

European Parliament Press Tool Kit



01-03-2023 - 09:12
20210914SRV12436

European Parliament

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.



The European Parliament during a plenary voting session

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Contacts

Natalie Kate KONTOULIS

Press Officer

☎ (+32) 2 28 43562 (BXL)

📱 (+32) 470 88 37 82

✉ natalie.kontoulis@europarl.europa.eu

Eoghan WALSH

Press Officer

☎ +32 228 32591 (BXL)

📱 +32 485 399443

✉ eoghan.walsh@europarl.europa.eu

Jack MOLONEY

Press Officer in Ireland

☎ (+353) 16 057 933

📱 (+353) 86 779 5408

✉ jack.moloney@europarl.europa.eu

Fionnuala CROKER

Press Officer in Ireland

☎ (+353) 16 057 932

📱 (+353) 86 851 4067

✉ fionnuala.croker@europarl.europa.eu

Anna ZAMMIT VELLA

Press Officer in Malta

☎ (+356) 23 425 314

☎ (+33) 3 881 53014 (STR)

📱 (+356) 992 671 89

✉ anna.zammit@europarl.europa.eu

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

European Parliament Press Tool Kit

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.

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?](#)

Parliament's composition changed in 2020 due to Brexit

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. The remaining 46 seats were kept in reserve for potential future enlargements.

See the current seat breakdown per country and per political group [here](#).

Parliament elected the new Commission



President-elect von der Leyen presented her team and vision to Parliament prior to the vote for the election of the Commission ©EP2019

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](#).

Public hearings of candidates for the European Commission

The 26 Commissioners-designate were put forward by their respective member states and by Commission president-elect Ursula von der Leyen. Before [winning the approval of Parliament](#) on 27 November 2019, MEPs assessed whether the candidates were suitable for the job in individual public hearings in the EP committees that deal with the candidates' areas of responsibility.

Detailed information and videos of the hearings are available on the [Commissioners-designate hearings 2019 website](#).

Read more about the [commitments made by Commissioners-designate](#) during the hearings.

Further information

[MEPs' individual web pages and contact details](#)

[EP Research Service briefing: Political groups in the European Parliament \(1979-2019\)](#)

[Former Presidents of the European Parliament \(since 1977\)](#)

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 next European Elections in 2024.

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



Final votes in plenary ©EP2023

Democracy in Action

Economic and social recovery and new EU budget rules

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.

The [EU long-term budget](#) and a unique [€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 [speed up 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 budget negotiations with Council, MEPs achieved a €16 billion increase for flagship programmes for 2021-2027 ([EU4Health](#), [Horizon](#) (research), [InvestEU](#) and [Erasmus+](#)).

EU solidarity based on shared values and objectives

As part of their budgetary authority, MEPs keep a close eye on the budget spending and on the [national recovery plans](#) financed through the Recovery and Resilience Facility. 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 exerts [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. 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

MEPs convinced member states to secure national [minimum wages](#) and to ensure that men and women receive [equal pay](#) for equal work, across the EU. Parliament also wants 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](#)”). Furthermore, [fair taxation](#) and the fight against [money laundering](#) remain high on Parliament’s agenda.

Support for EU industries

In February 2023, MEPs [voted in favour of establishing a new EU “Sovereignty Fund”](#) to anchor and re-locate industrial production capacities in Europe. They urgently call for measures to boost the take-up of clean energy technologies, and help EU industries produce high-quality jobs and economic growth to reach the Green Deal goals.

The European Green Deal

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 transition.

Achieve climate neutrality by 2050

To reduce the GHG emissions of industries, transport ([aviation](#), [maritime](#), [cars](#)) and households, the Parliament decided to incentivise alternative energy uptake. It further tightened the rules of the EU [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%.

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 batteries](#) for their entire life cycle. MEPs also wish to accelerate the roll-out of [renewable energy and improve energy efficiency](#) and in particular 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 their production being relocated abroad and to incentivise the rest of the world to step up their climate efforts.

[A series of products that cause further deforestation](#) in other parts of the world may no longer be imported: 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, starting in 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.

New rules on pesticides, nature restoration and sustainable food production ([Farm2Fork strategy](#)) as well as air quality, industrial emissions and packaging waste are still to be

agreed.

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 EU support, 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 the EU to impose tough sanctions 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 the EU heads of state and government at the EU summit.

Tackling the consequences of war on Ukraine and EU

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, MEPs approved an [€18 billion EU loan to support Ukraine in 2023](#).

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 competencies 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 subsequently 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.

Over the years, the European Parliament has built a unique and longstanding relationship with the 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. It 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”](#).

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. Parliament agreed to widen the scope and upgrade the resources of the [EU Civil Protection Mechanism](#) to respond quickly to large-scale disasters. The EP 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 are currently looking into further lessons learned from the pandemic, with the [COVI special committee](#) scrutinising, among others, the EU’s handling of the COVID-19 pandemic and vaccination campaigns.

