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 will be updated regularly as we approach the 10th European elections which will take place in all EU member states from 6 to 9 June 2024.

For more insights into the European elections, including – at a later stage – election results, consult the elections website. You can also find more details on electoral laws in the member states in this infographic.
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European Elections 2024

From 6 to 9 June 2024, around 370 million Europeans will be called to the polls to elect the 720 members of the next European Parliament.

Elections' dates

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

The vote will kick off in the Netherlands on Thursday 6 June, followed by Ireland on Friday 7 June, and Latvia, Malta and Slovakia on Saturday 8 June. In Czechia the ballots will be open Friday and Saturday, while in Italy the vote will take place on Saturday and Sunday. The other 20 EU countries (Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden) will hold their elections on Sunday 9 June.

Provisional results will be published on Sunday evening. You will find more information about the publication of results and practical details about the election night below.

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.

EU citizens living in another EU country may choose to vote and stand for election there. You can find more information here.

As regards electoral lists, there are several national systems in place, from closed lists (no possibility to change the order of the candidates) to semi-open lists (voters can change the position of candidates on a single chosen lists) and open lists (voters can pick candidates from different lists).

The voting age is also determined by national legislation. In most member states it is 18, with the exception of Greece (17) and Belgium, Germany, Malta and Austria (16). The minimum age to stand as candidate ranges from 18 to 25 across the EU.

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

“Use your vote” – Parliament’s electoral campaign
The European Parliament is the only European institution directly elected by citizens and, as such, is the only one directly accountable to citizens and capable of holding the other governing institutions accountable, to ensure a more transparent and more democratic Europe.

As in previous years, the EP intends to inform the public about the upcoming elections and their importance for the future of Europe. Institutional communication actions are non-partisan and complement the political parties’ and individual candidate’s campaigns by focusing on the EU and Parliament’s achievements and the importance of taking part in the democratic process by voting.

Further information
European Elections 2024 website
EP factsheets: The European Parliament: electoral procedures
Press Release: 15 additional seats for 12 countries
Distribution of seats per EU member state in the European Elections 2024 (infographic)
TogetherEU
Lead candidates

The European Parliament has long sought to ensure that, by voting in European elections, citizens not only elect the Parliament itself but also have a say over who will lead the European Commission.

In order to "Europeanise" the elections and to boost the democratic legitimacy of EU decision-making, Parliament called on the European political parties to nominate candidates for the Presidency of the European Commission. This allows for 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 process, in which European political parties designate one candidate each for the post of EU Commission President ahead of the European elections. Parliament laid out its position for the upcoming elections in 2023.

The system of lead candidates was introduced for the first time at the 2014 elections, when it resulted in the election of Jean-Claude Juncker.

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

Ahead of this year’s European elections, Parliament confirmed the importance of applying the lead candidate mechanism (the “Spitzenkandidaten” process), in which European political parties designate one candidate each for the post of EU Commission President ahead of the European elections. Parliament laid out its position for the upcoming elections in 2023.

MEPs insist that a clear and credible link between the choice of voters and the position of the Commission President is necessary. They say that, based on the EU Treaties, this choice should depend on the candidate securing majority support in Parliament and call on the European Council to end the practice of making behind closed doors deals.

As of now, several political parties have announced their lead candidates.

Further information
European Parliament resolution of 12 December 2023 on the European Elections 2024
Election results – Election days and night

During the whole election period, from 6 to 9 June 2024, EP services will closely monitor, aggregate and analyse national election data, including exit polls, as they are released.

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

The EP is neither conducting nor commissioning any kind of voting intention surveys or exit polls. The estimates published on election night will be provided by Parliament’s external contractor, Verian, which will use its network of affiliate institutes in all member states to aggregate available data.

The information provided during election night will combine different types of election data, depending on what is available in any given member state at the time, including exit polls, provisional results, final results and official results. All data on Parliament’s election results website will be clearly labelled according to type.

See below the definition of each kind of election data Parliament will be publishing on election night and until the constitutive plenary session of the European Parliament in July 2024.

National data

- Estimates: Aggregation established by Verian of available national estimates and/or polling data (such as exit polls) resulting from the elections and published in a given member state by well-known and reliable national polling institutes after voting has finished.
- Provisional results: First results as published by the member state’s official election authority on the basis of a percentage of votes counted.
- Final results: Results as published by a member state’s official election authority after all votes have been counted.
- Official results: Definitive results as proclaimed by a member state’s official election authority and validated by their national legislative authority.

