Examples include combatting late payments, the revision of payment services, food and textile waste, water pollutants, new genomic techniques, safety of toys, driving licenses, Single European Sky, pharmaceuticals and the revamp of the EU Customs code.

- that did not reach the plenary before the elections, saw the work done on them (in committee, trilogue if there was not a deal) end. However, the new Parliament could decide to continue this work.

Examples include combatting corruption, retail investor protection, Digital Euro, AI liability, combatting sexual abuse of children, long-term residents, the anti-smuggling package, animal transport and welfare of cats and dogs.

At the beginning of the new parliamentary term, Parliament's Conference of Presidents (EP President and political group leaders) will decide on the basis of input from parliamentary committees, whether to continue working on “unfinished business” (Rule

Once they take this decision (possibly in October 2024), it will subsequently be announced in plenary (possibly also in October 2024).

If the Conference of Presidents and plenary decide to take this work forward, the newly elected Parliament will continue with the next stage of the relevant decision-making procedure.

If needed, a new rapporteur will be appointed.

Traditionally, the Conference of Presidents decides to resume all unfinished legislative work. Exceptions can be made, for instance for files that have become obsolete and on which a new proposal by the Commission or renewed consultation by the Council is expected.

Find here a list of pending legislative files for the tenth legislative term (non-exhaustive).

Further information
Infographic: Timeline to new EU institutional leadership (EPRS)
Parliament's priorities and achievements in the ninth term

Between 2019 and 2024, lawmakers focused on Europe’s unwavering support for Ukraine and the green and digital transition to build a resilient economy and strengthen democratic oversight and fundamental rights.

Parliament adopted 467 legislative acts in its ninth term, following agreements with the Council, and made reform requests in 29 legislative own-initiative reports.

Parliament’s Legislative Observatory is the central database and monitoring tool to turn to for complete information on all past and ongoing parliamentary work, be it legislative or non-legislative. It offers a very responsive research tool to filter content.

Economic and social recovery and strong EU budget

In 2020, Parliament’s negotiators successfully fought for the biggest EU financial package ever to tackle the repercussions of the COVID-19 crisis and finance a new
generation of EU programmes for 2021-2027. MEPs achieved a €16 billion increase for flagship programmes such as EU4Health, Horizon (research), InvestEU and Erasmus+ in the EU’s long-term budget. To further support Ukraine and boost EU industrial autonomy, as well as addressing migration, MEPs insisted on a mid-term revision and upscaling of the long-term budget, which the Commission proposed in June 2023, in line with Parliament’s demands. A provisional agreement with member states was voted into law in February 2024, integrating the Ukraine Facility and the "Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform" (STEP).

The initial EU long-term budget and a €750 billion (more than €800 billion in current prices) recovery instrument (see also NextGenerationEU, RRF) aim to get European societies better prepared for crises and to boost the digital and green transitions, with particular support for young people, SMEs, rescue and health systems and research. Additional measures in support of regions and vulnerable populations (e.g. the Just Transition Fund and the Social Climate fund) were adopted in 2021 and complemented in 2023 to accelerate actions to reach climate neutrality and cut dependence on Russian energy (REPowerEU).

Parliament also secured a legally binding roadmap for the introduction of new own resources to cover the repayment of the NextGenerationEU borrowing. In November 2023, MEPs paved the way for three new sources to feed directly into the European Union’s budget: revenue from the Emissions Trading System, the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism, and on corporate profits.

EU solidarity based on shared values and objectives

As the EU’s discharge authority, Parliament keeps a close eye on the budget spending and on the national recovery plans financed through the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF). For member states to receive EU funding, they scrupulously need to respect EU climate and digital objectives as well as the rule of law and fundamental EU values. Parliament exerted constant pressure on the Commission to retain any payments under the “rule of law conditionality”, agreed with Council in 2020, if those requirements are not fulfilled. Notably, Parliament contested the Commission’s unfreezing of €10.2 billion in EU cohesion funds for Hungary and introduced a case (C-225/24) at the European Court of Justice. Moreover, MEPs succeeded in enhancing scrutiny and transparency of the RRF: the 100 biggest beneficiaries of RRF funding have to be published by each member state.

Fair wages and tax transparency

MEPs negotiated with member states to secure national minimum wages and to ensure that men and women receive equal pay for equal work, across the EU.
MEPs negotiated with member states to secure national minimum wages and to ensure that men and women receive equal pay for equal work, across the EU. Parliament and Council agreed on a new law to bring in social justice and dignity for workers and put an end to abusive practices by service providers operating via digital platforms. The so-called platform work directive puts an end to bogus self-employment and introduces the first ever EU-rules on the use of artificial intelligence in the workplace.

MEPs also call on member states to strengthen minimum income schemes and ban the exploitation of trainees. As work conditions in the cultural and creative sectors differ greatly between member states, they called for new EU legislation on the social status and working conditions of artists and other professionals working in culture. In a separate report, MEPs in particular seek ways to ensure musicians are remunerated fairly by music streaming platforms.

An outright ban on products made with forced labour, be it inside or outside the EU, will oblige manufacturers of such goods to withdraw their products from the EU single market and donate, recycle or destroy them.

For the first time, Parliament also adopted transparency requirements for short-term rental services to give municipalities better oversight of their local short-term rental market via platforms and protect travellers from fraudulent offers.

Furthermore, fair taxation and the fight against corruption and against money laundering remain high on Parliament’s agenda. To effectively enforce the new common rulebook, MEPs agreed with member states to set up a European Anti-Money Laundering Agency in Frankfurt (Germany). Parliament also adopted new rules for financial operations in cryptocurrencies, so they can be traced in the same way as traditional money transfers. Negotiators from the European Parliament and the Council of the EU also reached an agreement on new legislation to boost the freezing and confiscation of criminal assets and crack down on violations of EU sanctions.

**Economic stability and support for EU industries to drive the digital and green transitions**

In February 2023, MEPs voted in favour of establishing a new EU funding instrument to anchor and re-locate industrial production capacities in Europe. A first funding tool (STEP) has been set up in the overall revision of the MFF. Legislation on decarbonising gas supply and reforming the electricity market to stabilise prices for consumers was adopted in April 2024. Parliament also approved new rules to secure sufficient supply of critical raw materials in 2023 and adopted the “Net Zero Industry Act” to boost Europe’s green tech economy. This “competitiveness package” should boost the production and take-up of clean energy technologies, and help EU industries produce high-quality jobs and stimulate economic growth to reach the Green Deal goals.
With an eye on stimulating small-scale economic growth, MEPs agreed with member states on establishing **instant payment** rules for euro transfers to be performed in 10 seconds at no extra cost and on easing **SMEs’ access to capital markets**. In the last plenary of the 9th term, Parliament approved a series of rules agreed with member states to **increase financial and economic stability** in the EU. This includes an agreement with member states on **economic governance coordination in the EU** and on restoring **national budgetary discipline** as of 2024 while making the rules clearer, conducive to investment, more tailored to each country’s situation, and more flexible.