Pharmaceuticals, health at work, defeat cancer

Parliament repeatedly pushed to improve the protection of citizens’ [health at their workplaces](#) and set out ways to increase the [EU’s pharmaceutical autonomy](#) in a report adopted at the end of 2021. A revision of the EU’s key pharmaceutical legislation is expected to be tabled by the Commission in spring 2023.

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.

Migration and Asylum reform

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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. At the same time, EU lawmakers want to ensure human rights are respected and EU borders are efficiently protected against illegal border crossings and human trafficking. The upcoming Council presidencies and Parliament agreed on a [roadmap](#) to conclude negotiations on the package of nine proposals by February 2024.

A holistic approach

MEPs made sure that the EU gets 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 will provide more 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.

Parliament's Civil Rights MEPs are preparing for negotiations with Council on : [Regulation for Asylum and Migration Management](#), [Regulation for Crisis and Force majeure](#), [Screening Regulation](#), [Amended Asylum Procedures regulation](#) and [Return Directive \(recast\)](#).

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](#)). Following committee votes in spring 2023, Parliament will be ready for negotiations with Council on two proposals updating the existing [single work and residence permit directive](#) and rules on [long-term residence status](#).

Frontex under parliamentary scrutiny

The Frontex Scrutiny Working Group has been 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

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). Following its investigations and fact-finding missions, a first set of [recommendations](#) for better protecting EU democracy were adopted in March 2022. The Special Committee ([ING2](#)) continues the work until summer 2023 and will also look into ways to protect Parliament itself from attempts to influence its work.

Equal rights at work

In 2022, Parliament agreed 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.

Respect of rule of law in member states not negotiable

MEPs welcome the Commission's yearly "[Rule of Law report](#)" and [called for its further improvement](#) 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](#).

In a [resolution](#) on the third, improved "[Rule of Law Report](#)" (2022), MEPs express worries about persistent negative trends in press freedom, pluralism, and journalist safety and voiced concerns about the continued politicisation of the judiciary and targeting of minority groups' rights.

Thanks to Parliament's perseverance, a [new law making payments of EU funds conditional upon full respect of rule of law](#) including the independence of the national judiciary in member states came into force in January 2021. Since then Parliament has been repeatedly [pressuring the Commission](#), as the guardian on the Treaties, to fully apply the "[rule of law conditionality mechanism](#)", agreed with Council in late 2020. In 2022, the Commission suspended payments of recovery funds to Poland and of structural funds in the case of Hungary. MEPs insist on keeping funds suspended until both countries remedy in full the breaches of rule of law [pointed out by MEPs](#).

Freedom of media and media pluralism

On 10 March 2022, the European Parliament decided to set up the [PEGA Inquiry Committee](#) to investigate alleged illegal use in the EU of Pegasus and equivalent spyware surveillance software to spy on political opponents and journalists. In November 2021, Parliament made its recommendations for [new rules to protect journalists from being silenced](#). MEPs are now examining the Commission's [anti-SLAPP \(Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation\)](#) legislative proposal to protect the independence of European media from vexatious lawsuits intended to intimidate them - a step that MEPs have been calling for the Commission to take [since 2018](#). Parliamentary work on the much-awaited [Media Freedom Act](#) started in 2023.

Electoral and institutional reform

MEPs agreed on [new draft rules to regulate political advertising](#) and to reform campaign and [party funding rules](#) in the context of the EU [Democracy Action Plan](#). Negotiations with member states started. A legislative proposal to [revise the Electoral Act](#) to bring national electoral rules into line with each other more and create transnational lists 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.

In September 2021, Parliament called for an independent [Ethics Body](#) to improve transparency and integrity in EU institutions. In a resolution in December 2022, [MEPs reiterated the call to the Commission](#) to table a proposal.

Follow-up on the Conference on the Future of Europe

Finally, Parliament has been 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 proposals](#) of the Conference were immediately [followed up by Parliament by activating the process to change the EU Treaties](#). [MEPs called upon member states to set up a Convention to this end](#). [A parliamentary report](#) analysing possible follow-up on all recommendations will be tabled for a plenary debate before the summer.

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

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](#).

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. Under the DSA, users are better informed and better protected from manipulation. The Act prohibits targeted advertising directed at minors or based on sensitive data.

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. If gatekeepers fail to comply with the rules, fines of up to 10% of their global turnover (or 20% for repeated non-compliance) can be imposed.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

For years, Parliament has [called](#) for an AI rulebook that increases trust in, and the safety of, new technologies, one that sets high ethical standards, harnesses its transformational power for the job market and supports “AI made in Europe”. Several committees and a dedicated special committee ([AIDA](#)) gave their input to the Commission proposal for the first EU [legal framework on AI](#) (Artificial Intelligence Act). The final shape of the Act is currently being finalised by Parliament and needs to be agreed with member states in the Council before its adoption.