EU results

- Projection: The European Parliament’s projection is an estimate of its composition following the election, established by Verian as an aggregation of available election results, estimates or polling data published in member states after voting has finished. The projection will be based on the structure of the outgoing Parliament, so as not to prejudge the composition of the newly elected Parliament at its constitutive session in July.
- Provisional: Composition of the European Parliament based on available provisional or final national results published after voting has finished in all member states, and based on the structure of the outgoing Parliament.
- Constitutive session: Results as officially announced by the newly-elected European Parliament after verification of its Members’ eligibility criteria.
- Outgoing Parliament (for historical data only): European Parliament as configured in the last parliamentary session of the current legislature.
Note on the composition of the projections: If there are changes in the way the projection is composed that deviate from the established structure of the outgoing Parliament, these will only be reflected in the projection after an official, written declaration from the parties concerned of such a change has been received.

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 multimedia package
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
Parliament's priorities and achievements

With lessons learnt from the pandemic and the recent geopolitical and energy crisis, lawmakers focus on Europe’s green and digital transition to build a resilient economy and strengthen democratic oversight and fundamental rights.

Learn more about Parliament's achievements in policy areas that Parliament, Council, and the Commission identified as common priorities and committed to deliver on before the 2024 European Elections.

Parliament’s Legislative Observatory is the central data base 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.

Learn more about the political priorities of Parliament’s political groups

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

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. 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.

Parliament and Council informally 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 (“platform workers”). This will put an end to bogus self-employment and introduce 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, has been provisionally agreed with member states.

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 (
informally agreed with Council on 18 January 2024), 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.

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. Draft legislation on decarbonising gas supply and reforming the electricity market to stabilise prices for consumers has been agreed with member states. While Parliament also approved new rules to secure sufficient supply of critical raw materials in 2023, negotiations on the “Net Zero Industry Act” were only concluded in February 2024. 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.

On a macro-economic level, MEPs are to vote on a provisional 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.

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**

To reduce the GHG emissions of industries, transport (aviation, maritime, cars and vans, Euro 7 standards) 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 with member states 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. Rules to require companies to apply “due diligence” on the risks of the social or environmental harm of their activities were also informally agreed with member states.

**Striving for less pollution, more biodiversity**

Reductions in industrial emissions and mandatory requirements to restore damaged EU ecosystems while ensuring sufficient food production were approved by plenary in early 2024, while new rules for better air quality, less water pollution, clean soils, and reducing packaging waste still need to be finalised. MEPs are ready for negotiations with Council on a proposal introducing new genomic techniques to make crops more resilient.

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

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 the access of consumers and businesses 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 a EU cybersecurity competence centre and network, and called for tighter EU cybersecurity standards for connected devices, apps and operating systems.

Parliament finalised negotiations with Council on the Cyber Resilience Act, 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. Parliamentary 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.

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.

On sustainable consumption, MEPs agreed with the Council on an extensive revamp of the Eco-Design Directive for products to last longer and be easier to repair, upgrade and recycle. They also reached a deal on new rules on the right to repair, something which the Parliament has repeatedly pushed for in the past decade.
Parliament already endorsed rules that ban greenwashing. MEPs and Council also informally agreed on new due diligence obligations for corporate businesses to mitigate their adverse impact on human rights and the environment.

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 improve the protection of citizens’ health at the workplace 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, is currently being examined by MEPs and should be finalised after the upcoming 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.
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. An 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 reached on 20 December 2023. At the same time, EU lawmakers aim to strike a balance through which EU borders are effectively safeguarded and efforts are undertaken to combat human smuggling and trafficking (agreed with Council on 23 January 2024), while at the same time human rights of migrants 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.
Informal agreements were reached in December 2022 on ways to help vulnerable persons to reach EU territory in a legal, organised and safe way, 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 as well as 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 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.

**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, 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.

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”.

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 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 that resulted in tens of thousands people being killed and injured in Gaza since this attack. In the resolution adopted in March 2024 it 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 informally agreed with member states.

**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.

**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 want the EU to scale up its fight against corruption, money laundering (AML package) and disinformation, which threaten Europe’s democratic foundations and core values.

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.

**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 in February 2024 with member states on new rules to combat violence against women and domestic violence across the EU, 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’s right to equal recognition of parenthood across the EU.

**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 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) and in Poland 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 at the European Court of Justice to clarify the Commission’s role and margins of discretion about unfreezing of 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. MEPs reached an informal agreement on the new law with Council on 30 November.
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.

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 tasks of the independent experts the competence to examine individual cases and issue recommendations. The provisional agreement was endorsed by Parliament’s Conference of Presidents and is currently in the pipeline of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs with a view to finalise the process before the end of the term.