MEPs also gave a green light to the review of the **common agriculture policy (CAP)** to ease the administrative burden on EU farmers and build in more flexibility for fulfilling greening conditions.

**Climate protection and environmental policies**

Parliament declared a **climate emergency** in 2019 and fought for more ambitious greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reductions to achieve climate neutrality by 2050 in line with the Paris Agreement. The **Climate Law** (adopted on 24 June 2021) makes it a
binding objective for the EU to become climate neutral in 2050 and reduce GHG emissions by at least 55% in 2030 (compared to 1990 levels). It gives European citizens and businesses the legal certainty and predictability they need to plan for the green transition.

At least 30% of the EU budget will support climate objectives (and 8% biodiversity), with a significant part being disbursed collectively by the EU via REPowerEU to save energy, produce clean energy and diversify supplies. It also provides support for vulnerable households, SMEs and micro-enterprises. In addition, Parliament backed a €86.7 billion Social Climate Fund (to address energy and transport poverty) and a €17.5 billion Just Transition Fund for regions struggling with the social and economic impact of the climate/green transition.

**Achieve climate neutrality by 2050**

On top of reducing the GHG emissions of industries, transport (aviation, maritime, cars and vans, Euro 7 standards, trucks and buses) and households, the Parliament decided to incentivise alternative energy uptake. It further increased the ambition of the EU’s emissions trading system (ETS), which enshrines the “polluter pays” principle. By putting a price on greenhouse gas emissions, the ETS has made industries invest in climate-friendly technologies. The effort-sharing rules set out reduction targets for member states in areas not covered by ETS and a more ambitious EU carbon sinks target for the land use and forestry sector protects EU forests, boosts biodiversity and increases the EU’s 2030 GHG reduction target to 57%.

Fuels for heating and road transport will be included in the ETS by 2027/28 and free allocations to the aviation sector will be phased out by 2026. Parliament endorsed the objective for zero CO2 emissions from new cars and vans in 2035 and strengthened the rules that will cover the entire life cycle of batteries. MEPs also agreed to accelerate the roll-out of renewable energy and improve energy efficiency while reducing methane emissions from the energy sector. New rules have been adopted to lower the energy consumption of buildings to further reduce the EU’s carbon footprint and dependency on Russian fossil fuels.

**Avoid carbon leakage and greenwashing**

A new Carbon border adjustment mechanism will apply the EU’s carbon price to imported cement, iron and steel, aluminium, fertilisers, electricity and hydrogen. MEPs have established a level playing field to protect EU industries and prevent production being relocated abroad and to propel the rest of the world to step up their climate efforts.

A host of products may now no longer be placed on the EU’s market if they have caused deforestation: cattle, cocoa, coffee, palm oil, soya, wood, rubber, charcoal, printed paper
products. While no products will be banned outright, companies will have to show proof of “due diligence” - that producing them did not contribute to deforestation. More generally, sustainable company reporting becomes obligatory for all big companies in the EU, as from 2024. Some 50 000 companies will have to disclose data on the impact of their activities on people and the planet and any sustainability risks they are exposed to. Finally, MEPs adopted “due diligence” rules requiring firms and their upstream and downstream partners including supply, production and distribution to prevent, end or mitigate their adverse impact on human rights and the environment.

Striving for less pollution, more biodiversity

Parliament tightened rules on air quality and adopted new requirements to reduce packaging waste and industrial emissions in the EU. Mandatory requirements to restore damaged EU ecosystems while ensuring sufficient food production were also passed.

In parallel, Parliament adopted tougher sanctions and an extended list of environmental crimes to protect ecosystems more effectively.

Key moments: Climate protection and environmental policies (video)

Rules for a safe and competitive digital environment
Parliament is among the first institutions in the world to call for laws on key issues such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the regulation of online platforms. MEPs want Europe to uphold the highest standards on digital services, data protection and cybersecurity, built on EU fundamental rights and values set out in the EU’s Declaration of digital rights and principles.

A human-centred approach

The European Parliament has taken positions on establishing ethical principles that guide the EU’s approach to the digital transformation, as well as ensuring full compliance with fundamental rights such as data protection, the right to privacy, non-discrimination and gender equality, and with principles such as consumer protection, technological and net neutrality, trustworthiness and inclusiveness. Parliament has also called for users’ rights to be protected more robustly online, for investment in digital skills, support for workers’ rights and mental health in the digital workspace, and the right to disconnect, making digital platforms less addictive and virtual worlds based on EU values and ethical principles.

Digital Services rules

The Digital Services Act (DSA) sets clear standards for how online companies operate
and provide services in the EU, while offering a high level of protection for users. Under the guiding principle of “what is illegal offline should be illegal online”, online platforms have to take quick measures to remove illegal content, counter disinformation and strengthen checks on traders.

The **Digital Markets Act (DMA)** establishes obligations for large online platforms acting as “gatekeepers” on the digital market to ensure they behave in a fair way. The rules provide innovators and tech start-ups with new opportunities to compete and innovate in a fairer business environment. Consumers will have more and better services to choose from, without losing control over their data.

Both the DSA and DMA were **adopted by Parliament** in July 2022.

**Artificial Intelligence (AI)**

In March 2024, Parliament adopted the **world’s first comprehensive law on regulating artificial intelligence (AI).** The rules establish obligations for AI based on its potential risks and level of impact. Certain uses of AI will become completely prohibited such as social scoring, biometric categorisation using sensitive characteristics, and emotion recognition in the workplace and education. Powerful models referred to as "general purpose AI" will also have to abide with the rules.

**A European data strategy**

MEPs support an interoperable, EU-wide data governance framework and a human-centric “data society” in which citizens have full control of their own data. Access to high-quality data is an essential factor in building high-performing and safe AI systems.

The **Data Act** complements the rules set out in the **Digital Governance Act** on data-sharing. It aims to boost innovation by removing barriers obstructing consumers and businesses’ access to data.

Parliament finalised the **creation of an EU-wide digital wallet**, which will allow citizens to identify and authenticate themselves online without having to resort to commercial providers.

MEPs agreed with member states on setting up a **European Health Data Space** to ensure citizens can securely access prescriptions, imagery and lab tests, even across borders.

**Cybersecurity**

In response to the growing threats posed by digitalisation and a surge in cyber-attacks, MEPs updated the **rules for a high common level of cybersecurity across the Union**
NIS2), replacing the first EU-wide cybersecurity law (NIS). NIS2 sets tighter cybersecurity requirements, expands the number of “essential sectors”, streamlines reporting, and introduces stricter enforcement, including sanctions, across the EU.