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 Governance Act](#) (DGA) aims to increase trust in data sharing, create new EU rules on the neutrality of data marketplaces, and facilitate the reuse of [certain public sector data](#).

The [Data Act](#), which still needs to be agreed with member states and which complements the contents of the DGA, aims to boost innovation by removing barriers obstructing the access of consumers and businesses to data.

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 has also started work 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.

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 ([resolution](#)).

In a [resolution on the Common Security and Defence Policy](#) adopted in January 2023, MEPs welcomed new EU initiatives to enhance European security and defence, and called on member states to continue developing the EU’s cyber-defence policy and capabilities, as well as establish security and defence partnerships with like-minded partners.

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 its annual reports, Parliament continuously assesses

democratic reform progress in neighbourhood countries that want to join the EU. Pointing to a strengthened enlargement policy as the EU's strongest geopolitical tool, [MEPs urged the EU to overcome the status quo](#) and reenergise the enlargement process both among member states and in applicant countries.

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 - 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. 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.

These delegations are 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, partnership agreements

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](#).

Furthermore, the much-awaited proposal to effectively prohibit products made with [forced labour](#) from the EU market, including forced child labour, is currently under examination by MEPs. Negotiations with member states could start, at the earliest, in autumn 2023.

The EU's [Generalised Scheme of Preferences](#) (GSP), which grants preferential access to the EU market for developing countries, and new tools to protect EU companies from

[economic coercion](#) are under negotiation with the Council.

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. Other trade and investment agreements with, among others, Chile and New Zealand, are expected to be discussed by MEPs in parliamentary committees and plenary sessions in 2023 or early 2024.

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 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 agreed revamped [product safety](#) and [consumer credits](#) rules to enhance consumer protection and the wellbeing of EU citizens, both online and offline.

Circular Economy

Parliament and Council agreed [new rules for recycling and producing batteries](#). MEPs will present their position on [revamping the Eco-Design Directive](#) in early 2023 and vote on a series of proposals ([packaging](#), [product information](#), sustainable [textiles](#), etc.) tabled by the European Commission under the [Circular Economy Packages 1 and 2](#).

MEPs initiated a [proposal on the right to repair](#) to extend the life-span of products and will also negotiate new [due diligence obligations](#) for corporate businesses with member states in 2023.

Strengthen the EU's industrial base

In a [resolution](#) adopted in February 2023, MEPs called on the Commission to work on [plans](#) to enhance the EU's manufacturing strength, especially in strategic technologies like solar and wind energy, heat pumps, and batteries. Since 2021, MEPs urged the Commission to table a comprehensive [strategy on critical raw materials](#) to help EU industries stay competitive and become less dependent on third countries, while ensuring affordable and sufficient supply for EU consumers.

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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 spring 2023](#)

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 [2023 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.

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

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proposals that MEPs will vote on and Parliament's [Newspage](#) 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 Europedoes 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



MEPs discuss legislative proposals in committees before tabling recommendations to plenary ©EP2020

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

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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](#)

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.

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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](#)

European elections results

On 23-26 May 2019, over 200 million Europeans in 28 EU member states voted in the European elections, resulting in turnout increasing from 42,61% in 2014 to 51% in 2019.

The dynamic and interactive website www.election-results.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
- A widget can tailor the website to your needs. It will publish historical results of European elections on your website and provide live
- Download datasheets in open data formats (json, xml and csv) and graphic image formats (jpg and png).

[European elections days - photos and videos free for download](#)

What Europe does for me

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



What Europe Does For Me

<https://what-europe-does-for-me.eu>

The interactive, multilingual, 'What Europe Does For Me' website, put together by the European Parliament's Research Service, presents hundreds of easy-to-read, one-page 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.

More than 1,600 localities covered

Around 2,000 one-page notes are available to read, share or reuse as online pages or as PDF files. They are organised in two main categories on the website. In the first section, 'In my region', users can find information about their region by selecting the place where they and their family live or work. This section covers over 1,600 localities in every part of the European Union.

More than 600 snapshots of EU action for citizens

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In the section 'In my life', users can choose from 600 one-pagers to see how the EU affects, for example, families, health care, hobbies, travel, security, consumer choices and social rights. A series of podcasts in a growing number of languages is also available in this section.

What next?

The third section, with longer briefing papers 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 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

https://multimedia.europarl.europa.eu/en/video/v_EP139303

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,

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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](#).

[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

(+32) 2 28 31295

(+32) 460 79 21 10

Further information

[Accreditation for media](#)

[Subscribe to press releases and media alerts](#)