**Re-imagining the EU**

Finally, Parliament was instrumental in setting up and participating in the Conference on the Future of Europe (2021/22) and its deliberations on the European citizens’ proposals. The 49 policy recommendations of the Conference were immediately followed by Parliament activating the process for EU treaty change. Over the course of the next 18 months, a comprehensive set of proposals to amend the Treaties was prepared based on the Conference’s final report and taking into account the string of crises that the EU has been facing. These were endorsed by Parliament in November 2023, and it is now up to the European Council to decide whether to hold a Convention for the revision of the Treaties - which needs a decision by simple majority.
Further information
Joint Declaration of the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission on legislative priorities for 2023 and 2024
The six policy priorities of the von der Leyen Commission - State of play in autumn 2023
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.
After the European elections - What happens after 10 June

In the days following the elections, member state national authorities will communicate to the European Parliament the names of the elected members of the EP after checking they do not hold incompatible mandates or functions.

**Constitution of the political groups**

Negotiations for the constitution of the political groups will begin after the elections and may go on until the first plenary session. 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). To be officially recognised as of 16 July, the date of Parliament’s constitutive plenary session, political groups have to notify the President of their names, political declaration and composition by 15 July 2024 (Rule 33 of the EP Rules of Procedure).

**Constituent plenary sitting on 16-19 July 2024**

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

MEPs will also vote on the numerical composition of Parliament’s standing committees and subcommittees - thereby launching the new legislative term. The nominal composition of the committees is also likely to be communicated.

**Committee meetings**

After the constitutive plenary, the committees will then hold their first meetings to elect their respective Chairs and Vice-Chairs (Bureau).
Election of the President of the European Commission

The election of the Commission President will take place following Parliament’s constitution. This could happen during the first session after the summer recess (16-19 September). The final decision on the precise calendar will be taken by the Conference of Presidents of political groups after the Parliament has been constituted.

In previous terms, when the European elections took place in May – as in 2019 - two plenary sessions were organised in July, the first devoted to the constitution of the new Parliament and election of its President, Vice-Presidents and Quaestors, and the second to the election of the Commission President.

Article 14 of the Treaty of the European Union provides that the EP “shall elect the President of the Commission.” In practice, based on the rule 124 of the Rules of Procedure, the candidate proposed by the European Council will present their political guidelines to Parliament, followed by a debate. Parliament will elect the President of the Commission by a majority of its component MEPs (361, in a Parliament of 720 Members). The vote is by secret ballot.

If the candidate does not obtain the required majority, the President shall invite the European Council to propose a new candidate within one month for election in accordance with the same procedure.

Hearings with the Commissioners-designate

Under current procedures, together with the (newly) elected Commission President, the Council appoints the Commissioners-designate. Each Commissioner-designate is assigned responsibility for a specific policy area by the Commission President. 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 accurate and complete content 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 for resolving a conflict of interest.

Before the 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.

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 MEP questions.

Evaluation after the committee hearing

The responsible committee or committees must finalise their evaluation of a Commissioner-designate within 24 hours following the hearing and should meet in camera “as soon as possible” 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
- 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. If the CCC approves the letter, it is sent confidentially to the Conference of Presidents. A separate evaluation report on each Commissioner-designate is sent to the Conference of Committee Chairs and to the Conference of Presidents of the EP, which will draw up a draft resolution to be
voted on in plenary.

**Conclusion of the hearing process**

The Conference of Presidents declares the hearings closed after having analysed the evaluation letters from the Committees in charge and the recommendation of the Conference of Committee Chairs (CCC). Only at this point can the evaluation letters be published and comments on the evaluation be made.

**Plenary vote of investiture**

The Commission President takes the results of the hearings, as well as consultations with Parliament’s political groups, into account. They then present their team and political priorities during a plenary session. After a debate, MEPs will decide, by a majority of votes cast, whether to invest the new College of Commissioners for a mandate of five years.
From the ninth to the tenth parliamentary term

The last plenary session of the current term will take place in Strasbourg from 22 to 25 April 2024.

MEPs will continue holding committee meetings until April, discussing and voting on legislative proposals.

Trilogue negotiations

Interinstitutional negotiations have become standard practice for the adoption of EU legislation. They enable the co-legislators, the European Parliament and the Council of the EU (representing national governments), to reach agreement at any stage of the legislative procedure on proposals drafted by the European Commission.

Once negotiators agree a compromise text in a trilogue, this has to be proofread and translated by lawyers-linguists, before its submittal for final endorsement by EU ministers and Parliament’s plenary.