MEPs also approved the creation of an EU cybersecurity competence centre and network, and called for tighter EU cybersecurity standards for connected devices, apps and operating systems.

Parliament finalised the Cyber Resilience Act in March 2024, which introduces cybersecurity requirements for connected devices to protect consumers and businesses from unsafe digital products in the single market.

**Chips Act and rare raw materials**

MEPs adopted final plans to secure the EU’s supply of chips by boosting production and innovation in the EU, and establishing emergency measures against shortages. Parliament also voted to increase the availability of critical raw materials for the EU’s electronics industry through research in alternatives, mining, recycling and diversifying supply from third countries.

**Key moments:** Safe and competitive digital environment (video)

**Consumer policy for the green and digital transitions**
Thirty years after establishing the single market, Parliament took action on updating consumer protection rules to meet the challenges of the digital era and the green transition. Waste reduction, recycling and sustainable reuse or production of goods are the cornerstones of building a more self-reliant and zero-pollution circular economy.

Among the most recent changes are new rules set out in the Digital Markets Act, Digital Services Act, and initiatives like a common charger for mobile electronic devices. MEPs and Council also agreed revamped product safety requirements and consumer credits rules to enhance consumer protection and the wellbeing of EU citizens, both online and offline. Moreover, they adopted updated liability rules for defective products.

Circular Economy: products to last longer

Parliament and Council approved new rules for recycling and producing sustainable batteries and reducing packaging waste. MEPs also voted on a series of proposals to limit food and textiles waste.

To boost sustainable consumption, MEPs approved an extensive revamp of the Eco-Design Directive for products to last longer and be easier to repair, upgrade and recycle. They also strengthened consumers’ rights to repair to make repairs easier and more cost-effective in the EU. Parliament banned greenwashing, in addition to putting in place
due diligence obligations for corporate businesses to mitigate their adverse impact on human rights and the environment

Key moments: Consumer policies (video)

Building the European Health Union

Primary responsibility for healthcare systems lies with the member states. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has shown that the EU has an important role to play in improving public health, preventing and managing diseases, mitigating sources of danger to human health, and coordinating health strategies between member states. Parliament increased the funding for the 2021-27 “EU4Health” programme from €1.7 billion to €5.1 billion, aiming to improve cooperation among EU countries and to better deal with future pandemics and health threats.

In February 2023, Parliament agreed to set up a new permanent Subcommittee for Public Health, underlining the topic’s priority status.

Tackling the pandemic
In June 2021, MEPs and member states swiftly put in place the temporary digital COVID-19 certificate to facilitate safe cross-border travel and transport in the EU and beyond during the pandemic. Parliament agreed to widen the scope and upgrade the resources of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism to quickly respond to large-scale disasters. The Parliament also pushed for strengthening the mandate of the European Medicine Agency (EMA) and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), to enhance the EU’s crisis prevention, preparedness and response capacity when addressing future serious cross-border health threats.

MEPs considered further lessons learned from the EU’s handling of the COVID-19 pandemic and vaccination campaigns. They issued a roadmap to better prepare the EU for future health crises, based on the findings of the temporary COVI special committee.

**Pharmaceuticals, health at work, defeat cancer**

Parliament repeatedly pushed to protect citizens’ health in the workplace more robustly and adopted new rules to lower exposure to asbestos. MEPs also set out ways to increase the EU’s pharmaceutical autonomy in a report adopted at the end of 2021. A broad revision of the EU’s key pharmaceutical legislation, tabled by the Commission in spring 2023, has been amended by MEPs and should be finalised after the European elections.

The Parliament’s Special Committee on Beating Cancer (BECA) issued recommendations to improve cooperation on cancer prevention and early detection, as well as harness research, innovation and new technologies for prevention and treatment. MEPs also call on the next European Commission to draw up an EU long-term Mental Health Strategy.

**Making life abroad easier for persons with disabilities**

Parliament and Council agreed on a European Disability card and a related EU parking card. When travelling or temporarily studying in another EU country, persons with disabilities and those accompanying them will benefit from equal access to preferential conditions, such as reduced or zero entry fees, priority access, and access to reserved parking.

**Improving road safety**

Given around 40% of cross-border offences go unpunished, MEPs secured more robust assistance procedures between EU countries to help find a person liable for a traffic offence. Apart from speeding, drink-driving and failing to stop at a red traffic light, MEPs added dangerous parking and overtaking, crossing a solid line, and hit and run offences, which could trigger a cross-border investigation and result in a possible fine.
Key moments: Response to the COVID-19 pandemic (video)

Migration and Asylum policy reform

A new Pact on Migration and Asylum was proposed by the European Commission in 2020 to overhaul and streamline asylum procedures, reception conditions and return policies for migrants across the EU. The informal deal between Parliament and Council on the package of proposals, including Regulations for Asylum and Migration Management, Crisis and Force majeure, Screening and Asylum Procedures regulation, was approved by Parliament as a whole in April 2024.

EU lawmakers struck a balance through which EU borders are effectively safeguarded and efforts are undertaken to combat human smuggling and trafficking (adopted by Parliament in April), while ensuring that migrants' human rights are respected.

A holistic approach

MEPs made sure that the EU has an independent and fully operational Agency for Asylum by 2024 to develop operational standards, indicators, guidelines and best
practices on asylum-related matters. The Malta-based agency provides operational assistance to member states in need, including in crisis situations as well as on relocation and resettlement.

The Migration and Asylum package also establishes new rules to help vulnerable persons reach EU territory in a legal, organised and safe way. This is based on voluntary resettlement in a member state (Union Resettlement Framework Regulation), and on improved Reception Conditions to enable registered asylum applicants to start working after six months. It is also based on uniform standards across the EU for the recognition of people applying for international protection and regarding the type of rights granted to those that qualify for such protection (Qualification regulation).

Labour migration

In May 2021, MEPs called for establishing legal pathways for migration to reduce illegal border-crossings and to allow for the orderly integration of new arrivals into the labour force. As a first step, Parliament voted on new rules for highly qualified workers to settle more easily in the EU (Blue Card). They also improved the existing single work and residence permit directive for third-country nationals to integrate into the EU workforce.

Frontex under parliamentary scrutiny

The Frontex Scrutiny Working Group was created following a decision by the Civil Liberties Committee coordinators on 29 January 2021 to investigate allegations of illegal push-backs. The group of MEPs continues to monitor all aspects of the functioning of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency Frontex and the correct application of the relevant EU legislation, in particular the European Border and Coast Guard regulation. On 13 July 2023, the European Parliament adopted a resolution calling for more proactive EU involvement in search and rescue operations undertaken by member states, the EU and Frontex in the Mediterranean. This was followed up by a plenary vote in December on how the Agency can help member states to control their external borders more efficiently and in compliance with fundamental rights.

Key moments: Reforming the asylum and migration rules (video)

Parliament stands with Ukraine
The European Parliament stands with Ukraine in its fight for democratic freedom and self-determination. It has strongly and repeatedly condemned Russia’s war of aggression and called for tough sanctions on Russia and Belarus as of the first days of the military attacks. It continuously pushes for the EU to provide defensive weapons, humanitarian aid and democratic support to the institutions of Ukraine.

During an extraordinary plenary session on 1 March 2022, MEPs adopted a first resolution calling on tough sanctions to be imposed against Russia and Belarus over the invasion and swiftly provide Ukraine with defensive weapons.

The European Parliament became the first international political institution to be addressed by Ukraine’s President Volodymyr Zelenskyy after the assault, which he did in a (remote) speech the same day. A month later, on 1 April 2022, European Parliament President Roberta Metsola became the first EU leader to visit Kyiv, where she met with President Zelenskyy, parliamentary speaker Ruslan Stefanchuk and addressed Members of Ukraine’s parliament, the Verkhovna Rada.

On his first visit to Brussels on 9 February 2023, President Zelenskyy delivered a speech in plenary before addressing EU heads of state or government at the EU summit.

Tackling the consequences of war on Ukraine and EU actions
Parliament requested robust long-term humanitarian food aid for Ukraine, from both the EU and at the international level, in a resolution on 24 March 2022. In April 2022, MEPs demanded a complete EU embargo on Russian energy imports and as of May, started work to redirect recovery funds to RePowerEU and speed up the green energy transition in member states.

During the September 2022 plenary session, MEPs backed simplified rules for the use of EU regional funds to address the consequences of Russian aggression and in particular to help neighbouring regions hosting Ukrainian refugees. They also greenlighted a second tranche of EU macro-financial assistance for Ukraine’s immediate needs. In November 2022, MEPs approved an €18 billion EU loan to support Ukraine in 2023 and agreed in 2024 to set up a €50 billion facility to support Ukraine’s recovery and called for a solid legal regime to allow Russian state-owned assets frozen by the EU to be confiscated and used to reconstruct Ukraine.

MEPs renewed temporary autonomous trade measures for duty-free imports of Ukrainian products to support the ailing Ukrainian economy. They added some safeguard restrictions on agricultural goods to prevent potential market distortions in EU member states.

Towards a free and democratic Ukraine within the EU

In a resolution adopted in March 2022, Parliament also pointed out that the Russian government is spreading “disinformation of an unparalleled malice and magnitude” to deceive its citizens and the international community about the war in Ukraine. It urged the EU to put in place specific sanctions related to foreign interference and disinformation campaigns.

In May 2022, they urged the EU to support international proceedings and courts with the prosecution of the Russian and Belarussian regimes for war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide and the crime of aggression.

To this end, Parliament attributed new powers to Eurojust to allow the EU agency to collect and process evidence on these crimes.

In June, Parliament successfully called on EU heads of state or government to grant Ukraine EU candidate status and approved a first post-war tranche of macro-financial assistance to the country in July.

On 6 October, MEPs rejected the results of the Russian-orchestrated sham referenda to annex occupied Ukrainian territory at gunpoint as “null and void”. They also called for a massive increase in military assistance for the Ukrainian government and armed forces.

In a display of solidarity and admiration, Parliament bestowed the 2022 Sakharov Prize.
for Freedom of Thought to the brave people of Ukraine, represented by their president, elected leaders and civil society, on 19 October. The award ceremony was held in December.

Following the continued atrocities carried out by Russian forces and their proxies in Ukraine, MEPs decided to recognise Russia as a state sponsor of terrorism in a resolution adopted on 23 November. This was followed up by Parliament recognising Holodomor, the Soviet starvation of Ukrainians, as genocide.

During the plenary session in January 2023, MEPs called for a firmer response to Russian threats to European security and also renewed their call to create a special international tribunal to hold the Russian political and military leadership accountable for the crime of aggression against Ukraine.

Ahead of the EU-Ukraine summit in Kyiv on 3 February 2023, MEPs adopted a resolution calling on EU and Ukrainian political leaders to work towards the start of Ukraine’s EU accession negotiations, while reiterating the need for a merit-oriented accession process based on clear criteria, benchmarks and reforms.

On 13 July 2023, Parliament gave its final green light to EU plans to provide more ammunition to Ukraine. The new Act in Support of Ammunition Production (ASAP), which includes €500 million in financing, is intended to accelerate the delivery of ammunition and missiles to Kyiv and ramp up the European Union’s own production capacity to restore member states’ arsenals.

MEPs and the Council also agreed on new rules to incentivise EU countries to jointly procure defence products and support the EU’s defence industry. The new instrument, worth €300 million, should help member states meet their most urgent and critical defence needs in a voluntary and collaborative way. These needs have been exacerbated by transfers of defence products to Ukraine.

Over the years, the European Parliament has built a unique and longstanding relationship with Ukraine’s Verkhovna Rada (parliament) of Ukraine. Institutional cooperation on all levels has been stepped up since 24 February 2022 to provide immediate help and prepare Ukraine’s democratic future in the EU and a renewed Memorandum of Understanding was signed on 28 November 2023 by European Parliament President Roberta Metsola and Ruslan Stefanchuk, Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada. The European Parliament also contributed to the Verkhovna Rada’s communication capacities with the creation of a new common webpage in English and Ukrainian: “The EU stands with Ukraine”.

Key moments: EP stands with Ukraine (video)
A stronger Europe in the World

Parliament has called on the EU to improve its ability to take swift and effective foreign policy decisions, in particular under the Common Foreign and Security Policy, to speak with one voice, and to act as a truly global player in response to international crises. It also called on the EU to focus on strategic alliances to be able to position itself better in the new geopolitical context that jeopardises the EU’s security.

In a resolution on the Common Security and Defence Policy adopted in January 2024, MEPs say Russia’s war in Ukraine is part of a wider strategy to undermine the rules-based international order and underline that the EU will continue to support Kyiv with the necessary military means to end the conflict.

Enlargement

In September 2021, Parliament approved the pre-accession funding instrument IPA III worth €14.2 billion to support seven countries in adopting reforms required to comply with EU rules and values. In the 2023 report on Common Foreign and Security Policy, MEPs warn that the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine has significantly destabilised countries in the Western Balkans and the Eastern Partnership, which
jeopardises EU security. To address this, the report recommends that the EU reform its neighbourhood policy and accelerate the enlargement process.