This year, trilogue deals had to be concluded by mid-March for the final vote in plenary to take place before the end of the current term and the legislative text to be published in the Official Journal before the summer recess.

If all the technical work on a file could not be finalised, a corrigendum may be tabled in the new parliamentary term.

In March 2024, all Committee chairs (gathered in the Conference of Committee Chairs) will follow-up on the state of play of outstanding legislative files and look ahead to the new term.

What happens with “unfinished business”

Although Parliament will do its utmost to complete all the legislation it is working on before the current term ends, some legislative files will inevitably be left unfinished before the elections.

“Unfinished business” encompasses all legislative proposals where EU co-legislators (Parliament and Council) have begun the legislative procedure but not concluded it by the end of the legislative term. This can happen for several reasons, for example when no agreement is reached in interinstitutional negotiations, or when national governments are unable to agree on a common position.

The general rule is that at the end of the last part-session before an election, all Parliament's unfinished business shall be considered to have lapsed (Rule 240 of the EP’s Rules of Procedure).

In concrete terms, legislative files
- that have been 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.

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

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 240 of the EP’s Rules of Procedure).

This decision will be taken by the Conference of Presidents (possibly in October 2024) and subsequently announced in plenary (possibly also in October 2024).

If the Conference of Presidents and plenary decide to take forward this work, 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.
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 705 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.

The composition of the Parliament

Following European elections in May 2019, the new Parliament held its constituent session on 2 July and voted the European Commission into office on 27 November.

On 18 January 2022, Roberta Metsola (EPP, MT) was elected with 458 votes as the President of the Parliament for two and a half years.©EP2022

MEPs elected Roberta Metsola (EPP, MT) on 18 January 2022, to succeed David Sassoli (S&D,
IT) as the President of the Parliament. They also voted 14 Vice-Presidents and 5 Quaestors into office. In January 2023, a new Vice-President was elected.

All elected offices in the Parliament (the President, Vice-Presidents, Quaestors, Committee and Delegation Chairs and Vice-Chairs) are for two and half years. Elections for these positions are held at the start of the five-year term and half-way through.

The process to elect the European Parliament’s President and other office holders is set out in Rules 14 to 18 of Parliament’s Rules of Procedure. Their respective duties are set out in Rules 22 to 32.

Parliament’s committees

Who chairs the committees?

Who coordinates the committees’ work?

What are political groups and how are they formed?

What are the requirements to form a political group?

How are political groups funded?

Who are the political group chairs and how are they elected?

Who are the political group coordinators in committees and how are they elected?

How are the credentials of new MEPs verified?

Changes to Parliament’s composition

On 1 February 2020, following the withdrawal of the UK from the EU, Parliament’s composition changed from 751 MEPs to 705 MEPs. Of the UK’s 73 seats, 27 were redistributed to Ireland, France, Italy, Spain, Poland, Romania, the Netherlands, Sweden, Austria, Denmark, Slovakia, Finland, Croatia, and Estonia. See the current seat breakdown per country and per political group here.

Prompted by demographic changes in the EU, Council decided in 2023 to bring the number of MEPs to 720 (+15) in the next European Parliament. Following the June 2024 European elections, France, Spain and The Netherlands will each get two additional seats, while Austria, Denmark, Belgium, Poland, Finland, Slovakia, Ireland, Slovenia, and Latvia are attributed one extra seat each.

Establishing the Commission
Following the 2019 European elections, member states nominated Ursula von der Leyen (EPP, DE) as a candidate for the post of Commission President, taking into account the results of the elections. The new Commission President was elected on 16 July 2019 by an absolute majority (half of the component members plus one). Read more.

Following the election of the Commission President, MEPs assessed the suitability and qualification of the 26 Commissioner candidates in individual public hearings in the EP committees dealing with a candidate’s portfolio. Detailed information and videos of those hearings are available on the Commissioners-designate hearings 2019 website.

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.

With the 6-9 June 2024 European elections approaching, the EU’s response to the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine and Europe’s continued support for the country are set to remain prominent in the SOTEU debate on 13 September.

Looking back: #SOTEU 2023 videos.
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.
via the Europe by Satellite webpage.

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
Audiovisual services and multimedia content

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

Broadcast and Multimedia facilities in a nutshell


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.

Visit the Audiovisual webpage to find out more about all the facilities we offer to the media and how best to use them.

Further information
Contacts
Multimedia centre
Audiovisual webpage

European Elections 2024 Package
2019 Election Days 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.

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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
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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