Along with existing candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Türkiye, MEPs welcomed the granting of candidate status to Ukraine, Moldova and Bosnia and Herzegovina and urged member states to set a clear EU enlargement timetable to conclude accession negotiations with the candidate countries by the end of this decade. They called for candidate status to be granted to Georgia, provided priorities specified in the Commission's opinion on the country's eligibility have been addressed. They also welcomed the Republic of Kosovo's application for EU membership.

**Democracy support and human rights activities**

The European Parliament has always demonstrated its unwavering commitment to human rights and democracy around the globe. Since 1988, Parliament's Sakharov Prize recognises individuals, groups and organisations that have made an outstanding contribution to protecting freedom of thought in the world.

Events in recent years - the pandemic, the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine, Hamas' attack and Israel's response - have posed serious challenges to democracies around the world. Russia's aggression is directed not only against Ukraine but also against democracies and democratic values.

Parliament repeatedly condemned the despicable Hamas terrorists attack on Israel of 7 October 2023, and reaffirmed Israel's right to self-defence within the limits of international law. It also pointed to Israel's disproportionate response, which resulted in tens of thousands people being killed and injured in Gaza since this attack. In the resolution adopted in March 2024, MEPs called for an immediate and permanent ceasefire to address the looming risk of mass starvation in Gaza, and for an immediate and unconditional release of all hostages. There could be no prospect of Palestinian-Israeli reconciliation as long as Hamas and other terrorist groups play any role in the Gaza Strip, says the Parliament. It also strongly condemns the acceleration of the illegal settlement of Palestinian land, which constitutes a violation of international law.

The European Parliament supported parliaments in partner countries for years through a culture of dialogue initiatives like the Jean Monnet Dialogue, and the work of Parliament's delegations - official groups of MEPs that maintain and deepen relations with parliaments of non-EU countries, as well as with other regions and organisations.

The European Parliament also sends short-term election observation delegations to countries outside the EU every year, where the experience of MEPs as elected representatives enriches the evaluation of local electoral processes.

**Development**
In June 2021, MEPs approved the new Global Europe fund (the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – NDICI), securing €79.5 billion of external cooperation funding to support sustainable development in EU neighbourhood countries, Africa, Asia, the Americas, the Pacific and the Caribbean.

**International trade**

Parliament supports comprehensive trade partnerships and rules-based multilateralism. Reciprocity in trade relations is a cornerstone of recent legislation to ensure fair competition in the single market, such as new rules to avoid dumping by foreign subsidies and safeguards to shield EU companies from economic coercion by third countries.

Furthermore, the much-awaited proposal to effectively prohibit the sales of products made with forced labour in the EU, including forced child labour, has been agreed with member states and voted into law.

**Partnership agreements**

Parliament’s consent is mandatory for any new EU trade and investment deal with third countries to enter into force (e.g. the EU-UK trade agreement). In February 2020, MEPs approved the EU-Vietnam free trade agreement, which is the first to introduce environmental, social and democratic sustainability conditions. The Free Trade Agreement with New Zealand, approved by Parliament in November 2023, is viewed as the most progressive and sustainable trade agreement by the European Union ever and builds on common values. An updated version of the EU-Chile Association Agreement, including a trade deal was backed by MEPs in 2024.

**Key moments:** Agreement on future relations with the United Kingdom (video)

**Key moments:** Support to democracy and human rights activities (video)

**European democracy: common values, rules and rights**
Parliament defends a European Union built on the rule of law, fundamental rights, media freedom, non-discrimination, and gender equality. MEPs pushed the EU to scale up its fight against corruption, money laundering (AML package) and disinformation, which threaten Europe’s democratic foundations and core values.

**Foreign interference and disinformation**

Parliament set up a Special Committee on Foreign Interference in all Democratic Processes in the EU (INGE and ING2). Following its investigations and fact-finding missions, a first set of recommendations for better protecting EU democracy were adopted in March 2022 followed by a second report on 1 June 2023 on how to protect the European elections. Finally, plenary adopted a third set of recommendations outlining ways to protect Parliament itself from attempts to influence its work.

Following allegations of Russian interference, MEPs adopted a resolution in February 2024 to denounce Russia’s continuous efforts to undermine and destroy European democracy, including through large-scale funding of political parties, politicians, officials and movements in several democratic countries. In April 2024, they called upon the EU for a firm response to counter Russian interference in the European Parliament and in
the upcoming EU elections. In December 2023, they also called for stronger EU actions to limit Chinese influence over EU critical infrastructure and to combat cyberattacks and disinformation campaigns.

**Equal rights for women and men**

In 2022, Parliament secured a binding obligation for big companies to apply pay transparency for men and women to receive equal salaries when performing equal work. MEPs also succeeded in increasing the number of women in top positions through a landmark law: at least 40% of non-executive director posts or 33% of all director posts must be occupied by the under-represented sex by the end of June 2026.

After approving the EU’s accession to the Istanbul Convention in May 2023, MEPs successfully concluded negotiations with member states to adopt the first-ever EU rules to combat violence against women and domestic violence, and agreed on new standards for national equality bodies to support victims of discrimination more effectively. They condemn the backsliding in LGBTIQ+ rights and call for children to have the right to equal recognition of parenthood across the EU. In a 2024 resolution, MEPs reiterated their call to enshrine the right to abortion in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.

**Respect of the rule of law in member states not negotiable**

MEPs have welcomed the Commission’s yearly rule of law reports, as well as the methodological improvements made by the Commission based on Parliament’s recommendations. In the resolution on the third, improved “Rule of Law Report” (2022), MEPs express worries about persistent negative trends in press freedom, pluralism, and journalists’ safety, and voiced concerns about the continued politicisation of the judiciary and targeting of minority groups’ rights. In a resolution on the 2023 Rule of Law report, Parliament called on the Commission to take action against democratic backsliding across many member states.

Moreover, they have repeatedly called for these reports to become part of a comprehensive, effective mechanism, and for swift action against manifest challenges to the rule of law such as in the cases of Hungary and Poland.

Thanks to Parliament’s perseverance, a new law came into force in January 2021, making payments of EU funds to national governments conditional upon full respect of the rule of law (including the independence of the national judiciary) in member states. In 2022, the Commission finally suspended payments of recovery funds to Poland -which were finally released in March 2024 following commitments and reforms by the new government- and of structural funds in the case of Hungary. MEPs insist that funds should remain suspended until the systemic threats to EU values that have been identified in Hungary (which Parliament dubbed an “electoral autocracy” in 2022) are
addressed in full. In a January 2024 resolution, MEPs condemned the Commission’s decision to release some of the frozen EU funds to Hungary, despite persistent efforts by the Hungarian government to undermine the EU’s founding values. In March, following a recommendation by the Legal Affairs Committee, the President instructed Parliament’s services to introduce a case (C-225/24) to the European Court of Justice to clarify the Commission’s role and margins of discretion to unfreeze EU cohesion funds for Hungary.

**Freedom of media and media pluralism**

Following Parliament’s repeated requests (2021), the Commission tabled an anti-SLAPP (Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation) legislative proposal to protect European media as well as academics, artists and civil society activists from an increasing number of vexatious lawsuits intended to intimidate them. The final text as agreed with Council was adopted in February 2024.

Based on a year-long investigation into the use of Pegasus and equivalent surveillance spyware in the EU by the special PEGA Inquiry Committee, Parliament called in June 2023 for reforms to halt spyware abuse, including the illicit surveillance of political opponents and journalists in some countries. In November, MEPs criticised the Commission for not putting forward draft legislation to tackle the problem, and expressed concerns about developments in the member states.

Finally, Parliament strengthened provisions to shield editorial freedom from political interference and included strong protection of EU journalists and their sources in the new Media Freedom Act. It will also protect EU media freedom against arbitrary decisions by big online platforms and includes rules for allocating state advertising more fairly.

To honour outstanding journalism based on the principles and values of the EU, the Parliament set up the Daphne Caruana Galizia Prize in October 2020. The €20 000 annual prize has been awarded by an independent jury since 2021.

**Key moments: Rule of law, democracy and equal rights** (video)

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**Electoral and institutional reform**
The EU has new rules to regulate political advertising and fight against foreign interference. Parliament and Council however still need to find common ground to reform campaign and party funding rules in the context of the EU Democracy Action Plan. A legislative proposal to revise the Electoral Act to align national electoral rules and create a pan-European constituency was set out by Parliament in April 2022. Improved voting options for EU citizens living in another EU country were proposed in February 2023. In both cases, action needs to be taken by the European Council to turn the proposals into law. MEPs endorsed the Council decision to increase the number of seats in the next Parliament by 15 seats across twelve countries in light of demographic changes - a decision that added four seats to Parliament's initial proposal of an increase of eleven. So that the outcome of the 2024 EU elections is fully respected, MEPs proposed an updated lead candidate ("Spitzenkandidat") mechanism, which would ensure that the nomination of the President of the European Commission reflects citizens' votes and the new EP majority.

Further-reaching institutional reforms set out in a report on Parliamentarism, European Citizenship and Democracy were discussed during September's plenary session.

Already in September 2021, Parliament called for an independent Ethics Body to improve transparency and integrity in EU institutions and restated this demand in a
resolution in December 2022. In March 2024, Parliament's negotiators managed to improve significantly the Commission's proposal, described as “unsatisfactory” by MEPs in July 2023, by adding to the independent experts' tasks the powers to examine individual cases and issue recommendations. The agreement was endorsed by Parliament's Conference of Presidents and adopted by Parliament in April 2024.

The Conference on the Future of Europe and citizens’ impact on EU legislation

Meeting citizens’ expectations has always been the Parliament’s primary objective, but during the current term, a specific set of demands were placed at the core of MEPs’ work: the proposals of the Conference on the Future of Europe. Parliament was instrumental in setting up and participating in the Conference (2021/22), ensuring that citizens would be in the spotlight while pushing for the EU institutions to make effective political commitments. This unprecedented participatory democracy exercise resulted in 49 final proposals, consisting of 326 specific measures, across nine themes: climate, health, the economy, the EU in the world, values, digital transformation, democracy, migration, and education.

Responding to citizens’ demands, the EU institutions have adopted 323 policy initiatives (over half of which are legislative actions) reflecting approximately 75% of the Conference’s measures. Some “flagship” files that reflect citizens’ ideas include those on waste packaging, right to repair, corporate due diligence, platform work directive, the migration pact, combating human trafficking, the media freedom act & anti-SLAPP rules, the AI act, digital services & markets acts, STEP, and political advertising rules. More information on these files is available in the respective thematic sections.

The areas with the most followed-up initiatives are the economy (92%) and climate (89%). Given that up to 31 measures require changes in the EU Treaties, Parliament activated the process immediately after the end of the Conference and a comprehensive set of proposals to amend the Treaties was tabled, also taking into account the string of recent crises. This was endorsed by Parliament in November 2023, and now the European Council must decide whether to hold a Convention to revise the treaties - which requires a decision by simple majority.
A brief guide to the European Parliament

The European Parliament is the legislative branch of the European Union and one of its seven institutions. It is directly elected, and made up of members representing all EU countries.

The European Parliament decides upon EU legislation, including the multiannual budget, together with the Council of the European Union (EU member state governments). Read more about the European Parliament's powers.

The European Parliament holds other EU institutions, like the European Commission, to account. It elects the President of the European Commission and plays a key role in vetting Commissioners-designate through individual hearings.

Organisation of the Parliament

In its tenth legislative term, the European Parliament will have 720 members. The number of MEPs elected from each EU country is agreed before each election and is based on the principle of degressive proportionality, which means each MEP from a larger country represents more people than an MEP from a smaller country.

MEPs are organised by political affinity, not nationality, and join political groups that have representatives from many different countries. Check here the number of MEPs by country.

The President of the Parliament is elected from among its members for a renewable term of two and a half years. The President represents the European Parliament vis-à-vis the outside world and in its relations with the other EU institutions. Roberta Metsola was re-elected President in July 2024, until January 2027.

The President oversees the work of the Parliament and its constituent bodies as well as the debates in plenary and ensures that Parliament's Rules of Procedure are adhered to. At the beginning of every European Council meeting, the President of the European Parliament sets out Parliament's point of view and its concerns as regards the items on the agenda and other subjects.

After the European Union's budget has been adopted by Parliament, the President signs it, rendering it operational. The EP President and the President of the Council both sign all legislative acts adopted under ordinary legislative procedure.

Parliament’s committees

Committees amend legislative proposals through the adoption of reports, propose amendments to plenary and appoint a negotiation team to conduct negotiations with the Council on EU legislation. They also adopt own-initiative reports, organise hearings with experts and scrutinise the other EU bodies and institutions.
In the 10th term, Members will be divided up among 20 specialised standing committees, that will have between 25 and 90 full members, and the same number of substitutes. Find here the list of current standing committees and sub-committees.

In their constitutive meeting on 23 July, each committee elected a chair and up to four vice-chairs from among its full members, forming together the ‘committee bureau’, for a two-and-a-half-year mandate. The political make-up of the committees reflects that of the full Parliament.

The committee chairs coordinate committee work in the Conference of Committee Chairs (CCC).

**Political groups**

A political group must consist of at least 23 MEPs elected in at least one one-quarter of the member states (i.e. at least seven countries), as established in rule 33 of the EP’s Rules of Procedure. By forming a group, MEPs accept by definition that they have political affinity - a political declaration, setting out the purpose of the group is included in the statement sent to the President. A political group can be established at any time during the legislature.

Political groups can hire staff and are provided with administrative facilities, funded by Parliament’s budget. Parliament’s Bureau sets the rules for how these funds and facilities are managed and audited. The funds available to the groups are intended not only to cover the administrative and operational cost of a group’s staff but also the cost of political and information activities in connection with the European Union's political activities.

The budget may not be used to finance any form of European, national, regional or local electoral campaign or to finance political parties at national and European level or their dependent bodies.

Not all MEPs sit in a group. Those who do not are called “non-attached” members. They also are entitled to staff and have rights under the rules set out by the Bureau.

There are currently eight political groups in the European Parliament:

- Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats)
- Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament
- Patriots for Europe Group
- European Conservatives and Reformists Group
- Renew Europe Group
- Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance
- The Left group in the European Parliament - GUE/NGL
- Europe of Sovereign Nations Group

Each political group elects its own chair or co-chairs.

The political group chairs and the EP president constitute the EP Conference of Presidents.
The Conference of Presidents organises Parliament’s business and legislative planning, decides the responsibilities and membership of committees and delegations and is responsible for relations with other EU institutions, the national parliaments and non-EU countries.

The political groups elect “coordinators” for the parliamentary committees. They are each group’s political leader in the committee. They coordinate their group’s viewpoint on the topics before the committee, and together with the chair and the vice-chairs, they organise the work in the committee.

Establishing the Commission

Following the election of the Commission President at the beginning of the term, MEPs assess the suitability and qualification of the Commissioner candidates, who are proposed by the Council, in agreement with the Commission President. The commissioners-designate appear before parliamentary committees in their prospective fields of responsibility and face lengthy public and transparent questioning on their competence and suitability for the position by MEPs. Find more details on the hearings’ process in the section “After the European elections” of this press kit.

The full Commission, including the Commission President and the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, must be elected by a majority of the votes cast, by roll call, after the President-elect has presented the College of Commissioners and their programme before MEPs.

State of the Union debates

Every year, in September, the State of the European Union debate (#SOTEU) is an opportunity for MEPs to relay citizens’ concerns, assess the work accomplished by the Commission in the preceding twelve months, and discuss future challenges for the EU. This annual event, established in 2010 by the Framework Agreement on relations between Parliament and the Commission, echoes similar practices in national democracies.

Further information

MEPs’ individual web pages and contact details
Former Presidents of the European Parliament (since 1977)
Facts and figures about the European Parliament
How to follow Parliament’s work: a short guide

Parliament’s services put a wide range of tools and information services at your disposal to help you follow the work in committees and during plenary part-sessions.

Covering plenary sessions

Parliament sits for twelve plenary sessions in Strasbourg and a number of mini-sessions in Brussels each year. View the 2024 calendar.

In the week before each Strasbourg part-session, parliament’s press service publishes a newsletter on the main topics on the agenda. It also holds a press briefing with Parliament’s group spokespersons on Friday at 11.00 in the Anna Politkovskaya press room in Brussels. A last-minute briefing takes place at 16.30 on the Monday of the session in the Daphne Caruana Galizia press room in Strasbourg. Political group leaders regularly brief journalists in the Strasbourg press room on Tuesdays. Check the schedule of press conferences here (click on “other”). All briefings are webstreamed and recorded. Journalists can also ask questions remotely.

The press service publishes a newsletter ahead of any mini-session held in Brussels and the Parliament’s spokespersons brief journalists on the main topics on the plenary agenda from the VoxBox studio.

During plenary sessions, the press service issues alerts and press releases, a number of them in all EU languages, which are available on the Parliament’s pressroom webpage. To receive the newsletter briefing, press releases and media alerts via email, sign up via the News Subscription Services.

Press officers are available in the Parliament’s press room during the part-session ahead of plenary votes and to explain voting outcomes. They can be contacted via email and telephone - according to language and policy area.

Parliament’s press service Twitter account @EuroParlPress will provide the most up-to-date information about the session. Committees also have dedicated Twitter accounts publishing useful information and updates related to their respective policy areas.

You can find useful data about all the plenary sessions of the ninth term (2019-2024), including their duration, the number of legislative and non-legislative procedures passed, amendments tabled per session, and the number of votes at this link.

Official documents and background information

Parliament’s plenary webpage provides the agenda, texts and amendments, voting schedules, voting lists and vote results as well as live streaming and video recordings of the part-session, with interpretation in all EU official languages. Alternatively, the sessions can also be watched...
Ahead of the session, parliamentary services prepare background materials on the debate and vote topics. The European Parliament’s Research Service prepares briefings on legislative proposals that MEPs will vote on and Parliament’s News page offers a selection of interviews with lead MEPs and articles on topical issues as well as infographics. The Multimedia Centre provides further video and photo materials to download free of charge.

Each legislative proposal is registered and tracked in the publicly accessible Legislative Observatory database, where documents for each stage of the procedure and the names of MEPs steering the legislation through parliament can be found. The Legislative Train is another useful tool for tracking draft legislation.

Information on how EU decisions benefit citizens and regions can be found at the page What Europe does for me. Graphs, charts, podcasts, tables and maps with statistical data organised by subject can be found on the EP Research Service Graphics Warehouse page.

Covering discussions and votes in committees

Before they are debated and voted on in plenary, legislative proposals, resolutions and own-initiative reports are scrutinised and voted on in parliamentary committees (see parliamentary
calendar). Read more about these procedures and committee work.

Parliament’s press service sends out information on the highlights of the upcoming week, which is also available on the News page. You can sign up for the mailing list here. Press officers use Twitter to inform about the key issues on a committee agenda, and use it to issue press releases and the details of press conferences following committee votes.

The committee-specific press service Twitter accounts are listed here. The contact details of the press officers covering specific policy areas and committees are available on the Parliament’s Press room webpage.

Documents and contact details of MEPs

The list of members on each committee and their contact details can be found on committee webpages, as can agendas, meeting calendars and other meeting documents such as texts and amendments, voting lists, the names of rapporteurs and committee coordinators. Press releases related to votes in committees, hyperlinks to watch the meetings online and studies conducted at the request of the committee are also available on the committee webpages.

Background materials are prepared by EP services ahead of votes in committees, and can be found on the EP Research Service web page as well as on the EP News page.

Accreditation

To access Parliament’s premises and to use the rooms and resources available to them, journalists require accreditation. Find detailed and practical information on the types of accreditation available in the Parliament’s Press room webpage. Click here to apply for accreditation.

Further information

Contact details of press officers by policy area
Eurobarometer surveys in all member states

Parliament regularly issues Eurobarometer surveys on public opinion, monitoring citizens’ expectations, concerns and political priorities.

These surveys cover a wide range of issues, focusing on citizens’ perceptions and expectations of EU action, and the main challenges the Union is facing. The surveys also measure in detail citizen attitudes on the EU and the European Parliament, while keeping a close eye on the public’s views on the European elections.

Eurobarometer data in general goes back to 1979, while dedicated surveys from the European Parliament have been commissioned since 2007. The results provide detailed insights into trends and the evolution of public opinion on European issues, at the European and national levels, including also socio-demographic indicators. All Eurobarometer data are public and can be found on the inter-institutional Eurobarometer website.

Eurobarometer survey methodology

The European Parliament and the EU Commission are the main producers of Eurobarometer surveys. All Eurobarometer surveys are carried out using the same methodology. This allows for direct comparison of data and the easier observation of trends. The standard overall sample size is around 27,000 respondents from all 27 EU member states, drawn from the general population aged 15 years or older.

The survey sample mirrors the socio-demographic context of each member state and is statistically fully representative.

For each survey, Parliament publishes the following products and information:

- Full report (in English)
- Executive summary (in English on publication date, followed later by French and German versions)
- Presentation on EU27 (in English)
- National factsheets for each member state (both in English and the local languages)
- National presentations (in English; as of spring 2023 also in local languages)
- Complete socio-demographic and results annex
- Aggregated Excel data files
- Complete SPSS file with the full raw data set (on request).

Additional services by the Public Opinion Monitoring Unit

“Plenary Insights” is a monthly newsletter providing MEPs and the wider public with the most recent Eurobarometer data on key topics of the plenary agenda. The briefing is published on the EP’s website on the Monday of each plenary week.
In the context of Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine, the EP’s Public Opinion Monitoring Unit is tracking and analysing surveys and polls related to the war in Ukraine, collating them in comprehensive collections which are published regularly on the EP’s website.

Further information
Inter-institutional Eurobarometer website
EP Eurobarometer website
What Europe does for me

Detailed information on the EU’s impact on the lives of individual citizens and local communities can be found on a multilingual website of the European Parliament’s Research Service.

The interactive, multilingual, ‘What Europe Does For Me’ website, put together by the European Parliament's Research Service, presents hundreds of short, easy-to-read, documents that give examples of the positive difference that the EU makes to people's lives. Users can easily find specific information about what Europe does for their region, their profession or their favourite pastime. Around 2,000 notes are available to read, share or reuse as online pages or as PDF files.

More than 1,700 localities covered

In the first section of the website, ‘In my region’, users can find information about EU-supported projects in their area by selecting the place where they and their family live or work. This section covers over 1,700 places in every part of the European Union. There is also a new feature that allows for the possibility to view individual projects (as ‘pins’ on the map).

More than 400 snapshots of EU action for citizens
In the section 'In my life', users can choose from 400 short notes (with more to come) to find out how the EU affects, for example, families, health care, hobbies, travel, security, consumer choices and social rights.

What next?

The third section, with longer articles on EU policies, outlines some of the achievements of the previous parliamentary term, and the outlook for the future, with a special focus on public opinion and the concerns of citizens and their expectations for EU action.
Audiovisual services

The European Parliament supports media professionals by providing up-to-date multimedia content online and in-house facilities for reporting on Parliament's activities.

Multimedia content

The Multimedia Centre (MMC) of the European Parliament (EP) offers high-quality ready-to-use videos and photos, which are free to download. The full range of raw and edited material produced by the EP is stored permanently by the MMC, the EP’s audiovisual repository consisting of a mix of live and past events, news, illustrative infoclips and stockshots, and archive material. The Media Library colleagues can help you find video footage in the MMC or archive material.

In the streaming section of the MMC you can view the EP’s daily schedule of planned coverage (plenary and committee meetings) and download customised and trimmed clips from live broadcasts. Embed codes are available on request.

Broadcast-quality audiovisual content is also available via satellite on EbS and EbS+, the TV information service of the European Institutions.

For more information on our services and how to make the most of our online offer, please consult the Press Toolkit on the Audiovisual webpage.

Audiovisual facilities

The European Parliament welcomes journalists who want to use the broadcast and multimedia facilities in Strasbourg and Brussels.

The EP provides customisable broadcast studios, multimedia round-table sets, radio studios, broadcast or multimedia stand-up positions, and camera crews. These extensive and varied
services, fully staffed and equipped, must be booked in advance. Working spaces for audiovisual media, such as unequipped stand-up positions at high-profile locations in the EP, can also be booked for selected timeslots or for the entire day.

All our facilities are available free of charge.

We do our utmost to make your remote broadcast or multimedia programme a reality and to adapt to your needs.

Find out more about the audiovisual services by checking the online brochure or by visiting the Audiovisual webpage.

**Further information**

Contacts
Multimedia centre
Audiovisual webpage

European Elections 2024 Package
Useful contacts for journalists covering the European Parliament’s activities

Press officers in Parliament and member states (EP liaison offices) cover all policy areas and can help with media enquiries on Parliament’s work.

Spokesperson’s service

The Spokesperson’s service provides information on institutional issues and responds to enquiries about Parliament’s rules, procedures, finances and administration. For responses to the most frequently asked questions, see the recently updated FAQs.

Jaume DUCH GUILLOT
EP Spokesperson and Director General for Communication
(+32) 2 28 43000
(+32) 496 59 94 76

Delphine COLARD
EP Deputy Spokesperson and Head of the Spokesperson’s Service
(+32) 498 98 44 85

Parliament’s press services

The European Parliament's press service provides journalists with accurate and unbiased information on parliamentary activities and offers practical and technical assistance. Our press officers are available to brief media professionals on specific files on Parliament's legislative agenda and inform them about the audiovisual offer at their disposal.

- Press officers in Brussels/Strasbourg by policy area and language
- Press officers in the Member States
- Assistance for audiovisual journalists

Press Officers draft and disseminate alerts and press releases on debates and votes, organise press conferences, interactive webinars and seminars, and brief journalists.

Press briefings, press releases and alerts can be found online in the Press room section of the Parliament's webpage. Follow the latest news on @EuroparlPress or subscribe to receive press releases and media alerts via email.

Political groups’ press services

Political groups in the European Parliament have dedicated staff to manage press and media relations. They publish their own newsletters and press releases related to committee and plenary activities. They also organize briefings and media events.
You can find here the contact details for the political groups’ spokespersons.

**President’s press service**

A communication team, including a spokesperson and a deputy spokesperson, deals with all media requests addressed to the Parliament’s President.

**Jüri LAAS**  
Spokesperson of the President  
(+32) 2 28 44090  
(+32) 470 95 75 61

**Antti TIMONEN**  
Deputy Spokesperson of the President  
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**Further information**

Accreditation for media  
Subscribe to press releases and media alerts